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SOME TRAJECTORIES ON THE QUESTION OF ORDINATION IN ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES OF THE REFORMED TRADITION

Abstract. This article seeks to focus upon the situation regarding the question of ordained ministry within some of the Churches and Ecclesial Communities belonging to the Reformed Tradition. The central issue is that regarding the validity of ordination. The background to the genesis of the disagreement on the priesthood is described, as well as the attempts made to reach a consensus. The question regarding Anglican Orders is highlighted as a case study. This research suggests the usefulness of a scholarly *ressourcement* in the study of the validity of Orders. A possible path is proposed, towards the mutual understanding between the separated Churches on the question of ordination. This path follows the trajectory of the agreement, in 2001, on the common use of the anaphora of Addai and Mari by two separated Churches in the Middle East, and the subsequent eucharistic hospitality. Other recent conversations are referred to in the attempt to reach agreement, while recognising that specific obstacles do offer a major setback. The article is concluded by a number of concrete proposals.

Key words: ordination; ministry; *Apostolicae Curae*; ARCIC; validity of Orders; apostolic succession; Addai and Mari; consecratory prayers.

INTRODUCTION

The vexing question on ordained ministries in other Churches and Ecclesial Communities, particularly those originating in the Reformation, features prominently in both formal and informal ecumenical dialogue. Indeed, Cardinal Walter Kasper states that “ministry in the Church is one of the most

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discussed and—despite many new insights and convergences—one of the enduring controversial issues in ecumenical dialogue”.¹

It goes without saying that there is no particular difficulty regarding ordained ministers in the Orthodox Churches. Since apostolic succession was maintained, the validity of Orders of these Churches was never put into question. The validity and liceity of these rites of Ordination, dating back to the first centuries, have never been put into any doubt. In contrast, the long-standing debate on the validity of ordained ministries in the Churches and Ecclesial Communities originating from the Reformation necessitates the taking into account of various considerations from a theological point of view.

THE POSITION OF THE REFORMERS AND THE RESPONSE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Reformers in the 16th century strongly affirmed that in the Church there is no ministerial power which is conferred through the sacrament of Orders. Instead, they underlined that the uniqueness of the priesthood of Christ and of the redemption he accomplished, permits *only* the existence of the universal priesthood of all the faithful. The Reformers repeatedly insisted that those called to preside over the various Christian communities *did not need any special sacramental power*. The theological basis underlying this position is strongly bound to one of the pillars of the Reformation, namely, justification by faith alone. The pioneering Reformers and their followers stated that a personal commitment to God in Christ is enough, and thus, no human mediation is required. As a result of this position, the Reformers saw ministry *solely as a power which is delegated by the community*, and consequently, *they denied its sacramental character*. They therefore held that grace was not conferred by means of exterior signs which were entrusted to a particular sacramental ministry. Moreover, considering the Eucharist only as a memorial banquet and denying its sacrificial value, led the Reformers to affirm that the ministerial power of the sacrament of Orders (in the case of priests and bishops) was not required and thus, superfluous.

The Council of Trent, at its XXIIIrd Session (15 July 1563) affirmed in clear terms the existence of the ministerial priesthood which is grounded on the sacrament of Holy Orders.² The conciliar text affirms:

¹ Walter KASPER, *Harvesting the Fruits. Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), 99.

Since from the testimony of Scripture, apostolic tradition, and the unanimous agreement of the Fathers, it is clear that grace is conferred by sacred ordination (*per sacram ordinationem . . . gratiam conferrī*), which is performed by words and outward signs, no one ought to doubt (*dubitare nemo debet*) that orders is truly and properly (*vere et proprie*) one of the seven sacraments of Holy Church.³

THE QUESTION REGARDING ANGLICAN ORDERS

The question regarding Anglican Orders will be taken as a case study. As is well known, the question of Anglican Orders was formally tackled by Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903) in his Bull *Apostolicae Curae* (13 September 1896). The issue has been extensively studied by various scholars, especially the detailed study by Giuseppe Rambaldi (1928–2002)⁴ which holds pride of place. In the *Book of Common Prayer (Ordinal)* of King Edward VI (1552), Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556), strongly influenced by Martin Bucer (1491–1551), changed the ordination rites of the Roman Pontifical. In fact, soon after their publication, Anglican ordinations according to this new rite were immediately considered invalid.⁵

