

grace which they signify. Although the signification ought to be expressed in the whole of the essential rite—in the matter and the form—it belongs principally to the form; since the matter is of itself the undetermined element, being determined by the form... Fully aware of the necessity connection between “the rule of faith and the rule of prayer,” under the pretext of returning to the primitive form, they [Cranmer and his associates] corrupted the liturgical ordinal in many ways to suit the errors of the reformers. For this reason, in the whole ordinal [of Edward VI] not only is there no clear mention of the sacrifice, of consecration, of the priesthood, and of the power of consecrating and offering sacrifice, but, as we have just stated, every trace of these things which had been in those prayers of the Catholic rite which they entirely rejected was deliberately removed and struck out. In this way, the native character, or what may be called the spirit, of the [new] ordinal clearly manifests itself...

The imposition of hands being retained, the form of ordination was reduced to these words: “Receive the Holy Spirit. The sins that you shall remit shall be remitted, those that you will retain, shall be retained. Be a dispense of the word of God and His holy sacraments.”

With this inherent defect of form is joined the defect of “intention” which is equally essential to the sacrament. The Church does not judge about the mind and intention in so far as it is by nature internal; but in so far as the intention is manifested externally, she is bound to judge of it. When anyone has rightly and seriously made use of the due form and matter requisite for effecting and conferring a sacrament, he is considered by that very fact to do what the Church does. On this principle rests the doctrine that a sacrament is truly conferred through the ministry of one who is a heretic or unbaptized, provided the Catholic rite is employed. On the other hand, if the rite is changed, with the manifest intention of introducing another rite not approved by the Church and of rejecting what the Church does, and what by Christ’s

institution belongs to the nature of a sacrament, then it is clear that not only in the necessary intention wanting to the sacrament, but that the intention is adverse to and destructive of the sacrament.

The Decree of Leo XIII (1896)

Therefore, strictly adhering in this matter to the decrees of Our predecessors in the pontificate, and giving them complete confirmation, and, as it were, renewing them by Our own authority, of Our own motion (*motu proprio*), and with certain knowledge, We pronounce and declare that ordinations carried out according to the Anglican rite have been and are absolutely null and void.

There can be little doubt that Leo XIII himself intended to decide the question definitively. In a letter to Cardinal Richard of Paris in November 1896, Leo wrote, “It was our purpose to deliver final judgment and to settle completely that most important question of Anglican ordinations... All Catholics should receive our decision with the utmost respect, as being perpetually fixed, ratified and irrevocable”. The definitive nature of the Bull is therefore clear.

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Pamphlet 570

Anglicanism and Holy Orders

Anglicanism

At the beginning of its separation from Rome under Henry VIII, Anglicanism rejected practically nothing more than the primacy of the Roman pontiff. Later on, under Edward VI, it submitted to the influence of Lutheranism; still later, under Elizabeth, it yielded yet more influence to Calvinism. Anglicanism retained the hierarchical strata of the episcopacy, but turned over supreme spiritual authority to the king. Anglicanism is made up of three main groups: the *High Church*, which believes that the episcopacy is of divine origin, holds it in great esteem, and has a horror of being dubbed “Protestant.” To the High Church group belong Puseyites or Ritualists (“Anglo-Catholics”) who both in doctrine and in worship resemble the Catholic Church quite closely. The *Low Church* leaned heavily in the direction of Calvinism, and is much more concerned with justification by faith alone than with any Episcopal rank. The Broad Church opened its doors widely to rationalism and treats major Christian dogmas as debatable questions. Historically, “broad” tended to be used to describe those of middle of the road ceremonial preferences, which lean towards liberal Protestantism.

Reform and Non-Conformity in England, 1549-1678.

In 1521, Henry VIII answered Luther’s tract on *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* and earned the title “Defender of the Faith.” In 1531, Henry subjected the English Church to a captivity of his own by forcing the clergy to recognize him as Supreme Head of the Church of England ‘as far as the law of Christ allows.’ In 1534, the Supremacy Act dropped the saving clause and the English Church became the principle as well as in fact a department of state. In 1535, Henry was excommunicated by Innocent X. The English

Church was in schism with Rome, but it had not embraced as yet any of the doctrinal changes of the Continental Reformers. In 1547, Henry died and the succession passed to Edward VI, still a minor. Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry, and an ardent champion of Henry's erastianism [the doctrine, advocated by Thomas Lubber (1524-83) of supremacy of the state over the church in ecclesiastical matters], but not of his orthodoxy, was at last given the opportunity to transform a church in schism into a heretical Protestant church. Low churchmen claim that Cranmer succeeded and glory in his achievement; high churchmen insist that Cranmer saved at least the historic episcopacy, which chiefly matters; Anglo-Catholics will admit that Cranmer's liturgical and doctrinal innovations, although Protestant in conception, are, with later revisions, patient of a Catholic meaning.

