



ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP: OUR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED

Welcomes Pope's Offer of Personal Ordinariates

BLACKWOOD, South Australia, OCT. 20, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The prayers of Anglicans wishing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church have been more than answered today, according to the primate of the Traditional Anglican Communion.

Archbishop John Hepworth said this today in a statement that responded to the Vatican announcement that Benedict XVI would allow Anglicans to enter full communion with the Catholic Church while preserving elements of the Anglican spiritual and liturgical tradition.

This policy has been established in a forthcoming apostolic constitution, and it responds to requests from Anglicans who have expressed wishes to become Catholic, particularly as the Anglican Tradition continues to take steps toward opening their priesthood and episcopate to women and active homosexuals, and blessing same-sex unions.

Between 20 and 30 Anglican bishops have made such a request.

The constitution was announced at a press conference at the Vatican today, offered by Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Hepworth, who also heads the Diocese of Australia in the Anglican Catholic Church in Australia, said that the Traditional Anglican Communion is "profoundly moved by the generosity of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI."

Dedicated to unity

"He offers in this Apostolic Constitution the means for 'former Anglicans to enter into the fullness of communion with the Catholic Church,'" Hepworth explains. "He hopes that we can 'find in this canonical structure the opportunity to preserve those Anglican traditions

precious to us and consistent with the Catholic faith.'

"He then warmly states 'we are happy that these men and women bring with them their particular contributions to our common life of faith.'"

"May I firstly state that this is an act of great goodness on the part of the Holy Father," continued Hepworth. "He has dedicated his pontificate to the cause of unity."

"It more than matches the dreams we dared to include in our petition of two years ago," he added. "It more than matches our prayers."

"In those two years, we have become very conscious of the prayers of our friends in the Catholic Church. Perhaps their prayers dared to ask even more than ours."

The archbishop said he would take the offer of the Holy See to each of the national synods of the Traditional Anglican Communion.

"Now the Holy See challenges us to seek in the specific structures that are now available the "full, visible unity, especially Eucharistic communion," for which we have long prayed and about which we have long dreamed. That process will begin at once," he affirmed.

Noting that the Anglican Office of Morning Prayer included the Hymn of Thanksgiving, the Te Deum, Hepworth added: "It is with heartfelt thanks to Almighty God, the Lord and Source of all peace and unity, that the hymn is on our lips today."

"This is a moment of grace, perhaps even a moment of history, not because the past is undone, but because the past is transformed."