

EX FONTE

Journal of Ecumenical Studies in Liturgy

VOLUME 2 | 2023

REVIEW

Walter OXLEY – Ulrich RHODE (eds.),
A Treasure to Be Shared. Understanding *Anglicanorum
coetibus*, with a foreword by Steven J. LOPES,
Washington, DC 2022

CLINTON A. BRAND



exfonte.org

How to Cite

BRAND, Clinton A., Review: Walter OXLEY – Ulrich RHODE (eds.), *A Treasure to Be Shared. Understanding *Anglicanorum coetibus*, with a foreword by Steven J. LOPES*, Washington, DC 2022, in: *Ex Fonte – Journal of Ecumenical Studies in Liturgy* 2 (2023) 223–232.

DOI [10.25365/exf-2023-2-6](https://doi.org/10.25365/exf-2023-2-6)

Reviewer

Clinton A. Brand is associate Professor of English at the University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas.

GND [128891461X](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:5:1-63884-p0011-9)

Reviewed Book

Editors Walter OXLEY – Ulrich RHODE
Title *A Treasure to Be Shared*
Subtitle *Understanding *Anglicanorum coetibus**
Place Washington, DC
Year 2022
Publisher The Catholic University of America Press
Pages xi+182
LCCN 2022025383
ISBN 9780813235165
eISBN 9780813235172

Review

Walter OXLEY – Ulrich RHODE (eds.), *A Treasure to Be Shared. Understanding Anglicanorum coetibus*, with a foreword by Steven J. LOPES, Washington, DC 2022

Clinton A. BRAND

Nearly a hundred years ago, toward the end of the Malines Conversations, Dom Lambert Beauduin in 1925 dared to envision both the tentative possibility and the challenging goal of Anglican rapprochement and reunion with the Catholic Church.¹ He imagined an Anglican ecclesial identity “united, not absorbed” (*unie, non absorbée*), healed of schism and restored to Catholic communion, while keeping its distinctive character and traditions. Beauduin aspired, in other words, to find a framework of reconciliation that would assure unity and authority under the Petrine See whilst also acknowledging and preserving what Pope Paul VI, many years later (in 1970), would call “the worthy patrimony of piety and usage proper to the Anglican Church”. That this “patrimony” included much that had emerged and developed over the centuries of ecclesiastical separation would present particular challenges in its identification and repatriation. While inaugurating the age of Anglican-Catholic ecumenical dialogue, Beauduin’s hope for an Anglican “patriarchate” in Catholic communion was clearly impracticable at the time, and the promise of the Malines Conversations, informal as they were, seemingly came to nothing. Similarly, some fifty years of official ecumenical discussion via the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) have yielded little beyond the commitment to continue the process of dialogue amid dwindling pros-

¹ Cf. Lambert BEAUDUIN, *The Anglican Church, United not Absorbed*. Memorandum by a Canonist read by Cardinal Mercier (1925), in: Adelbert DENAUX (ed.), *From Malines to ARCIC. The Malines Conversations Commemorated* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium Lovanienses 130), Louvain 1997, 35–46.

pects of meaningful doctrinal and disciplinary convergence. Nevertheless, the ARCIC talks have served to sharpen the fundamental problem at the heart of the Malines Conversations, that is, the problem of authority. Interestingly, the vagaries of ARCIC have accentuated instability in the fissiparous Anglican Communion itself. The experience reveals that the challenge of corporate reunion has less to do with problems of mediating between Anglican and Catholic structures of authority than with the inability of Anglicans to agree among themselves and to represent their own patrimony coherently. From the beginning, Beauduin's vision of an Anglicanism "united, not absorbed" begged the question of authoritatively identifying what exactly from the Anglican tradition could be united and unifying in Catholic communion as something also capable and worthy of subsisting distinctively without absorption.

