

Affirming Catholicism

Inspiration and hope  in the Anglican Communion

Saturday, 24 October 2009

PRESS RELEASE

NOT ALL CATHOLICS ARE TRADITIONALISTS

The current debate about the implications of the offer made by his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to make provision for Anglicans who wish to join the Roman Catholic Church ignores one important fact. The majority of Catholics within the church are in favour of women's ministry and wish to remain loyal to the Anglican tradition within the Anglican Communion.

The Society of Catholic Priests, which has over 500 members in this country and is about to establish chapters in the American Episcopal Church and in Australia, and Affirming Catholicism which draws together clergy and laity in this country and throughout the Anglican Communion, are committed to the Catholic nature and teaching of the Church of England. We are actively working to see women ordained to the episcopate and hold that this is entirely consistent with the teaching of the church and the historic nature of our orders. We are also convinced that the issues of human sexuality should not be ones that divide the church.

To suggest that the departure from the Church of England of those who hold more conservative views will remove the Catholic wing and tradition from the church is entirely wrong. Churches and parishes which have a Catholic tradition and are served by priests, both male and female, are growing and flourishing and look forward to the future with enthusiasm.

We welcome the offer made by the Pope to those of our brothers and sisters who no longer feel that the Anglican Communion is their spiritual home. We hope that this will not impede swift progress in the Church of England towards the ordination of the first women bishops in this land.

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