



## NEIGHBORHOODS TO NATIONS

*The Call of the Anglican Union*

Advent 2025



The Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel  
*An International Confederacy of Churches*

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### Welcome to the Anglican Union – A Confraternity

We are an international **confraternity** (society) comprised of churches, ministries, dioceses, and individuals who place a high value on **prayer and the works of mercy**. We are organized around a common rule of life.

- **Our Vision and Mission**
- **Promote Unity:** We seek to foster unity among like-minded Christians so that we may work together to promote the spread of the Gospel around the world.
- **Reimagine "Being Church":** We aim to build a new understanding of "being Church" that will serve as a **lighthouse and an anchor** during this time of fracturing, fissuring, and realigning within Christianity.
- **Build Conciliar Relationships:** Our goal is to build relationships that are **conciliar** rather than solely jurisdictional or geographical. This structure helps us to be more flexible and better able to respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we seek to be witnesses of Jesus Christ and work toward the greater unity of the Church worldwide.

The following pages will offer you an insight into our vision and the rules of life.

# Neighborhoods to Nations: The Call of the Anglican Union

## INTRODUCTION and CHAPTER 1: Reflecting on the Idea of Confraternity

### All Things Have Historical Context

The idea of a confraternity, or sodality, is often misunderstood in contemporary Anglican circles.

Unfortunately, numerous Anglican media outlets have posted commentary on this Union that was short on facts and long on misinformation, illustrating an ignorance of key concepts important to the identity of sodalities such as this Union.

A similar situation occurred with a Mission Society in which many of us were involved. This precipitated a series of essays on Missiology—fifteen chapters authored over a year—in the hope of bringing essential concepts into the consciousness of leaders and members to reform the Society by adhering to the Norms. Rather than considering these possibilities, the leadership doubled in its rejection of essential ideas (and has continued to do so). This is disappointing, to say the least.

### Reflecting on "Kingdom Work."

"Kingdom Work" is a term often used by Anglican leaders in North America. However, it seems that it is only deemed valid Kingdom Work when in concert with an established Anglican "alphabet" (or organization). If an individual or group departs from that alphabet or discerns another call, the work is often judged as less than valid, and all relationships terminate.

We have seen this pattern repeat itself regardless of the group:

- **TEC** did it to FACA.
- **ACNA** did it to the Anglican Mission (The Society for Mission and Apostolic Works).
- **The Anglican Mission** has done so to what is known as the Anglican Union.

Anglicans are notorious for replicating the same behaviors, often justified by their own liturgical, missional, or theological affirmations of self.

In the age of Anglican realignment that has been underway for the last 20 years, we have seen the development of a transformation of what was once considered "the Anglican Idea." These transformations, for groups ranging from FIRST PROMISE to AMIA, to ACNA, to NAMS, to FIF-NA (and the list goes on), resulted in many hopes being espoused and periodic disappointments being rendered.

There have been positive results, but also questionable results due to the division and personal animosity that occurred with the various leaders. While these "Anglican Alphabets" (AA groups) have put into a clearer light the Gospel value for mission and have changed the face of the church with high marks for less structure, missiology, and church planting, there is little fruit in evidence when it comes to **fraternal charity amidst stalled efforts for Anglican Christian Unity**. The result of these failures is that many now question how such zeal for mission can also result in such deep division.

**The Call for a Deeper Community**-In the ongoing realignment, some organizations have succeeded in obscuring the basic elements of **Christian community** with fellow workers in the vineyard.

As a result, a group of clergy—not reacting out of anger, but sensing the dawn of a new day for the challenge to witness the Gospel in general and its Anglican expression in particular—have taken **Revelation 7:9** to heart. This passage describes those "gathered together in religious communities, women and men from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues," who have been and still are a particularly eloquent expression of God's sublime and boundless love.



### **From Academia to the Community**

It is important to remember this is not the first time such an evolution of the Anglican Idea has happened. Previously, it emerged from the halls of academia in places such as Clapham, Cambridge, and Oxford.

However, the high halls of the university have now given way to the people in the communities of faith: under trees, in shacks, in nursing homes, and in

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abandoned storefronts, from Arizona to Zanzibar. Godly people who have served the church for many years believe it is time to consider a wider dimension of the Church than simply focusing on one element (such as church planting or outreach). While specialists are always important, **General Practitioners** are also essential.

This leads us to a fundamental question: Is it possible for General Practitioners, rooted first and foremost in the **call to prayer** (given to all at the Sacrament of Baptism), to band together to offer values and vision that are distinctive to the foundational work of the Gospel, offering the gift of **fraternity and unity** given by Christ?

### **Birth of the Sodality**

It is upon this very question that a new sodality was birthed in **November 2018** in the USA and Africa. With a commitment and vocation as a Confraternity, it desires to be seen and experienced as a living expression of a fraternal communion in the effort to propagate the Gospel.

Where is this happening? In a variety of places and expressions rooted in a core calling:

- A call to prayer.
- A call to be a place of prayer.
- A call to be an **oratory for all!**

It is in this context that a group of faithful deacons, priests, and bishops seek a **more perfect Anglican Union** so as to effect a better effort for Christian unity.

This is an important part of the work of prayer, as we know from our Lord's plea in **John 17**, and has been stated repeatedly by Anglican leaders at Lambeth and beyond. Numerous statements are on record calling for efforts to be made to establish a pathway for Anglicans of this Communion to enter communion with other parts of the church catholic, "not definable as Anglican," as a step towards the ultimate reunion of all Christendom in one visibly united fellowship.

### **A Call to Unity, Not Opposition**

Thus, clergy and people committed to the idea of an orthodox Anglican expression of the catholic faith have grown tired of being engaged in debates about who leads a "Kingdom Work" and who does not. These groups often spend as much time defining themselves by what they are *not* and what they are *against*.



This Confraternity has discerned a wider call: to be a united people under the banner of the Gospel, rooted in a fellowship of prayer. This translates, in ecclesiastical terms, as: **The Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel: An International Confraternity of Oratories.**

What follows in this *apologia* is an effort to understand what the terms of this sodality mean in their context, moving forward, and not as a working antithesis towards another group. In this view of Confraternity, members of those various existing groups would be welcome if the shared vision is one they hold!

### Confraternity: Where Did That Come From?

**Confraternity** is a historical term in the life and work of the church referring to an organized spiritual or apostolic work of laymen and women, religious, or clerics. These associations have also been known as "sodalities."

- **Canonical & Linguistic Context**
- **Linguistically:** The term comes from the Latin *con-* (with) + *fraternitas* (brotherhood), illustrating that the experience is a matter of **vocation**, not lines of churchmanship.
- **Canonically:** Such a sodality is not limited in its fellowship and may aggregate with other like-minded associations of the same kind.
- **Vocation and Practice**

Members, through the call to prayer, strive in a common endeavor to foster and model the Christian spiritual life by promoting public and private prayer. This includes incarnating initiatives found in the Corporate and Spiritual **Works of Mercy** in unity and charity, to build up the Body of Christ.

### Historical Evolution

Era	Key Development	Note
400–1000 AD	Confraternities began to emerge, often rooted	Early beginnings of prayer & work as charisms

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	in the Anglo-Celtic life of the Church.	
<b>12th Century</b>	The rise of religious orders led to a wide expression of confraternities.	Some were under the direct jurisdiction of a bishop and had no specific connection to a religious order.
<b>Reformation</b>	The paradigm saw a period of decline.	Religious and community structures were heavily impacted.
<b>17th Century</b>	The paradigm returned, perhaps most famously with <b>John Wesley</b> .	His ministry of observing a methodical approach to the disciplines of the <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> was a movement <i>as a sodality</i> , and it was not intended to start a new church.