The impasse to realizing Beauduin's vision of Anglican patrimony "united, nor absorbed" in Catholic communion might have proved intractable were it not for the new context and auspicious framing of the issues that resulted in Pope Benedict XVI's 2009 Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*. This document established a framework for erecting Personal Ordinariates for Catholic converts from the Anglican tradition and providing for their distinctive ecclesial and liturgical life united with the See of Peter. As the name of the Apostolic Constitution suggests and as its first sentence indicates, the locus of accommodation shifted from the official governing structures of the Anglican Communion (a loose federation of ecclesial bodies, each housing diverse and often incompatible theologies) to self-selected "groups of Anglicans" who had been insistently petitioning for reception into the Catholic Church over the course of many years. *Anglicanorum coetibus* is, then, less an ecumenical initiative than a pastoral response fashioned precisely for those erstwhile Anglicans seeking the gift of authority as integral to the fullness of Catholic communion and for those ready to submit their patrimony to authoritative discernment and purification by the Holy See. The collection here under review, *A Treasure to Be Shared: Understanding Anglicanorum coetibus* is the fullest account to date of the making of the Apostolic Constitution and of the exercise of authority that went into its juridical and canonical development, its liturgical provisions, and its ecumenical implications. Though the book interestingly does not mention the Malines Conversations or Beauduin's dream of

an Anglican ecclesial identity “united, not absorbed” in Catholic communion, that formulation of the object and ideal of Anglican-Catholic reconciliation nevertheless runs as a golden thread throughout the collection and outlines the motivating purpose of the whole adventure informing and issuing from *Anglicanorum coetibus*.

Expertly edited by *Walter Oxley* (a former official of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) and *Ulrich Rhode* (Dean of the Faculty of Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University), this collection originated from papers presented at a special symposium held in Rome, October 2019, and hosted by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on occasion of the canonization of John Henry Newman and in anticipation of the tenth anniversary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution. The book gathers contributions from those curial officials and their collaborators who were and are among the chief architects and protagonists in the development of *Anglicanorum coetibus* and its ongoing implementation and supervision. Thus, the collection provides a valuable first-hand account and a front-row seat, so to speak, for a uniquely important perspective on one of the most audacious ecclesial and liturgical ventures of the pontificate of Benedict XVI, a project that moved beyond the experience of interminable dialogue and wishful thinking to harvest the first fruits of *realized* ecumenism. But what emerges most clearly from this volume is a strong sense of the ecclesiological thoughtfulness that went into the making of Pope Benedict’s Apostolic Constitution, together with the pastoral solicitude for a constituency of former Anglicans thereby integrated into Catholic communion while preserving their character and liturgical traditions, not to mention an overriding concern for evangelistic fruitfulness.

The book opens with a foreword by *Steven J. Lopes* (vii–xi), the second Ordinary and first Bishop of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter for the United States and Canada. Formerly an official of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, before his elevation to the episcopate, Lopes was actively involved at every stage of the initial development and subsequent implementation of *Anglicanorum coetibus*. His preface articulates the key principle of the Apostolic Constitution: “the unity of faith allows for a vibrant diversity in the expression of that same faith” (vii). Lopes makes clear that those Anglicans who petitioned for reception into the Church,

with the possibility of retaining elements of their Anglican ethos, customs, and liturgy, fully accepted the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as the standard of faith and doctrine. The challenge, then, in developing an appropriate juridical structure for this constituency of converts was that of balancing the imperatives of recognizing and maintaining authentic Anglican patrimony while also assuring the full integration of these groups of Anglicans coming into full communion with the rest of the Catholic faithful. Far from providing a kind of holding pen or a half-way house for recovering Anglicans, the motive and rationale for the provisions of *Anglicanorum coetibus* was sustaining the Anglican heritage in Catholic communion and simultaneously making sure that Ordinariate communities would become “a stable feature of Catholic life” (x).