In *Apostolicae Curae*, Pope Leo XIII pronounced the invalidity of Anglican Orders on two grounds, namely, *defect of form* and *defect of intention*. The *Ordinal* fails to refer adequately to the offices of bishops and priests. Moreover, the changes in the ordination rite were made with the scope of *excluding the concept of a sacrificial priesthood* exercised in the celebration of the Eucharist. More than a century after the *Ordinal*, the ordination rites of bishops and priests were changed, but, by then, the English bishops validly ordained according to the Roman Pontifical (until 1552) had obviously all died; thus, the apostolic succession was broken. This is central in our comprehension of the issue.

² See Heinrich DENZINGER, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum. Compendium of Creeds, Definitions and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Peter Hünermann, Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), par. 1764–1766.

³ See *ibid.*, par. 1766.

⁴ Giuseppe RAMBALDI, *Ordinazioni Anglicane e Sacramento dell'Ordine nella Chiesa. Aspetti storici e teologici a cento anni dalla bolla 'Apostolicae Curae' di Leone XIII* (Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1995).

⁵ See POPE JULIUS III, Letter to Cardinal Reginald Pole, 1554, and POPE PAUL IV, Letters dated 20 January and 30 October 1555.

In the last fifty years or so, the positive strides made in ecumenical relations led churchmen on both Catholic and Anglican sides, as well as unbiased scholars, to propose a re-examination of the question of Anglican Orders. The suggestion, often repeated, was that an impartial examination of all the historical facts and a careful scrutiny of Anglican liturgical texts could lead to a Catholic recognition of ministries in other Churches and Ecclesial Communities existing *outside* the foundational network of apostolic succession as this has been traditionally understood by the Church, as long as the integrity of the faith is restored.

In 1973, the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC I) published the document *Ministry and Ordination*. In its text, we read that, while presiding, Christian ministers are

representatives of the whole Church in the fulfilment of its priestly vocation of self-offering to God as a living sacrifice. [...] Just as the original apostles did not choose themselves but were chosen and commissioned by Jesus, so those who are ordained are called by Christ in the Church and through the Church. Not only is their vocation from Christ but their qualification for exercising such a ministry is the gift of the Spirit.⁶

Cardinal Kasper reminds us that Anglicans and Roman Catholics agree on the sacramental nature of ordination.⁷ Naturally, this poses a problem as to the proper understanding of the sacramental nature of ordination, especially in relation to the central principle of apostolic succession as firmly held and practised by the Catholic Church. The 1973 document by ARCIC affirms that in the sacramental act of ordination “the gift of God is bestowed upon the ministers, with the promise of divine grace for their work and for their sanctification; the ministry of Christ is presented to them as a model for their own; and the Spirit seals those whom he has chosen and consecrated”.⁸ The issue regarding Anglican Orders has been complicated further by the ordination of women to the priesthood on 12 March 1994 and to the episcopate on 26 January 2015. This is indeed a hornet’s nest.

⁶ ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION, *Ministry and Ordination* (1973), par. 13, 14. See http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19730901_ministry-ordination_en.html, accessed 8.02.2018.

⁷ See KASPER, *Harvesting the Fruits*, 104.

⁸ ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION, *Ministry and Ordination*, par. 15.

THE USEFULNESS
OF A SCHOLARLY *RESSOURCEMENT*

In my opinion, in order to study the authentic value of ministry in the Churches and Ecclesial Communities of the Reformed Tradition, one is obliged to make an in-depth study of the Rites of Ordination, starting from the earliest ones in the third century, and engaging scholars in serious comparative studies on ordination prayers.

