

A D C L E R U M
OF
Their Graces
THE MOST REVD. JOHN KERSEY, PRESIDING BISHOP OF ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA
DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM, ANDREW LINLEY, BISHOP IN ANGLIA OF ECCLESIA
APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM, AND ALISTAIR BATE, BISHOP IN
CALEDONIA OF ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM

Concerning
The Present Situation of the Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church

JOANNES, The Servant of Jesus Christ, by the Grace of God Presiding Bishop of ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM :

ANDREAS, The Servant of Jesus Christ, by the Grace of God Bishop in Anglia of ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM :

ALEXEI, The Servant of Jesus Christ, by the Grace of God Bishop in Caledonia of ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM :

UNTO : Our Clergy in the British Isles and in foreign parts,

Peace, Health and Apostolic Benediction!

Most Reverend and Reverend Fathers and Mothers, Good People :

WHEN the Co-Presiding Bishops of The Liberal Rite together with those clergy and laypersons representing the spiritual legacy of the late Archbishop Harold Percival Nicholson approved the creation of the Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church in 2008, they were responding both to a situation of urgent pastoral necessity that had arisen during the previous months, and inaugurating a distinctive and cogent expression of the traditions of Liberal Catholicism. Although we must record that the progress of this jurisdiction of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church has been marked by a number of vicissitudes, tribulations and indeed the outright opposition of those who, for various reasons, have chosen to constitute themselves her enemies, it is clear that it pleased Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, to grant to the Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church sufficient support to establish herself as a credible and organic entity bearing a faithful witness to her defined mission. This process reached its logical conclusion when later in 2008 the LCAC was admitted to membership of the International Council of Community Churches and thereby shared as part of that organisation in membership of the World Council of Churches and Churches Uniting in Christ.

THE structure of the Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church as constituted in 2008 was essentially that of a Corporation Sole, in which the Metropolitan Primate, then Archbishop Kersey (now Presiding Bishop of EADM) bore the burden of office alone. As the church expanded, it was determined on legal advice that, while this administrative structure would be preserved, the position of the Church would be strengthened if she was to be constituted as a division of an overseas corporation, a structure which was employed by a number of other independent denominations in the past.

WHEN, in a re-organisation of administrative responsibilities, the then-Metropolitan retired from office in the LCAC in January 2009, he having in the meantime been appointed to senior episcopal positions within two sister communions, the Apostolic Episcopal Church and the Order of Corporate Reunion, it was initially intended that another bishop should succeed him in the Metropolitan office. When no bishop proved willing to serve in that capacity, a collegial system of governance was adopted which reflected the importance the previous Metropolitan had placed on the role of an advisory college of senior clergy, with successive bishops eventually agreeing to serve in the role of president of that college on an annual basis. Some amendments to the Constitution and Canons were made, but this process was inconsistent and did not provide for a solution to the numerous and long-standing problems of administration and accountability that had been identified by senior clergy and that were consequent upon the rapid expansion of the church, particularly overseas, and the orientation towards a public, parish-based ministry that required extensive physical and spiritual resources. These problems were identified by Archbishop Kersey as placing a significant burden upon his health that had been a factor in his decision to retire. In practice after January 2009, any lasting address to these problems was put to one side and solutions to them established on an *ad hoc* basis.

DURING the tenure of Archbishop Kersey as Metropolitan, the LCAC was ably served by the Very Revd. Adrian Glover in the capacity of Vicar General of the jurisdiction. Mgr. Glover had previously served as an Overseer (a position equivalent to that of bishop) in the Apostolic Faith Church, an evangelical denomination, but had had prior contact with the Liberal Catholic Church under Presiding Bishop Eric Taylor. The LCAC was aware of the unfortunate events which had befallen Mgr. Glover's prior ministry on the island of Papa Stour (which were covered extensively in the press at the time) but concluded that these should not be a factor in their decision to advance him to the Major Orders. Mgr. Glover's performance in the role of Vicar General then and subsequent to the Metropolitan's retirement was in every respect satisfactory, and the Metropolitan approved his election to the Episcopal Order shortly before his retirement, acting as a co-consecrator at the ceremony later that year.