After Bishop Lopes’s foreword there comes the book’s introduction, printing the address convoking the 2019 symposium at the Pontifical Gregorian University, by *Cardinal Luis Ladaria* (1–4), Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and successor to Cardinal Müller and to Cardinal Levada († 2019), who was under Benedict XVI most directly responsible for shaping *Anglicanorum coetibus* and supervising its implementation. In the context of paying tribute to the late Cardinal Levada and referencing John Henry Newman on occasion of his canonization, Ladaria frames the papers which follow by commending the Ordinariate faithful in attendance at the symposium for the courage of following their conscience informed by the truth of Christ into the fullness of Catholic communion.

Then *J. Augustine DiNoia*, Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, contributes a chapter on “The Historical Context of the Development of *Anglicanorum coetibus*” (5–17). DiNoia was another figure instrumental in shaping the Apostolic Constitution by virtue of his roles, at the time, at both the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Congregation of Divine Worship. He also presided over the Interdicasterial Working Group *Anglicanae Traditiones*, which was responsible for fleshing out the Apostolic Constitution’s liturgical provisions. DiNoia’s account of the historical background really focuses on a series of events, dating back to around 2006, proceeding from multiple overtures and inquiries from various groups of Anglicans from around the world, all intent on joining the Catholic Church and interested in exploring what from their

Anglican patrimony could be retained. Though he offers a number of observations about wider and longer Anglican ecclesial history (with its often simultaneous centripetal and centrifugal movements both for and against reunion), the most fascinating parts of this chapter concern the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's response to these petitions from different Anglican groups over many years. This response led to the establishment, in October 2008, of a "Special Commission for Corporate Reunion" (6–7). According to DiNoia's account, this investigatory commission both validated and redirected the original intention of the ARCIC process while also seeking to build on the legacy of Pope John Paul II's 1980 Pastoral Provision for Episcopalian converts in the United States (a somewhat limited accommodation for former Episcopalian ministers to be ordained Catholic priests and for the erection of personal parishes in American Catholic dioceses for communities of converts from the Anglican tradition). In view of the international range of Anglican contacts with the Holy See and the new ecumenical situation entailed by the ongoing fracturing of the Anglican Communion, writes DiNoia, the Special Commission came to see its mandate not in terms of *whether* to make further provision for former Anglicans but rather to discern *how* such a juridical structure might be structured and implemented. With the approval of the Congregation and the blessing of the Pope, the Apostolic Constitution was the result.

Gianfranco Ghirlanda, longtime Rector of the Pontifical Gregorian University (and recently named a cardinal in August 2022), was prominent as a member of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts and central to working out the canonical issues and clarifying the juridical shape of what would become the Personal Ordinariates established under the auspices of *Anglicanorum coetibus*. His contribution to the book under review (19–88) provides a painstaking overview of the Apostolic Constitution's successive drafts and the considerable pushing-and-pulling that took place in the curia from 2008 through 2009 to provide the proposed Ordinariates with the appropriate autonomy, permanence, and the right ecclesial oversight to fulfill their purposes. As Ghirlanda makes clear, the two central exigencies that motivated the juridical and canonical formulation of the Apostolic Constitution were (1) "that of nourishing and maintaining within the Catholic Church some spiritual, liturgical, and pastoral traditions of

Anglicanism as a richness to be shared,” and (2) “that of full integration of groups of the faithful and individuals already coming from Anglicanism within the life of the Catholic Church” (40–41). With abundant context and detail, Ghirlanda explains how and why the Holy See rejected the possibility of configuring the new ecclesial structure for Anglican converts as a Personal Prelature or as an Apostolic Administration. Rather, this juridical entity assumed the form of a Personal Ordinariate, on the model of the Military Ordinariates, and clarified as a personal particular church, directly answerable to the Holy See and constituted as juridically equivalent to a diocese. As an instance of the principle that the “Christological reality is the foundation of the ecclesiological reality” (49), Ghirlanda amply testifies to Holy See’s careful solicitude to assure a Catholic home for Anglican patrimony “united, not absorbed”.