Most scholars agree that the “mother” of all liturgical texts is the *Traditio Apostolica*. This early third-century collection of liturgical texts includes detailed ordination prayers for bishops, presbyters and deacons. Consecration is always carried out by the imposition of hands by a bishop. The ordination prayers we find in the *Traditio* are very carefully composed, yet the author/s (often said to be Hippolytus of Rome, though not necessarily so) do not claim for these ordination prayers the same prominence as the important gesture of the laying on of hands which he/they say has been transmitted from generation to generation from the time of the apostles. It is important, in the context of this article, to take note of what the text of the *Traditio Apostolica* affirms in very clear terms: “*It is not at all necessary for the bishop to use the same words that I have given . . . but let each one pray according to his ability.*”⁹ Other texts which deserve expert study include the *Euchologion of Serapion* (mid-fourth century, reflecting the liturgy celebrated by Egyptian Christians) and the *Apostolic Constitutions* (probably, late fourth century, and reflecting the liturgical practices of Christians in the Syrian environment). *The imposition of hands retains a normative value, while the ordination prayers are seen to vary.* One might argue that the first five centuries, or so, constitute a period of great liturgical fluidity where written texts were indeed used, although *spontaneity in the liturgical prayer* was not ruled out altogether.

Later centuries bear witness to the compilation of liturgical texts in the attempt to “standardize” ordination prayers. In studying the Roman Ritual of ordinations from the sixth to the eighth centuries, scholarly recourse has to be made to two ancient sacramentaries, the *Veronense* (c. 560–580) and the *Gregorian* (early seventh century). Nonetheless, scholars are of the opinion that both sacramentaries rely on material composed in the time of Pope Leo

⁹ *Traditio Apostolica*, par. 9: Author’s translation of Bernard BOTTE, *La Tradition Apostolique de S. Hippolyte*, SChr 11bis (Paris: Cerf, 1946), 28–29.

the Great (440–461), or, indeed, by the Pope himself. The Ordination Prayers of presbyters and deacons in the Roman Pontifical up to this very day, by and large, are based on the mentioned sacramentaries, while that for the ordination of bishops was replaced, in the post-Vatican II liturgical reform, by the appropriate consecratory prayer from the *Traditio Apostolica*.

Scholars of the liturgy also point out the influence of Frankish practices in the Roman ordination liturgy. While the essentials are naturally retained (the imposition of hands and the consecratory prayer), scholars observe that the functional sobriety of Rome with a minimum of explicatory rites was gradually complemented with Frankish rites which highlighted a variety of symbols, including the *traditio instrumentorum*. It is also worth studying, with the help of expert historians of the liturgy, the Romano-Germanic Pontifical, composed in Mainz, around the year 950. This Pontifical borrows material from an ancient seventh-century ritual used in Gaul which, in turn, is based on the Old Gelasian Sacramentary and the *Missale Francorum*. Another mediaeval text which merits scrutiny is the Pontifical of Durandus of Mende (late 13th century), especially because it became the basis of the Roman Pontifical, printed for the first time in 1485.

ADOPTING THE USEFUL EXAMPLE OF AN ARCHAIC LITURGICAL TEXT WHICH IS STILL IN USE

The scope of the general overview which I have presented above is the necessity of a *serious comparative investigation*, on the one hand of the ordination prayers in the mentioned liturgical texts, and, on the other hand, the prayers used in Anglican ordinations as well as in corresponding rites for the induction of ministers in the Reformed Tradition (in particular, the Lutheran and the Methodist Traditions). Here, *I am putting the fundamental question of apostolic succession momentarily aside*, in order to underline the fact that *certain basic elements of the mentioned ordination and other induction rites may be present to a greater or lesser degree in most of them*.

Here, I emphasize my argument by opting to travel the same path entailed in the long discussion concerning the ancient Eucharistic prayer or *Qurbana* of Addai and Mari. After the customary consultations, Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) found no difficulty at all in approving (on 17 January 2001) the validity of the Mass when celebrated by the Assyrian Church of the East according to the mentioned *Qurbana* where the words of consecration are

not pronounced *ad litteram*, “but instead in a dispersed euchological way, that is, integrated in successive prayers of thanksgiving, praise and intercession”.¹⁰ Permission was granted for members of the Catholic Chaldean Church to participate and receive Holy Communion in an Assyrian celebration of the Eucharist, and conversely, albeit under certain conditions. I propose that the same kind of scholarly expertise used to arrive at the 2001 consensus on Addai and Mari could be applied to the modified words for the ordination of bishops and priests in the Anglican and other Reformed rituals.

