

My Dear Friends

I write to you at a time when thoughtful and prayerful debate is taking place across the whole of the TAC throughout the world with reference to the Anglicanorum Coetibus. This is a time when we are challenged by the Holy Spirit to consider with great care the consequences of our actions as we strive to unite the whole Catholic and Apostolic Church as One. It has been one of the greatest challenges that have confronted all Christians since the schism of 1054 between East and West and tragically to this day, it is still unresolved.

The late Pope John Paul worked throughout his Pontificate to rebuild relationships between Orthodoxy and Rome and he clearly set out his vision and aspiration in his book called, *One In 2000*. Sadly his vision and aspiration were not fulfilled during his lifetime, but that does not mean, that in the fullness of time, unity will not be achieved.

We as "Continuing Anglicans" share that same vision and aspiration to see all Christians united within the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and strive to see both the Vision and Aspiration to come to fruition, however we have to be certain individually and collectively that this is "that time."

All of us share in the Vision Of The Child, " The Star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was". "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His Mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him" Matt. ii, 10-11.

No wonder that when they saw again the Star the Wise Men "rejoiced with exceeding great joy." It told them of God's continual care; it was the assurance to them of the reward of their Faith and Perseverance; their expectation was to be fulfilled, they were on the threshold of the King. All the longing of their journey, all the endurance, all the questioning and doubt were at an end. The desire of their hearts was accomplished, and as they entered the house of the Son of God, there met them the Divine Vision: Mary the Blessed Mother, the witness of the Earthly Birth, the young Child, the Son of the Highest, the Incarnate Deity: faith saw through the veil of the flesh; "they fell down, and worshipped Him."

What can the toil and the labour, the journey and its weariness, the hopes and fears, have seemed to them in that supreme moment? All forgotten, all counted as for nothing, for that one Vision of God's Holy Child. The Star of Divine revelation in the Church leads the faithful seekers after Jesus, shining brightly when it seems obscured, illuminating when earthly help seems vain, a present witness to the Providence of God.

We suffer in the journey heavenwards; the way is long and difficulties are many; we seek and at times do not seem to find. But the Star of God's love shines above and around us, beckoning us onward and onward still. The place where the King dwells is so lowly. His Presence Chamber is so humble, we might, but for Divine guidance, overlook it, and pass it by.

We are led to the Home of the Son of God, the Sacrament wherein He vouchsafes His Presence; we enter in, and the old story is fulfilled to us; we find the young Child, God and Man, and blessed are we if, with true' and loving faith, we fall down and worship Him.

The Vision is earth's highest joy, highest comfort, fullest blessing. He is God, and God is ours: He is Man, and in the fellowship of His Manhood we have joy and peace now, and the promise of blessings as yet unknown, the fullness of which can only be revealed when we are freed from the burden of mortality.

Yes, "the vision is yet for an appointed time," Hab. ii.3. It shall be revealed in its fullness in the "house not made with hands." 2 Cor. v.1. Then shall we look back upon the journey ended, upon faith's reward, and hopes and aspirations accomplished with the eyes of love perfected; then we shall see the young Child and Mary His Mother; then shall we be filled with the Vision of the Eternal Love, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and worship with a worship which shall be forever "united" perfect and eternal.

May Almighty God Bless you all

Yours in Christ Jesus

Father Ian