

SUCCESSIO APOSTOLICA

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FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH VIA THE
LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH



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The Liberal Catholic Church formed in 1915 in succession to the Old Catholic Church of Great Britain, which had been affiliated to the Union of Utrecht of the Old Catholic Churches between 1908 and 1910. Its founders were leading Theosophists James Ingall Wedgwood and Charles Webster Leadbeater, and the church spread rapidly throughout the Western world.

The lineage of the Liberal Catholic Church is that of the Old Catholics of Utrecht. For many years, they were cut off from Rome as a result of a dispute at the end of the seventeenth-century, and gained impetus as a result of the First Vatican Council of 1870, at which point they formed a pan-European network known as the Union of Utrecht. In 1908, Rome declared their Orders to be valid. That year, the Union consecrated Arnold Harris Mathew as bishop in the British Isles, and he served as such for two years before separating from the Union in protest at its increasing modernism.

Mathew's church came after this point to include a number of clergy who were members of the Theosophical Society and saw no contradiction between such adherence and a traditionalist Catholic standpoint. In 1915, however, acting under pressure from others, Mathew caused a split with the Theosophists by announcing that membership of the T.S. would be prohibited for his clergy, who subsequently continued without him, forming the Liberal Catholic Church.

In 1941 a substantial dispute developed in the L.C.C. as a result of the insistence of the then-Presidenting Bishop, Frank Waters Pigott, that membership of the T.S. and vegetarianism be made compulsory for clergy. As a result of this and the long legal battle that ensued, Charles Hampton, who was L.C.C. Regionary Bishop for the United States, worked independently until his death in 1958, with his supporters eventually being victorious in court in 1961. He consecrated bishops for service in other churches, and also exchanged consecrations with Wallace de Ortega Maxey, a strongly liberal and progressive bishop who was the second Primate of the Apostolic Episcopal Church.

Validity of LCC Orders according to Rome

In 1930, a member of the LCC in Belgium received a prison sentence of a few months. The Roman Catholic prison chaplain had never heard of the LCC and wrote to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Mechlin seeking information and clarification. The Cardinal in turn put the question to the Roman Congregation of Rites, "An Ecclesia Libero-Catholicae validi sunt titus et ordines?" – are the sacraments of the Liberal Catholic Church valid?

The Congregation responded in the affirmative on 12 March 1931. It further recommended that "members of the so-called Liberal Catholic body should be treated according to the special instructions of Pope Leo XIII to Cardinal Lavigerie, regarding the Eastern schismatics."

These instructions were sent by order of the Pope in 1882 to Cardinal Lavignerie, Archbishop of Carthago, by the Special Congregation of the Propaganda for the Oriental Rites. They read as follows, "With regard to the Eastern Schismatic Christians. Your Eminence should impress upon his clergy the fact that their foremost two feelings must be: love for the individuals and respect for their rites. For the Schismatic Christians are our brethren, baptized with us in the Blood of Jesus Christ. We therefore must ever have for them "Bowels of compassion", as the Blessed Apostle Paul puts it, and always be willing to show them our loving-kindness...Let your Clergy therefore never despise or slight their ways and uses, their language, or their Liturgy, which Holy Church approves of as being quite just and rightful." [Mgr. Bernard Cardinal Lavignerie, Paris, 1896, vol. 1, p 86; vol 2, p 98.]

The Apostolic Succession from St Peter through the line of the Papacy is followed until:

Pope Paul IV (Gian Piero [Giovanni Pietro/Joannes Petrus] Cardinal Carafa [Caraffa])
(1476-1559)

Vicarius Christi (1555)

When Archbishop of Chieti, he consecrated as Auxiliary Bishop of Chieti and Titular Bishop of Amyclae on 16 March 1541:¹

Scipione Rebiba² (1504-77)

Assisted by Bishops Annibale Caracciolo and Giacomo de'Giacomelli, Cardinal Rebiba consecrated on 12 March 1566:

Giulio Antonio Santorio (1532-1602)

Assisted by Bishops Giulio Masetti and Ottaviano Paravicini, Cardinal Santorio consecrated on 7 September 1586:

Girolamo Bernerio (1540-1611)