WITH the retirement of the Metropolitan in January 2009, the LCAC ceased to be a division of the aforementioned overseas corporation and reverted to the status of an unincorporated religious society in England. In April 2010, the by-now Bishop Glover of the LCAC established a company limited by guarantee using the LCAC name, and this legal entity continues to exist at the time of writing. In the same month, Archbishop Kersey established the Ecclesia Apostolica Divinorum Mysteriorum under charter from the Apostolic Episcopal Church in Great Britain.

DURING the recent history of the LCAC, a number of significant problems have made themselves apparent, some of which in turn owe their origins to the earlier life of the church. For the sake of brevity, we will summarize these:

1. the LCAC had accepted as clergy a number of individuals who had little sympathy for the esoteric aspects of Liberal Catholicism as well as some who were of a more Protestant, evangelical mindset. Initially, the requirement was that clergy, whether or not they themselves were esoterically inclined, must be fully tolerant of those of their fellows who were esotericists. Latterly, this requirement was not as stringently applied as it should have been;
2. consequent on item 1 above, the admission of clergy whose first loyalty was not to the Catholic and esoteric traditions caused a fundamental change in the balance and emphasis of the church, and a dilution both of her Catholic witness and her adherence to Liberal Catholic tradition, with the Liberal Catholic Rite and its recommended Tridentine and traditionalist liturgical alternatives ceding their primacy of place and in some cases being replaced by modernist liturgies;
3. the continued willingness to admit any and all suitable candidates as seminarians, ordinands and incardinating clergy who applied, strained the administrative resources of the church to breaking point, and meant that much of that which should have been done in order to ensure its proper governance and accountability to the public was not done or was done badly; repeated recommendations for a moratorium on such admissions were defeated on each occasion, as was the recommendation that the LCAC should merge with another body with greater resources to hand;
4. despite the efforts and encouragement of the now ex-Metropolitan, the LCAC's membership of the ICCA was not in due course renewed and the administrative requirements of that body were not complied with;
5. those concerned with the +Nicholson spiritual legacy expressed the view that that legacy was not being effectively maintained by the LCAC in its current form.

SURPRISINGLY, Bishop Glover's conduct during the period following his consecration in 2009 was such as to cause serious concern on the part of his colleagues and other clergy. They expressed concerns specifically about:

1. his repeated failure to consult with his colleagues;
2. the issuance of unapproved and incorrect statements to the public, notably an announcement made without prior consultation of a "synod" that was unplanned, uncanonical and that could not conceivably have taken place;
3. the inclusion of material on the church website and elsewhere that was misleading in its effect, particularly in the false statement (subsequently removed) that EADM and the OCR were "in union" with the LCAC;
4. the failure to update that website to reflect more accurately the actual position of the LCAC today;
5. the blocking of a promising ordinand (who is now a member of clergy of EADM) on the grounds of an unreasonable disapproval of his esoteric practice (which practice was, possibly unknown to Bishop Glover, based in no small part on the advice and guidance of +Eric Taylor of the LCC);
6. the removal and reassignment of the responsibilities of a fellow bishop (now a bishop of EADM) without first consulting that bishop;
7. his publically expressed attitude to former members of clergy who had left the LCAC and had subsequently received a form of consecration that was invalid in any Catholic sense, and to the priest of the LCAC who, without obtaining prior permission, assisted in that service;
8. the admission of persons to the status of ordinand and to membership of the Independent Liberal Catholic Fellowship (including those whose behaviour had given rise to scandal) without proper consultation;
9. the refusal promptly to excommunicate clergy in good standing who had requested such excommunication through the Father Prior of their Order and their Ordinary;
10. the false accusation of a member of the Council of Three of EADM who was until recently a member of the College of Bishops of the LCAC of dishonesty and bad faith with respect to that member's statements on the matter at item 9.