Of course, the leaders of the Church of England, after the death of Wesley, forced out those committed to active lay preaching as a way of renewing the church. This resulted in the new modality of Methodism coming to life, and the rise of Confraternities differentiated from monastic communities.

### **Grasping Vocation and Vision-**

What we see here again is how **modalities** (formal church structures) often have trouble grasping the vocation and vision of **sodalities** (voluntary fellowship organizations).

Even supposed sodalities have trouble with other sodalities, largely because those leading them are often disgruntled leaders from a modality. What is critical here is the notion of **vocation** that requires **charism** for fruitfulness, whether they be Mission Societies, Confraternities, or Base Christian Communities. Such entities cannot be erected out of dissatisfaction or seeking viable alternatives to a failed modality! All that will result is a failed sodality.

One of the most difficult concepts for clergy to grasp is that the challenge faced by a sodality is to live into the specific **spirituality** that the sodality has as its foundation.

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- If it is a Mission Society, what is its spiritual foundation?
- If it is a *Communauté de Base* (Base Christian Community), what is the spirituality?
- If it is a Confraternity, the same question applies.

The challenge for a sodality is not to be exclusive in its spirituality, as it is not a sodality for Gnostics. The idea in Confraternity, especially, is that there is a **shared spiritual identity and vision** that gives a common language and opportunity for living out the charism.

### Models of Sodalities

In his landmark work, Cardinal Avery Dulles outlines six models of the church. These models represent six pathways that **modalities** may live into their vocation. Not all these models are structure-dependent, but they have structures necessary for each model to function.

**Sodalities** may not always have those clear structures, as they may have a charism designed for internal church renewal or external outreach. In both cases, however, both modalities and sodalities demand that there be a **charism** that can be discerned as a calling from God that is needed in the Church.



In Sodalities such as this Confraternity, perhaps there are three models or three pathways

#### 1. Model #1: Sodality as Transcendent Community

In this model, Confraternities are committed to connecting the **Church Militant** (the faithful on earth) and the **Church Triumphant** (the saints in heaven) through the ministry of **adoration and contemplation**.

In the Anglican Communion, such confraternities would include:

- The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament
- The Guild of All Souls
- The Society of Saint Mary

## 2. Model #2: Sodality as Servant Community

In this model, we have confraternities that actively promote both the **Spiritual Works of Mercy** and the **Corporal Works of Mercy**. In the Anglican Communion, such confraternities would include:

- St. Martin's League
- The Mothers' Union
- The Community of the Cross and Nails
- The Church Union

## 3. Model #3: Sodality as Missional Community

In this model, we have societies and confraternities where Christian people have discerned a call to fulfill the **Great Commission** in obedience to the Holy Spirit. They seek to demonstrate the Gospel tangibly by planting churches or establishing new apostolic works in a context where they can declare the Gospel creatively to certain peoples and places. In the Anglican Communion, such societies and confraternities would include:

- The Church Mission Society
- The Anglican Mission: A Society of Mission and Apostolic Works (AMiA)
- The Society of Anglican Missionaries and Senders (SAMS)

## Conclusion of the Models

These three models of sodalities have different charisms and ministries in relation to the Church and the world. Model #1 gives a high value to devotion and piety, while models 2&3 have activities ministries on to and beyond the church into the wider community, and as a result, at times, they share commonalities.

Nonetheless, when looking at the categories above, it is easy to see why there is some confusion surrounding the roles and definition of a sodality, as its meaning has come to be regarded differently by different people. Model #1 gives a high value to devotion and piety, while **Model #2 is focused on service, and Model #3 is centered on mission.**

It should be sufficient in the Anglican context to simply state that the objectives of all these societies, confraternities, and associations are to engage in the **saving of souls and promote the Christian vocation in the world**. Different Confraternities, Societies, and Associations go about that in a host of ways, including:

- Offer a way of evangelizing the Church.
- Offer a way of aiding certain groups within the Church.
- Offer a way to foster a more Christian life.

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- Promote public worship.
- Promote Christian doctrine.
- Promote works of piety and works of charity.

### The Anglican Union's Calling

The Anglican Union, as an International Confraternity of Oratories, came to ministry in **2019** in a world where a plurality of religions and faith perspectives are considered coterminous with each other, resulting in the diminishing of Christian faith in the West.

The primary path to address this crisis is **prayer**. Secondly, we need a joint local/global witness of faith through a fellowship of Anglican Oratories to meet the challenges of **propagating the Gospel** in a world increasingly apathetic to its message.

This Confraternity seeks to pursue this work through a **collegial, conciliar fellowship** of clergy and laity rather than a hierarchical, limited structure. We share the conviction that nourishing the Christian life and its values through:

- Prayer
- Formation
- Service
- Ecumenical work

...will create situations where Christianity can be made anew in people's lives again.

Like any sodality, The Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel seeks an explicit commitment from those who join. Primarily, this means engaging individuals and communities who share a passion or desire to work in these pastoral areas and forge a new way to be the church based on tried-and-true measures.

While many Sodalities are task-oriented, this Confraternity is centered on **Ora et Servitus** (prayer and service/task) in a highly relational context, commonly grounded in the purposes for which this confraternity was formed.

### Constructs Continue to Emerge (Nodalities)

Even as this Confraternity is forming, another piece of mission and ministry is emerging, being referred to as **Nodalities**. These Nodal communities are hubs/connecting groups, such as the Northumberland Community or the Iona

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Community, where there is an effort to be both **modal** (structured) and **sodal** (voluntary), thus creating a new entity now emerging as nodal groupings. Like the Anglican Union, these nodalities do not seek to centralize power and authority. In fact, authority is dispersed, which is quite different than a collegial model. How will they be able to safeguard against disagreements and divisions?

Whether these communities can succeed in maintaining unity remains to be seen; if they do, there is much that the so-called "Anglican Alphabets" (various Anglican groups) could learn from their example. What is clear, however, is that a shared Rule of Life is essential—this is why it stands as a foundational element of this Confraternity. As a Confraternity of Oratories, the Rule of Life

enables each community to express church life in contextually unique ways, while always upholding the core values of the Confraternity as a guiding principle.



In this Apologia, we are reminded that new movements within the church are emerging—some are locally rooted and built for longevity, while others are more mobile and focused on pioneering new paths. The Anglican Union Confraternity, in particular, is designed to build bridges so that all expressions of the church may journey together in faith and fellowship, rather than in discord and division. The essential point is that a Confraternity is a legitimate form of ecclesia, just as valid as a mission society, a diocese, or a monastic community. Its effectiveness depends on the unique charism and calling of its members.

Those who are committed to the Confraternity of Oratories recognize and honor this truth, even if others do not always reciprocate. The distinctive qualities of the Anglican Union include its focus on Confraternity, prayer, local adaptations of ministry, intellectual rigor, humility, collegiality, conciliarity, ecumenical fellowship, customary, prudence, and love of the Lord can only be integrated and understood in the light of the day-in and day-out living of the Rule of Life.

This Confraternity was born out of discernment and prayer, despite what has been suggested elsewhere. For Anglicans especially, prayer in common has always been regarded as the foundation of all community life. Through the power of this prayer, the love of God is made known, and thus a confraternity has come into being—a gathering of free people, liberated by the Cross of Christ to serve him with the gifts he has bestowed upon his Church.

We believe that the fruit of this prayerful foundation will be the ability to celebrate and give thanks together for the shared gift of the oratory vocation and mission. We trust that this fruit will transcend every individual and cultural difference that has hindered true Anglican unity. In our common prayer, we seek to cultivate a contemplative posture before the wisdom of God, who has

called us to a particular work carried out in humility, so that we may be a gift to the world as a living presence of Christ.

