

Affirming Catholicism

Inspiration and hope  in the Anglican Communion

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PRESS RELEASE

10/05/10 – for immediate release

Affirming Catholicism welcomes the Report of the Women Bishops Revision Committee which was published on Saturday 8th May 2010 (see <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/pr4210.html>). Our gratitude and thanks are due to all those who served on the Revision and Steering Committees which have enabled the Church to come to this point. Now is the time to move forward, in line with the proposals, so that women can take their full place within the Church of England's ministry.

As the Report says, the legislation proposed "will, for the first time, enable women to be admitted to all orders of ministry. By preserving intact the authority of the diocesan bishop it will avoid any changes in the historic understanding of that office and of the episcopate more generally. And by making statutory arrangements for those with theological difficulties it will endeavour to preserve that broad and comprehensive character of the Church of England that is one of its defining and most attractive features." (para. 459)

The Chair of Affirming Catholicism, Rev'd Jonathan Clark, said, "The Report bears witness to the careful exploration of the many and complex issues surrounding this legislation, and to the desire of all the members of the Church to retain the highest possible degree of unity. We recognise with sadness that many traditionalist Catholics do not believe that the provision for those who disagree is adequate to their needs. For those many Catholics in the Church of England who affirm the ordained ministry of women, though, this is good news – and we encourage the General Synod to move forward in working with these proposals."

Affirming Catholicism has always stated its desire both to see women admitted to the episcopate, and also to include within the Church those who oppose that decision. We continue to affirm that the Church cannot remain as one body if it is divided into two parts, one of which does not recognise the ministry of the other. We are encouraged that the proposed legislation preserves the Church's integrity, and thus serves its mission.

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