Research shows that Emilio de Augustinis (1829–1899), one of the members on Pope Leo XIII’s Commission on Anglican Orders, was of the opinion that the words “Accept the Holy Spirit” of the *Ordinal* of Edward VI (1552) could be seen to be equivalent to the gist of the Catholic Ordination prayer with regard to its epicletic character. Is the prayer calling God the Father to impart the Holy Spirit on the one chosen to be a minister of the Church, bound to specific words? Or is the epiclesis, whatever its words, enough for validity of Orders? Rambaldi’s research, over many years, is useful as he hands on to us the entire Italian text of de Augustinis’ positive evaluation of Anglican Orders, and supplements this with a historical contextualization.¹¹

OTHER RECENT DOCUMENTS AND STUDIES REGARDING ANGLICAN ORDERS

On 8 May 1990, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a very insightful text called *Anglican Orders: A Report on the Evolving Context for their Evaluation in the Roman Catholic Church*. The introduction of the document records the merits and progress of Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue, as well as the obstacles to reconciliation. The document states that

¹⁰ PONTIFICIO CONSIGLIO PER LA PROMOZIONE DELL’UNITÀ DEI CRISTIANI, *Admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East* (20 July 2001), par. 3, in *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 20 (Bologna: EDB, 2001), par. 1413. See “Ammissione all’Eucaristia in situazioni di necessità pastorale”, *L’Osservatore Romano*, 26 ottobre 2001, 8.

¹¹ This can be consulted in “Il voto del Padre Emilio de Augustinis sulle Ordinazioni Anglicane”, in *Archivium Historicum Societatis Iesu* 50 (1981): 48–75. More information on de Augustinis’ stance on the issue and its relationship to Pius XII’s Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* and the Letter by Cardinal Willebrands (1985) can be consulted in Giuseppe RAMBALDI, “La sostanza del Sacramento dell’Ordine e la validità delle Ordinazioni Anglicane secondo E. de Augustinis”, *Gregorianum* 70/1 (1989): 47–91.

despite the official pronouncement made by Pope Leo XIII in 1896, communication between both sides progressed, notably through the Malines Conversations (1921–1925) and other praiseworthy initiatives. Quoting the U.S. Bishops' document,

[...] this aspiration found expression in private talks, mutual friendships, and scholarly exchanges which bore witness to a slow and gradual convergence. This quiet convergence was nurtured by theological renewal and it was reinforced in both Communions by somewhat similar liturgical reforms derived from a wider knowledge of early Christian worship. Gradually there was official recognition of an evolution toward a new context quite different from the one of 1896. On the Anglican side the Lambeth Conferences of 1908, 1920, 1930, 1968, and 1988 gave official voice to this movement, and on the Roman Catholic side the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) was the most important event that signalled a new context.

Following Vatican Council II, developing ecumenical relations between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church have called attention again to the question of Anglican orders. The conditions of our times have become quite different from what they were in 1896. Theology and style of leadership have evolved in the two Churches. It is now not uncommon to think that the position of the problem of Anglican orders is no longer what it was under Pope Leo. A fresh examination of the data has shed new light on the subject.¹²

It is interesting to note the dialogue and eventual correspondence between Pope Paul VI (1897–1978) and George Luxton (1901–1970), Bishop of Huron, of the Anglican Church of Canada. Among the published details, Luxton addresses Pope Paul VI:

That you ask one of your Commissions to review the matter of the Anglican Ordinal with the Early Ordinals, with the Roman one described by Hippolytus [...]; the Eastern Rite of St Serapion [...]; the later Byzantine Rite, the Gregorian and the Gelasian Sacramentaries, as well as the Spanish Mozarabic rite. *In all these the matter and form are very close to that of the English Reformation Ordinal.* Also, the Commission might review the whole of the English Ordinal through phases of development for a further testing of its intention to continue (as the Preface declares) 'The Orders of Ministers' [...], etc.