### **The Mandates of Jesus Christ**

Jesus has given the Church several significant mandates that shape our purpose:

- **Matthew 16:16-20** – The Church is built by Jesus Christ.
- **Matthew 25:31-46** – The call to seek and serve the Least, the Last, and the Lost.
- **Matthew 28:19-20** – The Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.
- **John 17** – The High Priestly Prayer, “...so that the world may believe” that Jesus is the One sent by the Father, to whom we owe the full assent of faith.

We believe that the witness of our Confraternity is of profound importance—not because of anything inherent in ourselves, but because our life together is meant to be a sign pointing to the divine origin of the Christian message. It is this witness that has the power to open hearts to faith.

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For this reason, we hold that the effectiveness of Christian witness in the years to come will depend greatly on the quality of the fraternal life in common that the world either sees—or fails to see—within the Church.



Revised

## Chapter 2: Authenticity, Fidelity, and Communion

### Reflections on the Call of the Union

*"It is necessary to seek to build communion, to teach communion, to get the better of misunderstandings and divisions, starting with the family, with ecclesial reality, in ecumenical dialogue too."* -Pope Francis at a 2013 General Audience.

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#### Orientation

Few could dispute the assertion that **society needs unity, the church needs unity, our world needs unity**; this is an age in which we all need it. The Church, as the Body of Christ, has done a particularly poor job of witnessing to this unity over the last 100 years. Having witnessed this firsthand, there seemed to be little option this past November when several clergy and lay leaders called for a change in direction by establishing a ministry focused on unity through the **essentials of the faith and order of the Church Catholic**. Thus, the Anglican Union was born.

In our last chapter, we established the idea of a “confraternity” as an expression of how the ecclesial community may live out a set of *charisms* to accomplish essential works of the Gospel. When we speak of **union**, it is an extension of the idea of **communion**, which is intrinsically connected to the mission of the Church. This call to union, or more purposely "communion," is a direct response to two raging crises in the Church: **autonomy** and **individualism**. Of course, we live in a world that glorifies both autonomy and individualism, but what have they fostered beyond the expression of self for the satisfaction of self? The fact is, individualism and autonomy on the part of church leaders and various Christian movements have weakened the development and stability of personal and ecclesial values and their application in the world. There is an irony in the high value Anglicans give to autonomy and individualism in ministry, faith, and order: our very model for relating and ordering our lives comes from a communion—the **Trinity**—the Triune God.

We in the confraternity believe it is time for the ministries of the Church to model a relationship based on the Triune God, who exists only in communion. The Anglican expression of the Gospel, like the world it ministers in, suffers from such a high valuation of autonomy and widespread individualism that the result is divided churches, ministries, families, and human beings. If there is any doubt about that, look at how the leadership of the Society and Apostolic Works conducted itself over the last year. What did it offer the world as a Society for mission? Was it a radiant, attractive witness of fraternal communion? All

indications suggested it was not, as relationships of many years were tossed into the ecclesiastical trash heap with an arrogance that affirmed an

Individualistic, indifferent, and self-justified view. The disappointment was in the fact that there was little essence of communion.

It was indeed shocking because all our documents and the vast vision of our inaugural leader pointed to the fact that we were a society, a sodality, a **communion on mission** that shared not only a united commitment to the evangelization of the nations from the Great Commission but a conviction that as a society, "**pastoral dialogue**" among the leaders and members would be the norm. We would incarnate the very blessed communion in the Eucharist that we celebrated, participated in, and received! How could autonomy trump that? Well, it did!

### **A Union of Persons – A Confraternity of Pray-ers**

The emergence of the Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel is a gathering of a community of persons from different points of churchmanship to build communion with others based on common values in the Scriptures. It cannot be ignored or promoted as if it were the most popular ecclesiastical flavor of the month. To form such a union in the effort to foster a more authentic communion is a **prophetic step** for all involved, as it challenges the individualistic mindset of autonomy, which is pervasive among contemporary leaders in the Church. We want to be clear that this is born not "of the will of the flesh," nor from a personal desire for power or privilege or any other human motives, but "**from God**" (Jn. 1:13). The Anglican Union, as an idea, has been germinating in the minds of many because of the value they place on the concept of the **Oratory**. It is either a coincidence, a convergence, or a divine vocation, as this Union seeks to be a living sign of the **primacy of the love of God**, whose works of mercy are a hallmark of the presence of Christ in the world.

This International Confraternity of Oratories, as an Anglican movement, is a **communion renewal movement** that seeks to transcend autonomy and individualism by:

1. Promoting **true communion** amongst those whom God has called to practice the historic faith and order in the Anglican Tradition, mindful of the ecumenical mandate of Christ.
2. Promoting Anglican spirituality amongst the members and together to grow in the **sanctification** of their lives.

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3. Promoting and practicing ongoing **formation** in the lay and ordained ministry by sharing experiences, knowledge, and skills.
4. Promoting **prayer** as the foundation of all it does in each oratory community.
5. Expressing both inwardly and outwardly true Christian **fraternal charity** with each other and the wider Church.

For the Anglican Union as a confraternity to bear witness to its vocation, these elements of Gospel unity and Christian fraternity are the basis of its ecclesial life and promote the vocation of *communio* in the Church. If living into this vocation as a fraternal communion can be accomplished, it will create a new understanding of the **sodality-modality partnership** and a renewed *charism* in the life of the Church.

### Three Theological Dynamisms That Frame the Anglican Union

The call to Communion through the Propagation of the Gospel has three dynamisms:

1. **Christological**
2. **Pneumatological**
3. **Liturgical**

#### The Christological Dynamism of *Communio*

This dynamism finds its basis in John's Gospel 17:21-23. The essential phrase is in verse 21: "**...that they may all be one.**" This is critical because the unity that Jesus prays for and intends is for those who are his own. This mystical communion is not just with God alone but with those who are in fellowship with the Triune God. This clearly was shared collegially by the apostles, as we see in the Book of Acts. Each expression of communion, from Rome to Antioch, lived out its gifts but never at the expense of *communio*.

#### The Pneumatological Dynamism of *Communio*

This is the reality of the **Holy Spirit as the agent who effects the unity of the churches amidst the diversity of its people.** We see from the beginning of the Church that the coming of the Holy Spirit, the first gift to believers, brought about the unity willed by Christ. Poured out on the disciples gathered in the Upper Room with Mary, the Spirit gave visibility to the Church, which, from the very first moment, is characterized as **fraternity and communion in the unity of one heart and one soul** (cf. Acts 4:32). When one considers the lived experience of the Church from generation to generation, the evidence is clear:

The Holy Spirit is co-institutor of the Church and the source of the Church's holiness, catholicity, apostolicity, and communion.

### The Liturgical Dynamism of *Communio*

This is found in the gathering of the community around the altar with their bishop (and later their priest). At the liturgy, the words and actions make profoundly clear that the *communio* does not propagate the faith based on its own individual sacramental understanding or as a result of individual salvation within a historical church.

Rather, the liturgical dynamism is found in our **Eucharistic understanding** as being the people of God gathered from North and South, East and West, framing our mission as an imperative duty to witness the identity of being in communion as an authentic expression of God with His people, with all that it implies in our ethical, social, and eternal life.

No doubt, few in our Union would express their *charism* of being a Confraternity in Union in these terms. But people whose faith, at least implicitly, embraces these dynamisms in sodalities and modalities should agree that it is not only viable for these dynamisms to be part of the Union's identity but rather that they are happening in real time at the base model of the *communio*, the oratory itself.