AS a result of all these matters, a significant number of clergy - indeed the majority - have left the LCAC during the past six months, including two out of the remaining three bishops in the UK. This now leaves Bishop Glover as the sole bishop of the jurisdiction in the UK. It is notable that clergy do not generally depart from a jurisdiction lightly, and in each case reference has been made to a

number of the issues above, particularly with respect to concerns about governance and stability within the LCAC.

AT no point, *pace* Bishop Glover, has any member of EADM solicited members of the LCAC to seek excommunication from that jurisdiction. However, it is understandable that those concerns that have been expressed on the matters above have been shared as a matter of pastoral necessity between clergy, particularly where a decision to leave the LCAC has been concerned and the person involved has felt a consequent need to explain the reasons for their actions. A number of clergy who have been party to these discussions have indeed decided that their future lies outside the LCAC; equally some others have decided to remain within that jurisdiction and they do so with Our blessing. In general, it has been clear that esoterically-minded clergy have not felt happy in a church that is increasingly moving in a less overtly Liberal Catholic direction.

WHERE problems and criticisms have been voiced in the past, the response from Bishop Glover has consistently been one of *deus providebit*. Such an overt expression of blind faith puts us in mind of the reference that Our Lord makes in Luke 4:12, when He says "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." The problems that exist in the LCAC are very much of human making and must be capable of human solution; the good Lord, we should recall, is ready to help those who help themselves.

THERE have been many attempts to address these issues through patient mediation in private, with clergy giving up many hours of their time in discussion and in some cases producing detailed written recommendations of action to address the problems. None of these attempts has proved successful. In particular, requests for substantial change to the LCAC website (including recommendations as to how this may be done, and offers of practical help) date back well over a year, and are particularly pertinent given, for example, that no person in the photograph that until very recently adorned that website's front page is now a member of the LCAC. The website was in large part written and in part designed by Archbishop Kersey when Metropolitan, and updates since then have been partial and selective at best. This then creates a highly misleading picture of the LCAC as it is now constituted and of her current polity. The members of the Council of Three of EADM, all of whom formerly served as bishops of the LCAC, are unanimous in declaring that they have no wish for material concerning their ministries to be associated with the LCAC's present activities and direction, and for the LCAC effectively to trade on their reputations when they wish to dissociate themselves from that church's present leadership.

IN recent discussion, an offer of assistance had initially been made by the Council of Three to Bishop Glover. Bishop Glover had

initially written in an email to the Council of Three that he was *“sorry and am coming to understand the situation that has developed, under my charge, and I am saddened that this is where we are. I would be delighted to accept your help, which is undeserved, in repairing the situation as best as possible.”* It was also clear from this communication that Bishop Glover’s conduct may well have been influenced by factors in his personal life, concerning which he chose not to go into any detail.

THE detailed offer of assistance that was consequently made to Bishop Glover by the Council of Three yesterday was intended to help him address the problems not only in the LCAC but also those that had arisen in his personal life, and was intended to allow him a period of breathing space to recover and regain the equilibrium which had been so patently absent in recent months, with the expectation that he would return to full and active service as head of the LCAC in the medium term. The provisions of this offer of assistance were that Bishop Glover would remain in office as the head of the LCAC throughout, but would take an indefinite period of compassionate leave. The administration of the LCAC so far as its clergy were concerned would devolve upon his Vicar-General, the Very Revd. Dorothy Shugrue, while that of the Independent Liberal Catholic Fellowship would be undertaken by the two bishops of the Mission Episcopate of Ss Francis and Clare, +Br. Thomas OEF and +Sr. Magdalena OEF. EADM would provide temporary episcopal assistance and advice for the Vicar-General should she require such. Furthermore, EADM would create a new, revised website for the LCAC that would then be handed over to a LCAC webmaster, and would also take care of the +Nicholson heritage.

BISHOP Glover has today reversed his earlier position in which he indicated his wholehearted acceptance of Our assistance. He has rejected all aspects of the plan above excepting the last outright, and has circulated an email to clergy and laity within and beyond Our respective jurisdictions that wrongly and falsely accuses the Council of Three of attempting a “hostile takeover” of his church and of bad faith in so doing.

