

TO: The Most Rev. Walter H. Grundorf
The Rt. Rev. Larry Shaver
The Ven. Erich Zwingert
The Rev. Keith Acker
Members of the APA Provincial Council

FROM: The Very Rev. Glenn M Spencer

RE: Reception of Communion of Christ the Redeemer [CCR]

At the outset, I am greatly privileged to serve as a member of the Ecumenical Committee and to have an opportunity to review not only the liturgical documents of CCR, but also the comments of Bishop Shaver, Father Zwingert and Fr. Acker regarding his impressions of CCR.

The potential reception of CCR into the APA brings cause for us to review both the process of reception and the roles and obligations of both jurisdictions seeking unification. It also raises the question of “post unification” compliance by jurisdictions and parishes that have received into the APA.

I have given much thought and prayerful reflection on these three actions.

Consequently, I have prepared the attached document of my reflections, concerns and observations about how we approach the integration of jurisdictions with or into the APA. This document is meant to be a platform for discussion among those whose responsibility it is to work for unification in compliance with the canons.

**A Theological, Liturgical & Canonical Statement
Concerning the Reception of the CCR
The Very Reverend Glenn M Spencer**

Introductory Remarks

In approaching this weighty matter, I have always kept in mind the principle of *lex orandi/lex credendi* – the law of prayer is the law of belief. The classical Book of Common Prayer (1928 American edition) along with the Anglican & American Missals and other manuals authorized by our Constitution are not only commentaries on the Old and New Testaments of the Scriptures, but in a real sense they are the depositories of the Magisterium. If one wants to know what happens in Baptism, turn to page 273 in the 1928 BCP and study the rite. Not only ritual content, but also rubrics concerning tone, the actions of the celebrant and directions for the congregation provide Anglicans a manner in which worship, doctrine and life may correspond to the true, the good and the beautiful of the undivided Catholic Church. For Anglicans the classical Book of Common Prayer is the backbone of precisely what is claimed in the title, Common Prayer. Around this pearl of great price, the classical Anglican ethos has grown.

Our society is transient. In my parish of All Saints in Charlottesville, Virginia hundreds of students from the University of Virginia as well as families and singles from the community have found a rock of stability through the worship, doctrine and life made possible by the instrument of the classical Book of Common Prayer. Our parishioners are not different from parishioners in other APA parishes. Our families have moved all over this nation in the last seventeen years and in just about every case I have been able confidently to direct them to a parish that embodies the worship, doctrine and life of the parish and jurisdiction in which they were first nurtured in the Anglican Way. I still

hear from many of them after all these years. One thing they always express is the confidence and comfort of being able to raise their families with common prayer. Where they have experienced disappointment is in not being able to continue singing the common songs of Zion and finally having to settle for less. And, just to be clear, I am speaking of individuals and families who are today in their 30s & 40s. In all my years at All Saints, the 1928 edition of The Book of Common Prayer and our hymnody has been exactly what has drawn young people to our parish. I doubt very seriously that my experience here is much different from our parishes in Charlotte, Atlanta, Wilmington, Maryland, Florida or anywhere else common prayer has been practiced for any length of time. Our parishioners have indeed learned to sing the songs of Zion in common prayer.

General Remarks Regarding CCR Rites

The rites of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist as published by the CCR are strikingly similar to the 1979 rite of the Episcopal Church. The CCR Baptismal rite does restore some needed language about original sin, baptismal regeneration and the grace of the Sacrament missing from the original 1979 form - it is valid but obscure in places and continues the flawed theology of "baptismal covenant" present in the 1979 rite with the inappropriate "peace and justice" elements.

The CCR Confirmation rite is a thorough revision of the 1979 rite and conforms very closely the Novus Ordo Roman Rite promulgated by Pope Paul VI. The Confirmation rite used by CCR includes a very good and orthodox address on the sacramental nature of Confirmation. The sacramental form restores that which was missing from the 1979 rite: the prayer for the Sevenfold Gift of the Holy Ghost and the chrismation, administered with the Eastern Orthodox formula, "be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." It is certainly valid, but like so many of the new rites it is prosaic. It is not Anglican in origin and completely misses the mark of "common prayer."

The Eucharistic liturgy is even less satisfactory; it is a conflation and hybrid of the 1979 American rite and the Novus Ordo Missae.