These three dynamisms are the basis of life as a Confraternity and Union. Through these three dynamisms, we are, without exception, in communion with God and with our brothers and sisters in every oratory and partnership, reflecting the "one People of God." Our call to Propagate the Gospel is not an

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individual whim or passion but is based on the mystical communion formed at the celebration of Holy Baptism, which makes us a priestly people called and committed to prayer and service, as the Baptismal Covenant states.

From the gift of communion arises the call and desire to build confraternity—in other words, to become brothers and sisters through a particular witness,

where all are called to live as one. While this journey from what we always knew for these many years has been painful, we are filled with wonder and gratitude that we are granted an opportunity again to reflect on mystical communion. With that, we have the conviction to make this more visible by building up the oratories locally and globally "**filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit**" (Acts 13:52).

### **All May, Some Can, Few Will**

We are all **Oratorians** participating in the daily call to prayer, which binds us together, along with our ministry efforts, which should involve the whole local oratory and the entire Union. These dynamisms should help us better understand how we are a Union and a Confraternity in a Communion where we are part of something that is local and global.

The Anglican Union, in its vocation, structure, partnerships, and values, makes publicly visible and continually perceptible the gift of Confraternity given by

Christ for the whole Church. For this very reason, we have a commitment and mission to be an incarnational expression of **confraternal communion**—a sign and encouragement to the wider Church that there is a better way to live and conduct the witness of the Church.

This bond, rooted in the baptismal call to respect the dignity and integrity of every person, starts at the very top of the leadership structure in a confraternal union. This is not a path for every cleric in the Church to follow, but for those who sense there is value to be bound by a common calling from God in continuity with the foundational vision of the Propagating of the Gospel and the Works of Mercy, the Anglican Union offers a **third way** in the life of the Church that truly is flexible but honor-bound to the historic faith and order.

The external purpose of our confraternal union is to bring the Anglican expression to the Church Catholic and humanity in general, back to union with God and to unity among ourselves, through divine charity in living out the Works of Mercy and our daily call to be people of *Ora...* **Prayer**.

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Confraternal life, where we are truly bound, whether we are in Aurora or Zanzibar, is an expression of the union effected by God's Grace. While seeking to propagate the Gospel in works that we share in together, we become an essential witness for evangelization, which should have great significance for apostolic activity in our local Oratories and around the world. It is from the integrity of our confraternal *communio* that we have our energy and vigor, for we are not solo practitioners.

Confraternal communion is our beginning and our ending, for if we have effected it well in the Oratories, we will see a great cloud of witnesses in *communio* as a result.

In this chapter, we have endeavored to offer pastoral and theological reflection on the ideal of how to live as a union for the sake of the Gospel, with the hope that on the topics of the first two terms in our title, Confraternity and Union, those who believe understand it as a present future vision will give this serious consideration.



### Chapter 3: The Oratory Movement for Anglicans in the catholic Conciliar Tradition

This chapter explores the historical origins and contemporary relevance of the Oratory movement, advocating for its renewal within the Anglican Communion.

#### I. The Historical Roots of the Oratory Movement

In the early part of the 16th Century, a significant renewal movement in the Church, known as the **Oratory**, was established. It was inaugurated for people from all levels of society who wanted to focus on prayer and a God-centered life while **remaining in the secular world** and, through that vocation, discover a call to Christian service.

The person who shared this vision was a priest named **Philip Neri** (1515–1595). He was an attractive, joyful individual totally dedicated to the renewal of the Church. Neri spent half of his life as a layman, actively engaged in Christian service. Philip Neri and his friends met in churches for prayer, study, and formation, and from these informal gatherings, they went about their work. Over time, Philip became known for two effective ministerial gifts: **intercessory prayer for healing** and **evangelizing the indifferent**.

Despite this ministry, he admired missionaries like St. Francis Xavier and desired to become one. However, it was discerned that his mission was to stay home and form Christians within the community in Rome. In that moment, the DNA of the Oratory movement was born, thus beginning a 400-year-old history that has had its impact on the Anglican Communion.

At certain periods, Oratories in the spirit of Philip Neri have influenced Anglican spirituality and common life. Examples include:

- **Little Gidding:** A lay religious community in the 17th Century led by **Nicholas Ferrar**, known for its disciplined life of prayer and study.
- **The Oratory of the Good Shepherd (OGS):** Begun in 1913 as a group of Cambridge (England) chaplains who were seeking some form of disciplined holy life.

Typically, as in the Roman Catholic (RC) model, these communities were made up of laity who are served by *secular priests*. These priests, as Oratorians, are not members of a religious order but a community bound by mutual regard. It is not a cloistered community, even though it fosters contemplative prayer. It is not separated from the world around it, but it does call people aside for prayer and study and helps form them in spirituality and service.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, the Oratorian movement exists in Europe, the Americas, and Africa, with about 75 Confraternities in the Oratorian Confederation and 25 new oratories in formation. This is a lost *charism* in the Anglican Communion, and it seems that in a world broken and lost, the need for such a gift of the Church in Oratories has come again in the 21st Century.

## II. The Need for the Oratory Today – A Vision

The yearning for authentic Christian spirituality is on the rise, yet increasingly few places offer the timeless tradition of that spirituality. Perhaps that is why the attraction of ecumenical communities like **Taizé** in France has been longstanding, and why the renewed popularity of cloistered communities and their chants has seen a resurgence. Even the rediscovery of the writings of the Church Fathers indicates a hunger today for contact with **authentic prayer and worship in a timeless Catholic ethos** and places that provide for it. At the same time, there is also a desire for a connected personal community of faith committed to the corporal works of mercy, compassion, and justice.

For Anglicans, this has been a lost art in many respects. Since the Henrician reforms and the condemnation of monasteries, contemplative spirituality and Catholic worship were in crisis. Much of the historic Catholic tradition had been lost until the **Oxford Movement (Tractarians)**. The Tractarians were natural men of prayer who knew the traditions and teachings of the Church Fathers and the spirituality that evolved from them into the Celtic and English Church. Like their counterparts in the RC Communion, this **Oratory spirit** understood there was a time to pray and study, to share faith in quiet and in celebration. Ministries flowed out of these core experiences of prayer and commitment to the Eucharist.

The Anglican Communion now more than ever needs an **accessible community** where Catholic spirituality is lived out and where authentic Christian formation in the time-honored tradition of Catholic catechesis can take place on an ongoing basis. The Anglican Communion needs a cohesive witness of the Catholic faith to restore a call to be the Church that predates the English Reformation. While an Oratory is not intended to be a monastery or a retreat house, it is meant to be part of everyone's secular, daily life. It is a place where:

- *Christian community takes place.*
- *Everyone is welcome.*
- *A joyful, daily celebration of the Eucharist can bring people together for renewal and refreshment.*

Many Anglican parishes have programs for Small Group Ministries, where people come together for faith sharing and prayer. The Oratory movement takes those principles and integrates them into a centuries-old spirituality and tradition that is based:

- Not on convenience, but on **community**.
- Not on practicality, but on **authentic piety**.
- Not on religious marketing, but on **religious reawakening**.
- Not on church planting, but on **church becoming**.

When John Henry Newman served as an Anglican, he explored the great principle that makes an Oratory work. In the early 1830s, Newman preached:

“Perhaps the reason why the standard of holiness among us is so low, why our attachments are so poor, our view of life so dim, our belief so unreal, our general notions so artificial and external is this, that we dare not trust each other with the secret of our hearts. We have each the same secret, and we keep it to ourselves, and we fear that, as a cause of estrangement, which really would be a bond of union.