Nothing could be further from the truth than this wholesale misrepresentation of our position and intentions. The Council of Three proposal sought to maintain Bishop Glover in his position; it sought to maintain his church and body of clergy intact; it sought to help that church discharge her administrative functions efficiently, and it offered the support of senior clergy to those who would otherwise have been without such support. All of this effort was provided on a voluntary basis and without any obvious benefit to those offering such assistance, who were taking upon themselves significant extra burdens in order to do so. The aim of such assistance was to see the LCAC once more a purposeful and

vibrant denomination, and to help it recover from the parlous situation in which it had found itself.

THE Council of Three takes the view that further prevarication is unlikely to prove effective in realising these aims in view of the situation that has now developed. It also takes the view that Bishop Glover's decision to circulate his accusatory email beyond the Council of Three and himself constitutes a decision by him to discuss this matter in the public forum, an action which has compelled us with regret to need to set the record straight in this Ad Clerum.

IT is therefore only with extreme reluctance and after the exhaustion of all other reasonable avenues that We have determined that it is necessary to act to resolve this situation. To explain this action, We will explain some salient facts:

1. The website domain name liberalcatholics.org is the sole property of an overseas company. This company has hitherto allowed the LCAC to continue to use this domain to host her website as a gesture of goodwill. The circumstances outlined above have caused the withdrawal of this goodwill and therefore the withdrawal of the availability of the liberalcatholics.org domain name to the LCAC.
2. As a result, the LCAC website will no longer appear at this domain. The domain has been redirected to the website of EADM where those concerned may read this statement explaining the situation.
3. Archbishop Kersey asserts copyright over those portions of the LCAC website that are his own work and has decided to withdraw them from the use of the LCAC. Other clergy have expressed the wish that photographs that depict them and text describing their past and present ministries, be removed from that website.
4. An offline copy of all text and image materials on the LCAC website has been made, albeit with the expectation that such a copy has also been maintained by the LCAC, and such portions of that website as are accepted by both parties as falling within the authorship of particular persons who may make claim to the copyright of said material will be released to that person on request.
5. EADM intends to act to preserve the mission conferred upon two of its current bishops with respect to the preservation of the +Nicholson spiritual legacy through the immediate attachment of that legacy to EADM.
6. EADM is withdrawing permission for its clergy to serve bivocationally in the LCAC. Clergy that do so will be asked to indicate the choice of the denomination to which they wish to continue to adhere.

7. EADM reserves the right to take such further action as is necessary to protect Our position and Our clergy in the current circumstances.

WE do not seek to deny that Bishop Glover and his clergy have the right to continue to describe themselves as the LCAC, nor that they may move their website to another domain should they wish to. What We seek to achieve is Our effective dissociation from Bishop Glover's church and his actions, which We find ourselves unable in conscience to support, and Our removal from any implied association with a church that has ceased to maintain the principles which all of Us in EADM continue to uphold. It is for this reason that, in addition to these actions, We are further moved to state that no relationship of intercommunion subsists between his jurisdiction and Ours.

WE pray that these unfortunate events may, however unpromisingly, mark a new start for the LCAC, and that in time she may show through her proper governance and witness to the truths of the Christian faith such an amelioration of the present situation as will allow Us once more to regard her in amity.

A M E N.

Given on 17 September 2010 by

COUNCIL OF THREE

The Most Revd. John Kersey, O.C.R.



Presiding Bishop

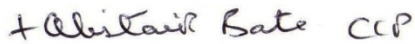
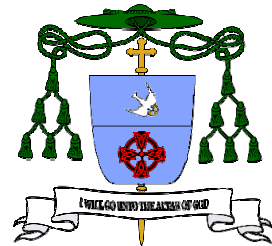


The Most Revd. Andrew Linley, O.C.R.



Bishop in Anglia

The Most Revd. Alistair Bate, O.C.R., C.C.P.



Bishop in Caledonia



No. 47 of 2010