The substance of that patrimony in its liturgical expression is the subject of *Hans-Jürgen Feulner’s* chapter on the development and promulgation of liturgical forms proper to the new Personal Ordinariates (89–151). A noted liturgical scholar with an expertise in Anglican worship, Feulner served as a member of the Interdicasterial Working Group *Anglicanae Traditiones*, together with other liturgical experts, some of them former Anglicans, and representatives of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Congregation for Divine Worship. His chapter offers the fullest, most granular account to date of the process of discerning and distilling the distinctive Anglican language of public prayer for Catholic worship. Indeed, the corpus of Anglican liturgical texts and rituals, winnowed and purified for conformity to Catholic doctrine, is the single most tangible instance of Anglican patrimony brought home to affirm a diversity of expression in the unity of the faith. As Feulner explains, the liturgical texts and rites promulgated for Ordinariate usage constitute “an integral variant of the Roman Rite” (92): “this Anglican patrimony is given a legitimate integrity by the Church’s authority” (93). In this richly detailed chapter, Feulner goes on to survey not only the sacramental and liturgical texts promulgated so far for Ordinariate worship, but he also reviews the work of *Anglicanae Traditiones* in aggregating a wide variety of traditionally Anglican sources for shaping the orders of Mass, Baptism, Confirmation, Matrimony, and Christian Funerals, among other rites, together with texts gleaned for the approved forms of the Divine Office. Feulner discusses the

working group's choice to favor the traditional hieratic dialect of a resonant liturgical vernacular best characterized as "Prayer Book English." And he, likewise, considers the decision to prioritize the "classic" lineage of the Books of the Common Prayer in their various national editions, while taking into account the long history and trajectory of Prayer Book revision, including its points of convergence with both traditional and modern forms of the Roman Rite. He notes also how the working group did not neglect specifically Anglo-Catholic adaptations and augmentations of BCP texts and rites, as instanced in the so-called Anglican missals and breviaries, for a better realization among Catholic-minded Anglicans themselves of the standards of Catholic liturgical praxis. That such resources were readily at hand and almost tailor-made for Catholic repatriation testifies both to the vigor of liturgical *ressourcement* in Anglican quarters and to the way in which Anglicans pioneered and anticipated the norms that would inform *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and shape the aspirations of liturgical renewal across the Anglican-Catholic divide. It is apt, then, that those elements of sanctification and truth specially preserved and then cultivated in the Anglican liturgical tradition should now find their proper habitation in the ecology of Catholic communion, both to honor a goodly heritage and for the sake of renewed evangelistic vigor.

In the book's last chapter, *Mark A. Langham* († 2021), who was from 2008 to 2013 an official of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, rounds out the collection with reflections on the ecumenical implications of *Anglicanorum coetibus* after ten years of maturation, during the time in which the Ordinariates in England, the United States, Canada, and Australia have put down roots and begun to grow (153–166). Langham's contribution not only assesses the Ordinariate project in the larger context of a reflective ecumenism, but also considers how the Anglican heritage, "united, not absorbed," can enrich the wider fellowship of Anglophone Catholics and how that heritage, newly imbued with Catholic clarity, certainty, and consistency in the bonds of communion, holds great promise as a model of unity in diversity.

A Treasure to be Shared: Understanding Anglicanorum coetibus is a richly informative collection of perspectives that will surely become indispensable in the burgeoning scholarship on one of the most audacious and fruitful endeavors to emerge from the pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI.

The volume is an essential resource for scholars seeking to understand the genesis, development, implementation of the Apostolic Constitution, and its pages helpfully include a Select Bibliography of relevant liturgical sources, Church documents, and scholarly commentary (167–178). This book and the witness of both doctrinal rigor and pastoral solicitude evinced by its authors powerfully testify to the promise of Lambert Beauduin’s dream of a *realized* ecumenism whereby Anglican patrimony brought home and given a new ecclesial identity in Catholic communion can subsist distinctively (*without confusion*) yet inhere integrally (*without division*) in the oneness of the Church’s salvific life and work.