*“We do not probe the wounds of our nature thoroughly: we do not lay the foundation of our religious profession in the ground of our inner man: we make clean the outside of things: we are amiable and friendly to each other in words and deeds, but our love is not enlarged, our bowels of affection are straightened, and we fear to let intercourse begin at the root: and in consequence, our religion viewed as a social system is hollow, the presence of Christ is not in it.”* (Plain and Parochial Sermons, V, pp. 126-7).

Anglican Oratorians in the catholic tradition seek to establish the **bond of union** that Newman was speaking of 125 years ago, that Nicholas Ferrar sought to address in the 17th Century, and what Philip Neri desired to bring about in Rome in the 16th Century. The Anglican Oratory movement seeks to recapture the spirit of these leaders and tradition to promote holiness of life among the Christian faithful in the world.

Through practices and disciplines of the spiritual life, **daily Eucharist, and prayer in common**, we hope to increase the love for our Lord Jesus Christ in such a way that men and women from north and south, east and west will renew their faith and devote their time to works of charity and tending those in need.

The Oratory affirms three core values:

- a) **An Anglican Oratory is a Place of Prayer**

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Prayer life in the Oratory is relatively simple, but it is indeed a **way of life**. The Oratory gathers individuals together to share the commitment to learning how to pray and remaining faithful to prayer. The invitation to join the community in prayer is open to everyone.

### b) *Lectio Divina* and the Oratory

The Oratory, which is rooted in the secular parish and pastored by secular priests, is a place for worship, formation, piety, and silence. Essentially, **contemplative prayer is the silence that comes after an encounter with God's Word**.



What the early Oratory experienced was shared ***Lectio Divina*** (reading of the Word). All this classic phrase says is that the Word was read in common, meditated upon aloud (*faith sharing*), and this led to silence or contemplative prayer. The gathering in silence in the evening was a continuation of the more extraverted afternoon prayer. This sense that contemplative prayer comes from an encounter with the Word makes the Oratory a great instrument in offering the world the **peace that cannot be found in the ways of the world**. It is something we strive to offer.

### c) An Anglican Union Oratory is a Place of Shared Ministry

The Oratory is where the community's prayer and contemplation lead directly to committed action and shared ministry in the world.



### III. Mission, Practices, and Structures of the Oratory

Anglican Oratorians believe that from the traditional order for prayer in the Church, we realize our unique gifts (*charisms*) and then share them with others. In addition to prayer, it should be noted that **religious education and spiritual renewal** form a vital component of the Oratorian ministry. The works and ministry of each Anglican Union Oratory will depend on the specific *charisms* and talents of its members.

The outward focus of the Oratory community could encompass a wide range of ministries:

- **Pastoral Work**
- **Retreats**
- **Writing and Teaching**
- **Counseling and Spiritual Direction**
- **Refugee Ministry**
- **Prayer Groups and Prayer Ministries**
- **Pastoral Care through a variety of chaplaincies**

Fundamentally, an Oratory is a “**house of prayer**” based in the common life of a local community. The laity and clergy of each Oratory community consider themselves “**contemplatives in action.**”



Prayer and community life are of the utmost importance, but this interior life is intentionally lived out in various **apostolates** particular to each place, usually consisting of:

- Christian formation and catechesis.
- Pastoral work.
- Spiritual direction.
- Service to the poor and marginalized.

As Oratories are typically based in a faith community (such as a parish or chapel), their clergy often serve that community directly.

### **A. Aims of the Anglican Oratory Movement**

The Anglican Oratory Movement, as a renewal movement for clergy and laity, seeks to fulfill these aims by:

- i. **IPromoting True Community:** Fostering genuine fellowship amongst those whom God has called to practice the Catholic faith in the Anglican Tradition.
- ii. **Cultivating Spirituality:** Promoting Anglican spirituality amongst the members and working together to grow in the sanctification of their lives.
- iii. **Ensuring Ongoing Formation:** Promoting and practicing continuous formation in the lay and ordained ministry by sharing experiences, knowledge, and skills.

- iv. **Deepening Prayer and Vocation:** Promoting prayer and fostering vocations to both the Lay and Ordained Ministry within each Oratory community.
- v. **Practicing Fraternal Charity:** Expressing both inwardly and outwardly true Christian fraternal charity with each other and the wider Anglican Faithful.

The Confraternities of the Anglican Oratory, concerning their common lives and internal governance, are primarily governed by a **Constitution**. This Constitution must be approved by the Episcopal Patrons and Consistory Members. These foundational documents are supplemented by **General Precepts**, which regulate the relations among the various Oratories internally and internationally as a Confraternity.

### **B) The Spiritual Identity of an Oratory**

The spiritual identity of the Anglican Oratory is defined by the following characteristics:

1. **Clergy Status:** Clergy of the Oratory are **secular**; that is, they do not profess religious vows (unlike monks or friars).
2. **Fraternal Life:** Oratorians live a fraternal life in a **stable community** rooted in a particular local setting.
3. **Stability:** Members make a commitment to one local Confraternity and are rarely transferred from one to another, fostering deep local roots.
4. **Core Spirituality:** Their spirituality is marked by **prayer**; reverent celebration of the **Sacraments**, especially the Eucharist; familiar preaching of the **Word of God**; and a joyful love for God and neighbor expressed through the **Works of Mercy**.
5. **Pastoral Focus:** We remain connected with the chief concern and commitment to pastoral formation and care through the local Oratory.

The local Oratory is faithful to a particular **autonomy** that is intrinsically linked to the reality of its local situation and identifies its specific *charism*. However, the importance of the **bond of fraternity** with other Oratories nationally and other Confraternities internationally is paramount. It is through this autonomy that individual oratories live out their active *charism* while remaining interconnected with the wider Anglican Union and International Confraternity.

It is the expectation that each Oratory will devote particular care to the initial and continuing **formation** of individuals and communities, to assimilate the ideals and values within the Anglican Union as an Oratory Movement, as proposed by the

General Precepts. This dedication is for the sake of a growing spiritual vitality and an effective apostolic presence for the sake of the Kingdom.

The specific aim and mission of the Anglican Union as an International Confraternity of Oratories is the **birth and growth of genuine Christian communities, which are "light and salt of the earth"** through common principles such as the **Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy**. These Oratories are presented as a fraternal union of the faithful who follow in the footsteps of Christ, St. Philip Neri, and Deacon Nicholas Ferrar.

Oratorians in the Anglican tradition draw inspiration from their example of **simple community prayer, spiritual reflections, and pastoral ministry**. In this perspective, the Oratory sees its identity in "the practice of discussing the Word of God together in a familiar way, as mental and vocal prayer, to foster a contemplative spirit in the faithful, as at a school, and the love of divine things."

### C. Canonical Status of the Oratory Movement

In Canon Law, the Oratories would not be understood as a **Religious Order** (such as the Franciscans or Benedictines), whose members take perpetual vows. The Oratory is a Secular Society of Apostolic Life.

Its members do not take religious vows, oaths, or promises but are held together by the **bond of charity**. The members give themselves with a free will, with the intention of remaining in the Confraternity until death.

## IV. Dynamics of an Oratory Vocation-

### A. The Essential Elements of the Oratorian Life and Work

1. **Service to the Church:** The Confraternity of Oratories was instituted from the beginning for the service of the wider Church and the Anglican Communion.
2. **Community Driven by Charity:** A group formed and erected in a lawfully established oratory maintaining the common life, whose members are led more by the spirit of **charity** than by rigid law.
3. **Commitment to Tradition:** Members willingly follow the traditions of the Oratory.
4. **Emphasis on Prayer:** Lays great stress on **mental and vocal prayer**, individually and in common.
5. **Eucharistic Center:** Holds the **Eucharist as the very center and unifying point of life**.