When this new study, which I am requesting, is set in our present climate of theological dialogue, we believe that your Commission would arrive at different conclusions. Our conviction in this matter is strengthened by the fact that in recent years new interpretations of the doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice have been pro-

¹² See UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Anglican Orders: A Report on the Evolving Context for their Evaluation in the Roman Catholic Church*, USCCB, accessed 7.10.2017, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/anglican/anglican-orders-in-catholic-church.cfm>.

posed by distinguished scholars in the Roman Catholic Church [reference to Eugene Masure, Maurice de la Taille, and Abbot Anscar Vonier]. Since the heart of the argument in *Apostolicae Curae* turns on the understanding of [the] Eucharist[ic] Sacrifice by the English Reformers, these new interpretations of your theologians seem to call for a reconsideration of the earlier verdict of seventy years ago.¹³

The document on Anglican Orders by the U.S. Bishops enters into interesting details, especially details retrieved after the opening of the Vatican Archives on Leo XIII. It is revealing and relevant to read that Leo was intent on building bridges with the Anglican Communion and its hierarchy. The brevity of my study precludes me from elaborating any further on the question of Anglican Orders. At this point, I can only affirm that the following aspects are masterfully presented in the above-mentioned 1990 U.S. Catholic Bishops' document, and, therefore, prove to be useful for further reflection on the subject:

(a) Leo XIII's desire for further contacts and discussion with the Anglicans;

(b) *Apostolicae Curae* did not bring discussions to an end, but rather began a latent process of further dialogue;

(c) The response of the Holy See was theological, rather than political. Theological conditions had to be met for validity to be ensured;

(d) A proper exegesis is required of the "encyclical letter" *Saepius Officio* (1897) by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. In it, they affirm that the Anglican Church "intends to confer the office of priesthood instituted by Christ and all that it contains. [They] contended that the Church of England teaches the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice in terms at least as explicit as those of the canon of the Roman Mass";

(e) The positive outcome of the Malines Conversations;

(f) The memorial written by Lord Halifax (1881–1959) on behalf of the Anglican representatives on 21 May 1925, defined in clear terms the distinctive priesthood of the ordained ministry in such a way that there is a fundamental relationship to the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. The priest is defined by Halifax as one who offers up the sacrifice of Calvary by prayers and a commemorating rite;

(g) The *Findlow-Purdy Report* presented at the Anglican-Roman Catholic meeting held in Malta, between December 1967 and January 1968, with a lengthy report on the then recent literature on ministries, including the

¹³ Ibid.

articles by O’Hanlon and van Beeck in favour of some recognition of all Protestant ministries;

(h) The contents of the *Malta Report* (1968), with reference to ministries in paragraph 19;

(i) The work of ARCIC I (1970-1981);

(j) The concept of ‘Sister Churches’;

(k) The Letter of Cardinal Johannes Willebrands (1909-2006) on *Apostolicae Curae* (July 1985), its qualified statements and conclusions, in particular the path to a new evaluation of the sufficiency of Anglican rites with regard to future ordinations. Such a study could prescind “at this stage from the question of the continuity in the apostolic succession of the ordaining bishop”;

(l) The response of the Lambeth Conference (1988), in particular with regard to the sacrificial character of the Mass and the action of the presiding priest.

The 2007 Document *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* by the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) reiterates the question raised by *Apostolicae Curae*, and realistically affirms that the question of the validity of Anglican Orders remains a fundamental obstacle. Nonetheless, in the light of several ARCIC statements and the official responses by both Churches, “there is evidence that we have a common intention in ordination and in the celebration of the Eucharist. This awareness would have to be part of any fresh evaluation of Anglican Orders” (par. 60).¹⁴

MINISTRY IN THE BILATERAL DIALOGUES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WITH OTHER REFORMED TRADITIONS: A BRIEF ACCOUNT

Evaluating the issues raised on ordained ministry in Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, one notes the agreed statement that “ministry is not simply a delegation ‘from below’, but is instituted by Christ”.¹⁵ Another document of

¹⁴ INTERNATIONAL ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR UNITY AND MISSION, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity accessed 10.10.2018, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20070914_growing-together_en.html.

¹⁵ INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION ON UNITY, *The Ministry in the Church* (1981), par. 20, see also *ibid.*, par. 23 and 24, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, accessed 12.2.2019, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/it/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/luterani/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/1981-il-ministero-nella-chiesa/en.html>.