Modified forms of Eucharistic Prayers II, III, and IV from the modern Roman Rite are included as options, as are slightly altered versions of Canons A, B and D of the 1979 rite; this completely undermines common prayer. There are several innovations in the CCR rite characteristic of modern liturgical forms, including the pedestrian dismissal rite, “God is not mad at you.” Some of the altered offertory prayers from the Novus Ordo do change the language for the better and are more theologically traditional regarding Eucharistic sacrifice, but one great perplexity of the CCR Mass rite is that, unlike the Novus Ordo or the classical BCP tradition, there is no one consistent translation or canonized form of the Institution Narrative; the Words of Institution differ from Canon to Canon depending on their provenance. This innovation is most irregular and confusing even for those who may be accustomed to some form of contemporary liturgy. In the Roman Rite there is one set form of the Consecration (Narrative), and it is strictly used for all Eucharistic Prayers. The Church of Rome considers the set formula of Institution necessary for the valid consecration of the Blessed Sacrament. Since they seem to take their primary lead on this issue from the Roman Rite, the CCR should attend to these anomalies. One praiseworthy addition to the Mass rite is the consistent commemoration of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Communion of Saints in every Eucharistic Canon. *But none of these prayers is of historical Anglican origin and ethos.*

Some Examples of Specific Liturgical/Theological Anomalies vis-à-vis Common Prayer

(References in parenthesis are to The Holy Eucharist – Diocese of Delmarva)

1. “The Prayers of the People” and the use of “lay persons” to lead such prayers is not an element of our common life (p. 1). This practice simply does not exist in classical BCP tradition. Also both Form II (p. 100) and Form IV (p. 102) include several opportunities where “individuals may offer their own prayers at this time.” In Form VII (p. 110), the direction is repeated that “the people may add their own petitions” presumably out loud and extempore. Such directions invite disorder, potentially false theology and the intrusion of personal piety into common prayer. An established and canonized liturgy, not

subject to extemporaneous change, insures doctrinal orthodoxy and consistency.

2. The use of “lay persons” to pronounce a form of absolution, “exchanging ‘us’ for ‘you’ and ‘our’ for ‘your,’” is a liturgical abuse and a theological error (p. 7). An absolution pronounced by a priest is not effected merely by the sign of the cross, but by the words themselves. Making the sign of the cross is good and wholesome and ought to be done by a priest, but it is an error to suppose that by removing it, in the case of a “lay person” or a deacon, one has materially changed the intention of the action. Instead, it is the absence of a priest to perform the absolution that materially changes the intention of the act, rendering it non-sacramental and innovative.

3. The novelty of Praise and Adoration (p. 11) is a special case of personal piety intruding into common prayer. This part of the liturgy is designated by the rubric: “There may follow a time of Praise and Adoration...It is expected that this time will be accompanied by periods of singing in the Spirit, prophecy, etc., as the Holy Spirit leads” (p. 11). This is an example of personal, and in this case, popular, piety being treated as common prayer. We have a group of ladies in our parish at All Saints that meets to say the Rosary. We also have folks in our parish who meet for Bible studies with the benefit of clergy whose duty it is by ordination to teach the Scriptures. I can imagine a group that would meet for what is referred to in this rubric as “Praise and Adoration.” Each group is an example of personal piety; none is common prayer. Our public services of worship, whether Sunday Eucharists or Prayer Book Feasts, are to be celebrated in common prayer. I am an Anglo Catholic and my personal devotions, including devotion to the Virgin Mary, run far beyond common prayer, but I would not presume to force those devotions upon others against their consciences; nor am I impoverished spiritually by their absence in the common Liturgy of the Church. It is inappropriate to attempt to make personal or popular pieties into common prayer.

4. The Prayer of Humble Access is removed from the liturgy of the Holy Communion. It does reappear as a "Prayer before Worship" at the front of the program, incongruously, for the rites of Baptism and Confirmation. And unfortunately it is the sanitized, dissected 1979 version that presents a flawed soteriology and anthropology.

There is much more that could be said about the rites in use by the CCR, but the upshot is that these rites are conflation of the 1979 rite, the Novus Ordo Missae and personal piety. Thus, they are not common prayer. But not only do they fail as common prayer, these rites also violate the provisions of our Constitution.