Assisted by Bishops Claudio Rangoni and Giovanni Ambrogio Caccia, Cardinal Bernerio consecrated on 4 April 1604:

Galeazzo Sanvitale (1584-1622)

Assisted by Bishops Cosmo de Torres and Ottavio Ridolfi, Archbishop Emeritus Sanvitale consecrated on 2 May 1621:

Lodovico Ludovisi (1575-1632)

Assisted by Archbishops Emeriti Galeazzo Sanvitale and Vulpiano Volpi, Cardinal Ludovisi consecrated on 12 June 1622:

Luigi Caetani (1595-1642)

Assisted by Bishops Antonio Ricciulli and Benedetto Landi, Cardinal Caetani consecrated on 7 October 1630:

Giovanni Battista Scannarolo (ca 1600-64)

Assisted by Bishop Marco Antonio Bottoni and Bishop Emeritus Laurenzio Gavotti, Bishop Scannarolo consecrated on 24 October 1655:

Antoine Barberini (1607-1671)

Assisted by Bishops Pierre de Cambout de Coislin and Michel Colbert de Saint-Pouange, Cardinal Barberini consecrated on 12 November 1668:

Charles-Maurice Le Tellier (1642-1710)

Assisted by Bishops Armand de Monchy and Gabriel de Roquette, Archbishop Le Tellier consecrated on 21 September 1670:

Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (1627-1704)

¹ Based on evidence established by Archbishop Bertil Persson from research in the Vatican Archives.

² The late Pope John Paul II was also in succession from Cardinal Rebiba, and indeed an estimated 91% of the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church today trace their succession from him.

Assisted by Bishops Gui de Sève de Rochechouart and Louis Marie Armand de Simiane de Gorde, Bishop Emeritus Bossuet consecrated on 16 April 1673:

Jacques Goyon de Matignon (1643-1727)

Assisted by Bishops Louis-François Duplessis de Mornay and Jean-Baptiste Massillon, Bishop Emeritus de Matignon consecrated as Bishop of Ascalon in partibus infidelium on 10 February 1719:

Dominique Marie Varlet (1678-1742)

Bishop Varlet consecrated as Archbishop of Utrecht on 17 October 1739:

Petrus Johannes Meindaerts (1678-1767)

Archbishop Meindaerts consecrated as Bishop of Haarlem on 11 July 1745:

Johannes van Stiphout (1708-77)

Assisted by Bishop Johannes Byevelt, Bishop van Stiphout consecrated as Archbishop of Utrecht on 7 February 1768:

Gualtherus Michael van Nieuwenhuysen (1722-97)

Archbishop van Nieuwenhuisen consecrated as Bishop of Haarlem on 21 June 1778:

Adrian Johannes Broekman (1724-1800)

Assisted by Bishop Nicolas Nellemans, Bishop Broekman consecrated as Archbishop of Utrecht on 5 July 1797:

Johannes Jacobus van Rhijn (1724-1810)

Archbishop van Rhijn consecrated as Bishop of Deventer on 7 November 1805:

Gijsbertus Cornelis de Jong (1764-1824)

Bishop de Jong consecrated as Archbishop of Utrecht on 24 April 1814:

Willibrord van Os (1744-1825)

Archbishop van Os consecrated as Bishop of Haarlem on 25 April 1819:

Johannes Bon (1774-1841)

Bishop Bon consecrated as Archbishop of Utrecht on 13 November 1825:

Johannes van Santen (1772-1858)

Archbishop van Santen consecrated as Bishop of Deventer 17 July 1853:

Hermann Heijkamp (1804-92)

Bishop Heijkamp consecrated as Bishop of Haarlem 11 August 1873:

Gaspard Johannes Rinkel (1826-1906)

Assisted by Bishops Cornelius Diependaal, Josef Hubert Reinkens and Eduard Herzog, Bishop Rinkel consecrated as Archbishop of Utrecht on 11 May 1892:

Gerard Gul (1847-1920)

Archbishop, The Union of Utrecht of the Old Catholic Churches (1892)
Assisted by Bishops Johannes Jacobus van Thiel and Nicholas Bartholomaeus Petrus Spit,
Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland, and Bishop Josef Demmel, Alt-Katholische Kirche
in Deutschland, Archbishop Gul consecrated on 28 April 1908