Lutheran-Catholic dialogue affirms that ministry “must be ministry in apostolic succession”.¹⁶ At the same time, it has to be said that the 2013 Lutheran-Catholic document *From Conflict to Communion* affirms that “for Catholics, Lutheran ordinations lack a fullness of sacramental sign. [...] The sacramental sign of ordination is not fully present because those who ordain do not act in communion with the Catholic episcopal college”.¹⁷ Regarding the constitutive elements of ordination, although Lutherans do not speak of ordination as a sacrament, yet there is convergence between the Catholic and Lutheran understanding and praxis that wherever an ordination takes place, this consists of the laying on of hands as well as an epiclesis prayer over the new minister.¹⁸

The same kind of consensus regarding the laying on of hands by other ordained ministers and the invocation of the Spirit (epiclesis) was reached in the Reformed-Catholic dialogue.¹⁹ The same document affirms that those consecrated to a particular ministry derive the dignity from Christ without reference to the believing community.²⁰ Catholic-Methodist bilateral dialogue, too, reached the same consensus mentioned earlier regarding the constitutive elements of ordination, namely an epiclesis and the imposition of hands: “Both our Traditions retain the practice, attested in the New Testament documents, of setting apart for ministry by the laying on of hands with prayer; prayer is made for the gift of the Holy Spirit appropriate to the particular form of ministry”.²¹

¹⁶ INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION ON UNITY, *The Apostolicity of the Church* (2006), par. 270, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, accessed 12.2.2019, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/luterani/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/en2.html>.

¹⁷ See LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION AND PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY, *From Conflict to Communion. Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation 2017* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2013), par. 191.

¹⁸ INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION ON UNITY, *Facing Unity – Models, Forms and Phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church Fellowship* (1984), par. 78, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, accessed 1.2.2019, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/it/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/luterani/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/1984-facing-unity---models--forms-and-phases-of-catholic-luthera/en.html>. See Id., *The Apostolicity of the Church*, par. 277; LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION AND PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY, *From Conflict to Communion*, par. 183.

¹⁹ See INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES, *The Presence of Christ in Church and World* (1977), par. 98, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, accessed 10.3.2019, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/it/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/alleanza-mondiale-delle-chiese-riformate/dialogo-internazionale-cattolico-riformato/documenti-di-dialogo/1977-la-presenza-di-cristo-nella-chiesa-e-nel-mondo/testo-in-inglese.html>.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, par. 99.

²¹ INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND PROPOSALS

Given the fluidity in the texts used over the centuries (and their variety in the choice of words), particularly in the Latin rite in the first millennium, it would be wise to consider the consecratory nature (or not) of the prayers used over ministers of the Reformed Tradition during their ordination or induction. *Progress in this regard could lead to overcoming the issue concerning the defect of form.* The issue regarding defect of intention remains a difficult one. What is the intention of the ordaining minister/s? How can the hiatus of apostolic succession be overcome? Can apostolic succession be restored in those communities which have lost it? In my opinion, this remains one of the greatest stumbling blocks. How can this be overcome? What understanding of ministry do these Reformed brethren have? These, admittedly, all remain very thorny issues.

At the same time, one has to value the fact that the ministers belonging to these Churches and Ecclesial Communities have received *a call from God to serve their respective communities and responded generously to it.* They have committed themselves to carry out this mission. In my opinion, Catholics would be mistaken in *underestimating their call and their commitment to ecclesial service, as if this does not exist or has no value at all in the eyes of God and in the eyes of their community, as well as of society.* The fact that Pope Paul VI, on 23 March 1966, gifted the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey (1904–1988), with his episcopal ring, is a powerful gesture, at least from a human point of view. Does it have any theological relevance? Was Paul VI's intention in giving the ring solely a gesture of human friendship to a minister with a defect in his ordination, or was he acknowledging the episcopal ministry (or at least, the ecclesial ministry of leadership) of the receiver?

More recently, what significance can we give to the gesture, on 5 October 2016, when at the end of the ecumenical service at San Gregorio *al Caelio*, Pope Francis gave to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, a replica of St Gregory's staff? ... and Welby took a pectoral cross from around his neck and gave it, as a gift, to Pope Francis, who kissed it and put it on? What theological significance, if any, can be read in these powerful gestures?

THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL, *The Apostolic Tradition* (1991), Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, accessed 10.3.2019, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/it/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/consiglio-metodista-mondiale/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/1991-the-apostolic-tradition--singapore-report-/en.html>.

My article comes to its conclusion by the proposal of some suggestions with regard to the way forward as to how the Roman Catholic Church seeks to build bridges in the context of the situation of ordained ministries in other Churches and Ecclesial Communities, particularly those originating in the Reformation:

(I) Firstly, the setting up of a commission for *an interdisciplinary study of the various Ordination prayers from the different Churches and Ecclesial Communities of the Reformed Traditions*. Such a commission, under the aegis of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, would include, in my opinion, expert liturgists, seasoned theologians and experienced exponents in the field of ecumenical dialogue. The Addai and Mari ‘consensus’ of 2001, described above, can be used as a model for this study.

(II) Secondly, at a later stage, the involvement of experts from the Churches and Ecclesial Communities — experts able to provide *a hermeneutical key to the authentic meaning of Ordination prayers, anaphoras and other liturgical prayers of their respective Traditions*.

(III) Thirdly, the results of these studies (in I and II, above) are then confronted with the salient aspects of the various bilateral dialogue documents where these have pronounced themselves on ordained ministries. A fundamental consideration regards *the ecclesiology that lies at the foundation of these Churches and Ecclesial Communities*, in particular their understanding of (a) apostolic succession, (b) the relation between local Church and universal Church, and (c) the nature of the Eucharist and the relationship of ministry to its celebration.

Finally, I borrow the wise words expressed by Robert F. Taft (1932–2018), an expert on the Oriental liturgies, and apply them to the subject of this article, the deeper reflection it entails, and the path to be followed in the years to come:

Ecumenical scholarship means much more than scholarly objectivity, [and] goes much further than just being honest and fair. It attempts to work disinterestedly, serving no cause but the truth wherever it is found. It seeks to see things from the other’s point of view, to take seriously the other’s critique of one’s own communion and its historic errors and failings. It seeks not confrontation but agreement and understanding. It strives to enter into the other’s point of view, to understand it insofar as possible with sympathy and agreement. It is a contest in reverse, a contest of Christian love, one in which the parties seek to understand and to justify not their own point of view, but that of their interlocutor.²²

²² Robert F. TAFT, “The 2001 Vatican Addai and Mari Decision in Retrospect: Reflections of a Protagonist”, in *The Anaphoral Genesis of the Institution Narrative in Light of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari*, ed. Cesare Giraudo (Roma: Edizioni Orientalia Christiana and Lilamé, 2013), 321.

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NIEKTÓRE TRAJEKTORIE KWESTII ORDYNACJI
WE WSPÓLNOTACH EKLEZJALNYCH NALEŻĄCYCH
DO TRADYCJI REFORMOWANEJ

Streszczenie

Artykuł koncentruje się na kwestii urzędu duchownego w niektórych Kościołach i wspólnotach kościelnych należących do tradycji reformowanej. Centralne jest tu zagadnienie dotyczące ważności ordynacji. W tekście opisany został fundament braku zgody odnośnie do kwestii kapłaństwa, jak i próby osiągnięcia konsensusu. Naświetlona jako studium przypadku została kwestia święceń w anglikanizmie. Badania przedstawione w artykule sugerują użyteczność akademickiego „powrotu do źródeł” (*ressourcement*) w studiach nad ważnością święceń. Zaproponowana zostaje również ścieżka ku wspólnemu rozumieniu kwestii ordynacji przez podzielone Kościoły. Ścieżka ta podąża za uzgodnieniem z 2001 r., dotyczącym wspólnego stosowania anafor świętych Addaja i Marięgo przez dwa Kościoły z Bliskiego Wschodu i będącej tego konsekwencją gościnności eucharystycznej. Na zakończenie artykułu podanych zostaje kilka praktycznych propozycji.

Słowa kluczowe: ordynacja; urząd duchowny; *Apostolicae Curae*; ARCIC; ważność święceń; sukcesja apostołska; Addaj i Mari; modlitwy konsekracyjne.