Constitutional Issues

Article VIII:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Anglican Province of America."

This declaration is required of any bishop, priest or deacon being ordained in this church. Affirming this declaration is also required of all previously ordained bishops, priests or deacons who are received into the APA from some other jurisdiction. In short, compliance with the Constitution and Canons of the APA is absolutely necessary for any bishop, priest or deacon wishing to be a member.

Article X

Article X lays the bedrock for the common life of this jurisdiction in the first sentence:

“The 1928 American Edition of the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, the Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating Bishops, Priest, and Deacons, the Form of Consecration of a Church or Chapel, the Office of Institution of Ministers, and Articles of Religion of 1801, as now established or hereafter amended by the authority of this Church, shall be in use in all the Dioceses and Missionary Districts of this Church.”

Furthermore, realizing that common prayer is not an attempt to impose a “one-size-fits-all” conformity upon parishes of different churchmanship, but rather a time-tested, successful manner of living within the variegated unity of one jurisdiction, other traditional texts and manuals are permitted with strict, inalienable provisions vis-à-vis other rites and liturgies.

“The following are permitted for general use in this Church in addition to, and subordination to, The Book of Common Prayer, 1928 American Edition:

1. The Book of Offices, Third Edition, 1970, or earlier editions thereof;
2. The Calendar and the Collects, Epistles and Gospels contained in the Lesser Feasts and Fasts and Special Occasions (1963 Edition or earlier);
3. The Priest's Manual;
4. The Book of Occasional Offices (1960 Edition);
5. The Hymnal, 1940, and other hymns and music authorized by the incumbent;
6. The Anglican Missal;
7. The American Missal; and
8. Other traditional Anglican liturgies as may be authorized by the Bishop Ordinary.

Nowhere in the Constitution or the Canons is the 1928 BCP referred to as a mere “standard,” as though it is merely a model. Rather, the 1928 BCP is specifically and unambiguously cited along with the others texts in Article X of the Constitution as the *only texts* permitted

for use in this jurisdiction.

This Constitution was adopted on July 22, 1998, long after the promulgation of the 1979 rite and the Roman Novus Ordo. Had either the 1979 rite or the Novus Ordo been acceptable, Article X would have included them by name. It may be noted that the only texts additional to those listed in Article X which may be permitted are those *traditional Anglican liturgies* authorized by the Bishop Ordinary. The 1979 rite and the Novus Ordo cannot and do not qualify as traditional Anglican liturgies. Their use or the granting of permission for their use would be a violation of Canon.

CCR Petition

In their petition for reception into the APA the bishops of the CCR state the following:

“We uphold the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Anglican Province of America, especially as defined in the Solemn Declaration thereof. We will continue to use our Sacramentary, as it is presently constituted. Its use, however, will be consistent with, and subordinate to, the Book of Common Prayer, in its 1928 American edition. Furthermore, we commit all of our clergymen to the learning and use of that Prayer Book and its introduction for use, as may be possible, in our congregations, recognizing that the common sacramental and liturgical life in the Anglican Province of America, of which we wish to be a part, is governed by the same.”

This statement does not comply with the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Province of America on several fundamental counts, but most importantly on the issue of the use of the 1928 American edition of the Book of Common Prayer. First, the Solemn Declaration may not be separated out of the Constitution as having special authority over the rest of the Constitution. Furthermore, the bishops of the CCR clearly and plainly state that they intend “to use our Sacramentary, as

it is presently constituted.” They state that the use of their own Sacramentary will be “consistent with, and subordinate to, the Book of Common Prayer, in its 1928 American edition.” They even go on to state that they “commit all of our clergymen to the learning and use of that Prayer Book and its introduction for use, as may be possible, in our congregations, recognizing that the common sacramental and liturgical life in the Anglican Province of America, of which we wish to be a part, is governed by the same.” These commitments might be acceptable if the APA viewed the 1928 BCP as a mere standard, but that is far from the case. Far from being a standard, the 1928 BCP along with the other rites specifically cited in the Article X of the Constitution are the only ones permitted. It is not an option for congregations, but a fundamental requirement. If the CCR wishes to enter into our common life, and, as they state, “uphold the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Anglican Province of America,” then they must comply with liturgical usage as it is clearly stated in our Constitution.