Arnold Harris Mathew (1852-1919)

Bishop, The Union of Utrecht of the Old Catholic Churches (1908)
Archbishop-Primate, The Old Catholic Church in Great Britain (1911)
Archbishop-Primate, The Uniate Western Catholic Church (1916)
On 28 October 1914 he consecrated:

Frederick Samuel Willoughby (1862-1928)

Archbishop-Primate, The Old Catholic Church in Great Britain (1914)
Assisted by Bishops Rupert Gauntlett and Robert King, The Old Catholic Church in
Great Britain, Bishop Willoughby consecrated on 13 February 1916:

James Ingall Wedgwood (1883-1951)

Presiding Bishop, The Old Roman Catholic Church (1916)³
Assisted by Charles Webster Leadbeater and the Jonkheer Julian Adriaan Mazel he
consecrated on 13 July 1919:

Irving Steiger Cooper (1882-1935)

Regionary Bishop for the United States, Liberal Catholic Church (1919)
Assisted by George Sydney Arundale and Ray Marshall Wardall he consecrated on 13 July
1931:

Charles H. Hampton (1886-1958)

Regionary Bishop for the United States, Liberal Catholic Church (1935)
Bishop, The Old Roman Catholic Church (1945)
On 23 August 1945, he exchanged consecrations with Lowell Paul Wadle⁴, Henry Joseph
Kleefisch and:

Wallace David de Ortega Maxey (Mar David I) (1902-92)

Primate, The Ancient Christian Fellowship (1944)
Primate, The Apostolic Episcopal Church (1948)
Patriarch of Malaga, Apostolic Primate of all the Iberians and Supreme Hierarchy of the
Catholicate of the West in the Americas, Catholic Apostolic Church (Catholicate of the
West) (1946)
Assisted by bishops Jürgen W. Bless, Archbishop-Primate The German Old Catholic
Church in America, Emile F. R. Fairfield, Archbishop-Primate Iglesia Ortodoxa Católica
Apostólica Mexicana, Arthur Garrow, Archbishop-Primate The Tridentine Old Catholic
Church of the Americas, Daniel N. McCarty, The Apostolic Catholic Church of the
Americas, Ronald R. Ramm, The Apostolic Episcopal Catholic Church, The Catholicate

³ From 1917 named The Liberal Christian Church (Old Catholic), from 1918 named The Liberal Catholic Church (Old Catholic) and from 1919 The Liberal Catholic Church.

⁴ Hampton had in 1945 entered into a working relationship with L.P. Wadle, who was a bishop of the Apostolic Episcopal Church and head of the American Catholic Church, along with those bishops such as Kleefisch, Maxey and Antoine Aneed who worked with him.

of the West and The Ancient Christian Fellowship, Paul G. W. Schultz, Iglesia Ortodoxa Apostólica Mexicana and Apostolic Administrator of the USA of The Apostolic Episcopal Church, Archbishop de Ortega Maxey consecrated subconditionally and enthroned as the third Primate of the Apostolic Episcopal Church on 7 November 1986 at Glendale, California, USA:

Nils Bertil Persson (Mar Alexander) (1941-)

Bishop-Primate, Katolska Apostoliska Kyrkan i Sverige (The Catholic Apostolic Church in Sweden of the Communion Igreja Católica Apostólica Nacionais) (1987); Primate, The Apostolic Episcopal Church (1986), Universal Primate, The Order of Corporate Reunion (1998), Archbishop for Europe, The Philippine Independent Church (1988) *etc.* who assisted by Archbishop Phillip Lewis, Metropolitan-Archbishop-Primate, The Ethiopian Orthodox Coptic Church of North & South America & Europe, and Archbishop Paget E.J. Mack, The Franciscan Order of St Benedict the Moor and The Apostolic Episcopal Church, he consecrated to The Sacred Episcopate on 23 November 2008 at Golders Green Unitarian Church, London:

John Kersey (1972-)

Presiding Bishop, Ecclesia Apostolica Divinorum Mysteriorum (2010); Archbishop of Great Britain, The Apostolic Episcopal Church (2008); Bishop and Rector Pro-Provincial of Canterbury, The Order of Corporate Reunion (2008)