In 1555 Mary Tudor, a Catholic, succeeded Edward VI, repealed the Supremacy Act, and restored the bishops imprisoned by Cranmer to their sees. In 1558, Elizabeth succeeded to the throne and the Catholic interlude was over. The Supremacy Act was restored, with Elizabeth assuming the title Supreme Governor rather than Head of the Church. In 1559, the reformed Church of England became established as the religion of the land, and by the Act of Uniformity the second Prayer Book of Edward VI was made obligatory for religious services, with attendance at such services mandatory on the people. In 1563, the XXXIX Articles of Religion were drawn up under Elizabeth, and although their binding force is disputed by many Anglicans today, we present the following extract for what they may or may not mean to those who subscribe to them.

Article XXV. There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel...

Anglican Orders

Holy Order is in three degrees: those of bishops, priests, and deacons, the bishops possessing the priesthood in its plenitude, that is, with the power not only to exercise this ministry personally, but also to transmit it and the diaconate to others. Thus the bishop is the only minister of Holy Order, and for its valid administration it is essential that he should himself have received a valid episcopal consecration, and should use a rite in which are reserved all the essentials of validity as instituted by Christ.

To have received or failed to receive orders under these conditions is to be within or without the Apostolical succession of the Catholic ministry.

In the sixteenth century this doctrine of a priesthood endowed with mystical powers was pronounced superstitious by most of the Protestant Reformers, who, accordingly, rejected Holy Order from among the number of their sacraments. They recognized, however, that from primitive times downwards there had always been a body of clergy set apart for the pastoral duties, and this they desired to retain in their separated communions; in some cases organizing it in two degrees only, of presbyters and deacons, in others of three degrees, which, in accordance with ancient practice, they continued to designate by the names of bishops, priests, and deacons. However, their doctrine in regard to these ministers was that they could possess no powers beyond those of other men, but only "authority in the congregation" to preach and teach, to govern churches, and to preside over services and ceremonies; and that the rites, of imposition of hands or otherwise, whereby candidates were inducted into the grades of their ministry, were to be regarded merely as simple and impressive external ceremonies employed for the sake of decency and order. This view of the Christian ministry is very distinctly expressed in the public formularies and private writings of the continental Reformers. In England, it was certainly shared by Cranmer, Ridley, and others who with

them presided over the ecclesiastical alterations in the reign of Edward VI. That the present Anglican clergy are bishops, priests, and deacons in the latter sense admits of no dispute. However, are they so also in the former and Catholic sense; and are they in consequence in the true line of Apostolical succession, and endowed with all its mystical powers over the Sacrifice and sacraments? This is the question of Anglican orders.

Anglican Orders and Objective Intention

The question of validity of Anglican Orders was reopened by Leo XIII, and an adverse decision was handed down in the encyclical *Apostolicae Curiae*. The sole point at issue was the validity of the new formula of ordination introduced by Thomas Cranmer and his associates at the time of Edward VI. It was the pontiff's contention that Cranmer deliberately changed the meaning of the rite of orders by eliminating from it all reference to sacrifice, which alone gives significance to the Christian priesthood; that in so doing, he gave the rite a new meaning, namely, to make "ministers of the word," and not Catholic priests; and in consequence, that those who use this rite express externally—whatever their subjective intention or belief—the intention of doing, not "what the Church does," but what the Reformers were doing in fact, that is ordaining "ministers of the word and sacraments." The distinction between subjective and objective intention is indeed delicate, but it stresses the Church's traditional teaching that the "form" or formula of the sacrament approved by the Church must be used to guarantee "the intention of doing what the Church does."

In the examination of any rite for the effecting and administering of a sacrament, due distinction is made between the part which is ceremonial and that which is essential, usually called "the matter and the form." Now all know that the sacraments of the New Law, inasmuch as they are sensible and efficacious signs of invisible grace, ought both to signify the grace which they effect, and effect the