Our Constitution and Canons did not drop down from Heaven, but rather they have been a developing part of the Anglican experience in America since the dawning of this nation. The first edition of both the Constitution and Canons was adopted in General Convention in October of 1789. The gravity and seriousness with which our fathers of old have held these issues is evident in the explicit attention they receive not only in the Constitution, but also in the Canons. For example:

Canon 19, Section 1(a) (Of Ministers and Their Duties):

“The control of the worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the Parish, are vested in the Rector, subject to the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the Canons of the Church, and the godly counsel of the Bishop.” (see Title III/Canon 37, Article X/Constitution for specific requirement to use BCP 1928).

Canon 31, Section 2 Abandonment of Communion by a Bishop

(a) "Abandonment of the Communion of the Church" shall be defined as (1) an overt renunciation of the Doctrine, Discipline or Worship of

the Church, or any one of them, (2) formal admission in any degree or consideration whatsoever into any religious body not in communion with this Church, or (3) in any other manner deemed to constitute a rejection or departure from the precepts, principles and teachings of the Anglican Province of America.

Canon 26 - Of Offenses for Which Bishops, Presbyters, or Deacons May Be Tried – This most sobering canon cites the following:

That “A Bishop, Priest or Deacon may be presented on any of the following charges.” Note especially sections 4, 5, & 7:

(1) Commission of an act constituting a felony violation of the criminal code of law of any political subdivision of the United States or of the Federal government.

(2) Commission of an act of a lewd, lascivious or vulgar nature involving moral turpitude or immorality.

(3) Holding, pronouncing, teaching or espousing by any means whatever any doctrine or practice contrary to that held by the Church.

(4) Violation of the Constitution and Canons of the Church.

(5) Violation of the Canons and By-laws of the Diocese, Missionary District, or Parish.

(6) Any act or statement which constitutes a violation or repudiation of his Ordination vows.

(7) Habitual neglect of the exercise of his Ministerial Office, without cause; or habitual neglect of Public Worship, and of the Holy Communion, according to the order and use of this Church.

A Way To Get To “Yes”

Seeing then that the CCR cannot simply fold into the APA, how may we honor the work of God the Blessed Trinity in the life of the CCR

and foster our potential life together in a manner that blesses God's work in both our corporate lives? What way is open for us to walk together in a common direction toward the City of God? We recognize and celebrate the grace of God in the CCR. We see the hand of God moving their community to the efflorescence of the Catholic Religion and we rejoice in our opportunity to participate in that process as we have come to know and love it in the Anglican Way. *It is clear that the only way the CCR may be received into the APA is through full participation in our common life, which is only achieved through common prayer that will be existentially realized through compliance with Article X of the Constitution of the Anglican Province of America.* It is also, in all honesty, not the sort of godly task that is achieved overnight. It demands diligence and patience. Therefore it seems that the most prudent, godly and authentic way forward for us is first to create a relationship of full sacramental communion and *episcopate* between our Presiding Bishop and the CCR under the care of his Patrimony. During this time of patrimonial oversight, the CCR, with the help of senior priests of the APA appointed by our Presiding Bishop, should be mentored in the Anglican Way. Practical instruction in the use of the Book of Common Prayer and the other manuals of worship permitted in the APA should be implemented during this time and reports presented to the Synods of the APA as the process moves forward. Where needed, the APA should be prepared to provide Anglican catechesis and theological instruction for CCR clergy. (I suggest that our Board of Examining Chaplains be consulted concerning this educational process since they have been developing courses designed for the Anglican formation of clergy.) Means and ways that honor the principle of common prayer for the parishioners of the CCR and allow for exercise their personal pieties, particularly as they relate to the exercise of charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, should be explored with a select group of senior priests of the APA. Again reports of progress should be made regularly to our PB. As quickly as possible, when this process gets underway, the bishops, priests and deacons of the CCR should complete the proper individual application forms required of all clergy of the APA, which should include certification of baptism, confirmation and ordination. As a matter of due diligence, background checks should be done for all the clergy of the CCR, just as they have been done for our own clergy. I am delighted to witness the work of God the Blessed Trinity in our life together and it is my

hope that we can implement these procedures as soon as possible after Synod 2008.