6. **Participation in Formation Ministry:** Engages in ministry of spiritual formation, through:
  - a. Discourses on divine things (informal theological instruction).
  - b. Participation in days of reflection, the Spiritual Disciplines, and the Works of Mercy.
  - c.
7. **Devotion to Apostolate:** Devoted to the apostolate of formation for young and old, rich and poor, local and global.
8. **Evangelistic Preaching:** Preaches the Gospel in ways that are familiar, helpful, and transformative to the community.
9. **Fraternal Bonds:** Intricately linked to the clergy of the Union by spiritual as well as material aid.

### **B. Obedience**

1. Although not bound by vows, the members honor and practice obedience:
  - o To the **Consistory of Bishop Patrons**
  - o To the **Constitutions and General Precepts.**
  - o To the **Apostolic Prefect** and the **Leadership Team**
  - o And to the General Confraternity.
2. All Oratory members are under the authority of the Apostolic Prefect and a Patron Bishop who are members of the Consistory and are accountable to them in matters of worship, pastoral care, and the organization of their particular Oratory apostolate.

### **C. Freedom to Leave the Confraternity**

1. Oratorians are not bound by vows, which would require them to remain perpetually.
2. While all serve freely, there is a **rule of life** and commitments that are made among the members.

### **D. Spiritual Norms for the Oratory**

1. In each Oratory, there should be provision made for **regular prayer** during the week and **celebration of the Holy Eucharist** on Sundays.



## **V. The Ministry of Formation in the Oratories**

The oratories, in their common life, commit themselves to the ministry of formation through spiritual direction, workshops, retreats, study days, ecumenical gatherings, catechesis, and theological education.

Because prayer is emphasized as a core experience, the Oratory—within its shared life—focuses on an ecumenical ministry of prayer for the unity of the Church, as Jesus himself prayed.

This commitment is the principal value of our common life and the source of our unity. Accordingly, we endeavor to engage in Eucharistic sharing in accordance with the principles of catholicity in the Eucharist.

## **A. Principles of Establishing the Anglican Union for the Confraternity of the Gospel**

### **Principle 1: Living as an Instrument of Unity for Anglicans**

The foundation of our life in this Confraternity is Christ's call to service, expressed through the biblical mandates:

- *Matthew 16:16-20*: The Church is built by Jesus Christ
- *Matthew 25:31-46*: Seeking the least and the lost
- *Matthew 28:19-20*: The Great Commission
- *Acts 2:42-46*: Following a rule of common life
- *Ephesians 4:6-16*: Living into charism to build up the Body of Christ

Following the example of Christ the Redeemer, our mission is rooted in prayer. We seek to be a people dedicated to prayer in particular places, and from this call, we witness the Gospel and build up the Church through formation, collaboration, and service to those identified in Scripture.

### **Principle 2: Fidelity to Our Biblical Vocation**

Fidelity to our biblical vocation—under canonical authority to a godly bishop in communion with the wider catholic Church—guides us in expanding the ministry of Christ's Church. This fidelity is both the reason for and the goal of authentic reorganization after one year of existence.

Such fidelity requires us to establish and implement apostolic priorities. Not every apostolic endeavor, however praiseworthy, can be identified as an expression of our missionary priorities. Therefore, we must continually draw our apostolic efforts closer to these priorities, ensuring that our mission remains faithful to the Gospel and effective in service.

### **Principle 3: Establishing an Anglican Confraternity that will stimulate a Reawakening of Anglican Values and Charisms.**

Our call is to **conversion and profound renewal** of our apostolic vocation in all its dimensions, domestically and internationally. This conversion and renewal will invite those of us who seek to expand ministry as Oratorians to deepen our reflection on vocation.

Those who seek to be part of this **Sodality** (a form of the "Universal Church" expressed in a specialized, task-oriented form) are clergy and laity who come together from various cultures to form communities based on faith in Jesus Christ that span the globe. Our re-organization for mission and ministry will foster a greater freedom to face the challenges of evangelization, education, and development prophetically. Our discernment and decisions will be made through **collaboration** with the direct involvement of other members of the Oratory through collegial fellowship.

### **Principle 4: Affirming a Collegial and Conciliar Model for Ministry.**

We must exercise a "**preference for situations where there is pastoral need, which can be met with our charisms and resources,**" and this is best determined by those who possess those *charisms*, resources, and are aware of the needs on the ground.

Our ministry cannot be so broad as to include every possible form of pastoral opportunity devised by a body of leaders unaware of the realities of the Union. Therefore, **taking counsel in council (conciliar governance)** will be foundational to our organization and decision-making structure.

### **Principle 5: Solidarity in Mission Includes an Ability to Optimize Resources, Both Human and Financial.**

Our resources are first and foremost **human resources!** Our members are called by the Holy Spirit to work together in the mission of Christ Our Redeemer. Solidarity in mission will include exceptional care for those in the Union, whether they are experiencing fragility with respect to human or spiritual resources.

Such solidarity has demanded that we seriously examine the present economic formula for this loose federation of Chapters and engage in the following reforms:

- The **tithe** (10% standard) will continue as the standard commitment for our donors, benefactors, and parishes.

- The title will be limited to **ministry projects on the ground**, with primacy given to domestic and international works.
- Secondary requests, such as funding meetings and travel thereof, will only come about with the assent of the **Consistory of Bishops and the Councillors**.

### **Principle 6: We Shall Develop a Clear Identity in the Confraternity as Reflected in our Rule of Life.**

To restructure resources for the mission today means that no member should act in isolation. It also means establishing new associations. Some will be Anglican...and some will be **ecumenical**. All associations will be formed for the singular purpose of achieving better service to the mission of the Church. We take these steps to ensure our future and to flee unacceptable rivalries and divisions, which have become a source of scandal and embarrassment to us. This re-ordering will enable us to have a more fruitful expression of identity as an Anglican sodality.

### **Principle 7: Theological Reflection Rooted in Spiritual and Pastoral Experience is a Vital Part of Our Mission.**

New deployment of our theological resources is essential to meet the challenge of the Propagation of the Gospel. We, in this Confraternity, seek to make a priority the **continuing theological formation of all members** and to encourage specialization in certain disciplines. We also need formation for, and a network of, **collaboration** in other theological areas of expertise consistent with our *charism* and needs, both domestically and internationally.

### **Principle 8: Participation and Co-Responsibility will Involve All Members.**

Participation and **Co-Responsibility** will involve all who embrace the **Rule of Life** as members of the Confraternity. This process will involve all members of the Confraternity and people of goodwill and faith who join in our goals.

Though the pastoral priorities of each Oratory and Oratorian should be in harmony with the pastoral priorities of the Conference of Oratories as a whole, each oratory will discern and develop its own specific pastoral priorities in the light of its own particular history, its personnel, resources, local Church realities, and the possibility of a missionary response to local and global need.

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In relation to these pastoral priorities, **no member should act in isolation.**

Therefore, the priorities will be agreed upon in consultation with the Consistory and be shared by the Prefect with the entire Oratory, whereby **collegial teams** will work to address the various priorities.



### WHY A NEW SODALITY?

The West has had a strong Christian legacy. Nevertheless, we recognize that in many ways we find ourselves in a new “season” in relation to Christian Faith that we can no longer ignore, namely that there now exists a plurality of religions and faith perspectives within the Church and that the number of people involved in Christian faith communities in the The West is diminishing.

We believe prayer must be our first commitment to address this threat to the Church and the world. Secondly, we believe we need a global witness of faith that can be

Manifested through a Union of fellow Oratorians to best meet the challenges of witnessing the faith in the world.

We believe, also, that this Union of Oratories model will benefit the whole church in its witness to the world. It can be a vehicle that can link diocese, independent ministries, and individuals into a common purpose and mission. It brings a model of collegial, conciliar fellowship of clergy and laity from around the world that allows it to move into places, react to needs, and do so at speeds that modalities are unable to do.

We share the conviction that in the mutual nourishing of Christian values between our international Oratory members and in presenting our common faith in Jesus Christ through prayer, formation, and ministerial partnerships, Jesus Christ might once again be made

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present as “Good News” for the people of the earth. Christianity can be made anew in people’s lives.



## Chapter 4: The Rule of Life For Members of the Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel

This Rule of Life is a pattern for Christian discipline, designed to anchor our hearts in God, unite us in mission, and equip us for faithful service in the world based on the acronym FOCUS

### ***F — FORMATION: Commitment to Personal and Corporate Growth***

We make a daily commitment to “**put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness**” (Ephesians 4:24). This is the lifelong process of being transformed into the image of Christ.

Commitment	Description
<b>Daily Scripture</b>	To read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Holy Scriptures daily, ideally following the <b>Daily Office Lectionary</b> in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) or a structured Bible reading plan.
<b>Spiritual Reading</b>	To commit time each week to read works of Christian devotion, theology, history, or missiology that challenge and deepen our understanding of the faith.
<b>Regular Confession</b>	To make a practice of regular self-examination, confession of sin, and seeking the grace of reconciliation, recognizing that holiness is essential for effective mission.

**Biblical Example: St. Paul (Philippians 3:12-14)** – Constantly straining forward, viewing his entire life as an ongoing process of pressing toward the goal of knowing Christ.

**Historical Example: The Oxford Movement** – Emphasized the restoration of liturgical practices and spiritual disciplines to deepen the spiritual life of the clergy and laity.

### ***O — ORARE (Prayer): Commitment to Be a People of Prayer***

We commit to be a people of **PRAYER**, recognizing it as the **Pulse that Runs Through Our lives**. Through prayer, we seek communion with God, spiritual power for the mission, and discernment for the path ahead.

Commitment	Description
<b>The Daily Office</b>	To commit to praying the <b>Morning and Evening Prayer</b> from the Book of Common Prayer daily (or <i>at least</i> a significant portion of the liturgy), either corporately or privately.
<b>Eucharistic Life</b>	To attend the Holy Eucharist as often as possible (ideally weekly), recognizing it as the <b>source and summit</b> of our Christian life and the primary act of corporate prayer.
<b>Intercession</b>	To commit to a focused time of daily intercession for the <b>Church, the AUs' mission, the nations</b> , and the needs of others.

**Biblical Example: The Early Church (Acts 2:42)** – They devoted themselves to "the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (referring to the temple prayers/Daily Office).

**Historical Example: Bishop Lancelot Andrewes** – Renowned for his deep devotional life, captured in his *Preces Privatae* (Private Prayers), exemplifying structured, systematic intercession.

***C — COMMISSION: Commitment to Being a Great Commission People***

We commit to fulfilling the **Great Commission** (Matthew 28:19-20) in all aspects of our lives, recognizing that our ultimate purpose is the propagation of the Gospel and the making of disciples.

Commitment	Description
<b>Intentional Witness</b>	To pray daily for opportunities to share the Gospel or our faith journey with others, and to be prepared to give a reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15).

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<p><b>Missionary Support</b></p>	<p>To commit to <b>regular financial and prayer support</b> for the ANGLICAN UNION's mission work and other Patron mission efforts, both locally and globally.</p>
<p><b>Personal Evangelism</b></p>	<p>To engage in a tangible act of evangelism or Christian outreach at least once a month (e.g., inviting someone to church, hosting a discussion group, serving at an outreach event).</p>

**Biblical Example: The Apostle Peter (Acts 10)** – Overcoming cultural and religious barriers to preach the Gospel to the Gentile Cornelius, establishing the principle that the Gospel is for all nations.

**Historical Example: St. Augustine of Canterbury** – Sent by Pope Gregory the Great in 597 AD, he successfully established the Church in England, demonstrating a commitment to missionary expansion into new lands.

***U — UNITY: Commitment to Seek Unity in Love, Mission, and Vision***

We commit to seeking **Unity in Love, in Mission, in Vision**, to live into **Community**, and to promote **Historic Christian Unity** as a sign of the Kingdom to the world (John 17:21).

<p><b>Commitment</b></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p>
<p><b>Commitment to Community</b></p>	<p>To regularly gather with ANGLICAN UNION members and/or our local parish community for <b>fellowship, mutual encouragement, and accountability</b>, actively pursuing loving relationships.</p>
<p><b>Avoiding Gossip/Strife</b></p>	<p>To strictly avoid divisive speech, gossip, and the promotion of factionalism, commit instead to <b>speaking the truth in love</b> (Ephesians 4:15).</p>
<p><b>Ecumenical Prayer</b></p>	<p>To pray regularly for the unity of the Church, particularly within the Anglican Communion and with other historic Christian bodies, maintaining a <b>charitable posture</b> toward all Christians.</p>

**Biblical Example: Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37)** – Known as the "Son of Encouragement," he was an example of generous love, self-sacrifice, and bridge-building, bringing Paul to the Apostles and later mediating conflict.

**Historical Example: Richard Hooker (Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity)** – Sought to defend and articulate the position of the Anglican Church in a way that promoted peace and order against internal Puritan and external Roman pressures.

**S — SERVICE: Offering Our Lives for Christ, His Church, and His Gospel**

As Oratorians, we offer our lives for the sake of **Christ, his Church, and his Gospel**. We commit to being people who **serve others with compassion** and do the **Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy**.

Commitment	Description
<b>Works of Mercy</b>	To engage in a practical act of service or one of the traditional <b>Works of Mercy</b> (feeding the hungry, visiting the sick/imprisoned, clothing the naked, etc.) at least monthly.
<b>Servant Posture</b>	To seek out ways to serve our local parish and the ANGLICAN UNION in humble, behind-the-scenes ways, prioritizing the <b>needs of others</b> over our own preferences.
<b>Vocation as Service</b>	To view our daily work, family responsibilities, and civic duties as a direct opportunity for Christian service and a contribution to the flourishing of God's creation.

**Biblical Example: Dorcas (Tabitha) (Acts 9:36)** – Described as "full of good works and acts of charity," her life was a testament to practical, hands-on compassion within her community.

**Historical Example: The Oratorians (The original communities)** – Dedicated themselves to serving the poor and sick, promoting spiritual direction, and teaching, exemplifying a life given over to humble service.

### Conclusion: The Rule as Our Spiritual Compass

The F.O.C.U.S. Rule of Life is more than a list of duties; it is the **heart and framework of our life together in the Anglican Union.**

By embracing these intentional disciplines of **Formation, Prayer (Orare), Commission, Unity, and Service**, we seek to grow daily as faithful clergy and laity of Christ's Gospel. This Rule sets out the practical habits necessary to sustain a lifetime of fruitful, resilient ministry.

We pray that the consistent rhythm of this Rule will:

- **Foster Wisdom:** Enabling us to engage deeply with the richness of our Anglican inheritance and articulate the timeless truth of the Gospel afresh amidst the complexity of our own age.
- **Cultivate Compassion:** Developing within us a profound capacity for attentiveness to the world's needs, and nurturing a disposition of humble openness—to Christ himself, and to those among whom we are called to serve.

May this Rule be the spiritual compass that guides the Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel, drawing us closer to the heart of God and sending us out with power for the sake of His Kingdom. The Rule of Life is not intended to be a burden of how to live as an Oratorian but rather a dynamic pathway to a spirituality that fuels ministry and a ministry that fuels our spirituality. Living into the Rule of Life should foster the following spiritual commitments in summary.

- 1) A Commitment to Holiness and the Discipline of the Soul
2. A Commitment to Wisdom and the Discipline of the Mind
3. A Commitment to Charity and Justice as Disciplines of the Heart.
4. A Commitment to Servanthood as the Incarnation of the Three



## Chapter 5 –Ecclesiology and Missiology in a Post-Pandemic, Post-Christian World

The Anglican Union for the Propagation of the Gospel (ANGLICAN UNION) is called to be a **Prophetic, Sacramental, and Missionary Movement**—anchored in the Historic Faith and dynamically engaged with a skeptical, fragmented world.

### I. Ecclesiology: The Nature of the Church

In a world defined by digital isolation, distrust of institutions, and rapid cultural shifts, the ANGLICAN UNION must embody the Church not merely as an institution, but as an authentic, counter-cultural **Community of Encounter**.

#### A. Oratories as a "Hospital for the Soul"

The post-COVID reality has laid bare deep anxieties, grief, and spiritual disorientation. We envision the Church as:

1. **A Place of Healing:** Where the wounds of isolation, loss, and trauma are acknowledged and brought before the Great Physician, Jesus Christ. This requires intentional pastoral care and mental health awareness.
2. **A Sanctuary of Truth:** In an age of information overload and "alternative facts," the ANGLICAN UNION must be a stable witness to the reality of God, upheld by the authority of Holy Scripture and the teaching of the historic Church.

#### B. The Oratory as a Sacramental Community

We must re-emphasize the tangible, material presence of God's grace in a world that has learned to fear physical proximity:

1. **Reclaiming the Physical:** The Eucharist, Baptism, and the laying on of hands (Confirmation/Ordination) are radical acts that affirm the goodness of creation and the power of the Incarnation. The Church is a community that *gathers* in body, not just in spirit or virtually.
2. **Worship as Evangelism:** Our common worship must be beautiful, ancient, and accessible—a powerful witness that draws the seeker into the presence of the transcendent God.

#### C. The Oratory as a Discipling Body

The "post-Christian" label means nominal faith is dissolving; therefore, deep discipleship is paramount.

1. **From Consumer to Disciple:** We must move members away from passively consuming religious services toward active spiritual **Formation** (F.O.C.U.S. Rule), equipping every member to articulate and live the Gospel.

2. **Intergenerational Faith:** We commit to deliberately connecting the wisdom of our elders with the energy and digital fluency of the youth, ensuring the faith is actively *handed down* in a culture that disconnects generations.

## II. Missiology: The Mission of the Oratory Community and the Church

In a post-Christian context, the mission must shift from *reclaiming* cultural ground to **innovating new pathways** for the Gospel, embracing both proclamation and demonstration.

### A. Mission as Re-Evangelization of the West

We recognize that most people in our context are no longer simply unbelievers, but **de-churched and post-believing**—having rejected a previous, often distorted, version of Christianity.

1. **Gospel in Action (The Works of Mercy):** Our credibility is built through **Service** (F.O.C.U.S. Rule). We commit to the Works of Mercy—caring for the poor, the isolated, and the marginalized—as tangible evidence of the love of Christ.
2. **Apologetics of Authenticity:** Mission must address the contemporary questions: *What does a life of genuine Christian joy and integrity look like?* We must demonstrate authentic **Unity** (F.O.C.U.S. Rule) and love in a polarized society.

### B. Mission through The Anglican DNA

The ANGLICAN UNION should leverage the unique strengths of the Anglican tradition:

1. **The Via Media:** As a "Middle Way," Anglicanism is uniquely positioned to offer a stable, historic, orthodox faith that avoids both fundamentalist rigidity and liberal assimilation. We hold together Scripture, Tradition, and Reason.
2. **The Mission of the Oratory Parish:** The parish remains the primary missionary outpost. We commit to revitalizing local churches to become oratory parishes.... to be centers of **Prayer (Orare)**, community, and outreach, adapting their methods without compromising their message.

### C. Mission as Incarnational Presence

We shall offer a vision of being a Christian community that moves beyond solely attracting people to church events and embraces going out to where people are.

1. **Cultivating Missional Hubs:** We will support the creation of small, nimble Christian communities and "fresh expressions" of church that meet people in their vocational, neighborhood, and cultural contexts (e.g., pubs, co-working spaces, digital communities).
2. **Global Awareness:** Recognizing the center of gravity of the Anglican Communion has shifted to the Global South, we

commit to mutual partnership and learning, ensuring our **Commission** is truly global and bidirectional with our Patrons

The vision for the Anglican Union in this new era is to be **Faithful in Form and Flexible in Function**. We are called to be communities that encounter God deeply, serve others radically, and witness courageously, offering the enduring hope of the Gospel to a world desperately seeking a center.

Our commitment to the **Propagation of the Gospel** in a post-Christian world requires us to demonstrate the **Unity** for which Christ prayed. Our ecumenical vision is therefore not an end in itself, but a vital means of mission and a fundamental expression of our authentic ecclesial identity.

The Anglican Union commits itself to seeking full visible unity with the **historic Church catholic**. We believe that by faithfully embodying the **fullness of the Apostolic Tradition**, we are strategically positioned to pursue serious dialogue and partnership with other non-papal, ecumenical, and conciliar-minded ecclesial bodies globally, including Scandinavian Lutherans, traditional Old Catholics, Western Rite Orthodox, and like-minded communities in the USA, Africa, and the UK.

### **The Vision of Conciliar Catholicity**

This approach is rooted in a **Conciliar Ecclesiology**—a model of the Church governed by synodical consultation and bound by common faith, rather than centralized authority. This offers a **Via Media** between the extremes of institutional centralization and fragmented denominationalism. In this context, the Apostolic Succession is fundamental to the catholicity of the Church. This succession—imparted when a synodically-elected candidate for bishop is validly consecrated through prayer and the laying-on of hands by bishops who themselves possess it—ensures that our life, worship, doctrine, and ministry share in the common life of the local Church, ontologically and temporally.

### **Fulfilling the Lambeth Quadrilateral in Mission**

If orthodox Anglicans, traditional Old Catholics, Scandinavian Lutherans, and Western Rite Orthodox can bring their distinct yet complementary ecclesiological traditions to the conversation, the ANGLICAN UNION can contribute to forging a truly Ecumenical Catholicity.





- **Authentic Community:** The Oratory actualizes the vision of Christ: to be an authentic, welcoming community of disciples, open to new graces and committed to **love** to draw in the marginalized and excluded.

### **3. Missiological Strategy: Transformation through Mercy**

- **Pastoral Reach:** We are a **pastoral Anglican Union**, fully engaged in the modern world and mindful of post-pandemic struggles, reaching out to the suffering and neglected through the **Corporal Works of Mercy**.
- **Instrument of Grace:** The Oratory model is a powerful instrument of grace that combats the forces of materialism and individualism, reminding the faithful of their call to live intentionally and actively to hasten the **reign of God**.
- **The Leaven of Salvation:** As God's people, our calling is to be **God's leaven amid humanity**, proclaiming and bringing salvation, hope, and encouragement to a world that has gone astray. The AUPG is called to be the sign and path to God's reign of mercy, justice, and peace.

### **4. An Ancient/Future Response**

- **Evangelization and Transformation:** With proper formation of lay and ordained leaders, the Confraternity of Oratories has the potential to be a powerful instrument of **evangelization and transformation** from the personal to the global level.
- **Continuity and Vision:** This model aligns with the transformative vision established by the **Anglican Communion in 1920 (Resolution #9)**, adapting the historic faith for the challenges and demographics of the 21st century.