

My Dear Friends

The revelations over the past few weeks regarding MPs' expenses have cast a real question mark over the integrity of our politicians. We appear to have created a ruling political elite that see themselves as above the law, who can do whatever they want to do without having any due regard to the people who have elected them on trust to serve the nation.

We face a period of uncertainty and potential upheaval as each individual politician and their respective parties try to reclaim lost credibility and respect. This will take more than just fine words and minor gesturing; the problems lie much deeper than the superficial revelations of late.

The reality of our national disgrace goes far beyond the palace of Westminster. The whole of the "establishment" has fallen into a state of decadence and decay; it has to all intents and purposes lost the trust of the people. The state Church has abandoned its historical ground, for a new shifting-sands foundation. This in part is what can happen when Parliament and Church see themselves as all-powerful and ignore the historical foundation upon which they stand.

Once our political and parliamentary system were the envy of the world, "Westminster the Mother of Parliaments" copied by countless old Empire and non-Empire nations as the model to use ensuring credibility, equality, respect and possibly admiration by those who have used our Democratic system to govern their nations.

Today, Parliament and some of our politicians are being mocked and ridiculed for their actions, even though in their defence and in many cases, they operated within the "rules". The rules, however, were blatantly unfair and unjust. This is nothing more than a systematic failure of the Establishment deluding itself that it is above the law of the land.

Should we be so surprised at this latest series of disappointing revelations? I think not. It is not the first time nor will it be the last, when we will see the uncovering of practices that are wrong. Should we be depressed by what we have seen and heard? I think not, at least in this sense; that our treasured democracy and our ability to expose this type of wrong has forced it upon our politicians to make radical changes to a disgraced system, in order to restore public trust and confidence over a period of time.

The Church has been in steep decline now for very many years. Attendances have dwindled and church buildings have been closing at an alarming rate. The so called leaders have not led their people into the Promised Land, but into a deadly desert of plague and locusts that threaten to devour everything in sight. Religion and politics are rapidly becoming totally irrelevant to most people and within the next hundred years, the Christian Church in particular may end up as nothing more than the tiniest of fragments, with many of our cathedrals and churches being demolished or used for other purposes. Could it happen? Most definitely it will, if action is not taken to halt the decline very soon.

Leadership and vision are really desperately required and the greatest charge against both our Parliament and to some extent the Church is that they act with an almost complete disregard to the basic needs and views of the people. The Synod vote that crippled the state Church was swung by just one vote. What has happened since that time has seen the views of the minority (49% of the total) being completely ignored, causing the chaos and hurt that has engulfed the Anglican Church ever since.

There are those like ourselves who are continuing as before. There are those who are trying to continue, but their continuing is compromised by remaining within the structures of an apostate Church. There are those who believe that becoming a part of the Roman Church in some form or other is the best way to secure the future of the Continuum, particularly the TTAC.

For every Christian, a united Church where all can truly claim to be a part of the one true Catholic and Apostolic Church should be a shared aspiration and desire, but we are a very long way from that at this time. There is very great danger when leaders, either political or in the Church, ignore the basic desires, views, and wishes of the very people whom God has called them to serve.

There are very many differences of culture and history in our international Church Family; it is what helps to make our Communion truly representative of the One True Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, throughout the world. God moves in a mysterious way, and HIS ways manifest themselves by the peoples of each nation state being enabled to follow him in their truly unique Anglican Traditional way.

So what of our nation? Where do we go from here, and in particular the TTAC? The politicians will have to sort themselves out and quickly if the whole process of our parliamentary democracy is not to be damaged beyond repair. The reality is though, that the ballot box is all-powerful. Reforms will be required to restore trust and credibility to a damaged institution.

The TTAC does not have ballot boxes nor should it, but the views of all should be heard in the correct way. We need to continue to build the Church based on sound governance within the rules of our Canons and Constitution. We need strong visionary leadership to take this Diocese forward with confidence into the future. We need to welcome in, all those who seek refuge from what ever source and build up strong worshipping communities throughout the country.

Structures are required which will bring about order, but we do not need to burden ourselves with unnecessary rules and regulations beyond those contained within our existing governing documents. Relationships with other denominations who share our position of being an integral and authentic part of the One True Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church should be actively encouraged both at parish level and a national and international levels. We are sure of our ground. Our own TTAC publications clearly state and explain our apostolic pedigree, and we have nothing to prove to anyone. We are what we are.

Anglicanism is one of the several ways in which God communicates with His people. It is a part of His kingdom on earth and adds richness to the Christian Faith as preached and practised around the world. In this country, the TTAC is the true ancient Church as manifested in the Continuum. So now let us consider this. God needs, I truly believe, HIS Church in these Islands to reach as many people as it can. And it can reach them by simply allowing the beauty of its liturgy, music and tradition to speak to the people. Our priceless 1662 Prayer Book, and the Authorized Version of the Bible help to make our contribution unique in this broken nation.

Rome too has its own part to play, and its unique heritage and history meet the needs of those who adhere to its teachings and practices. The Orthodox Church in this country has grown over recent years and meets the needs of many who have settled within our shores from Eastern Orthodox Countries. Both bring something different and unique to the people of this land.

We are neither Roman nor Orthodox, but continuing Traditional Anglicans serving God in our way at this time. The future may well see, in God's time, all three becoming one. But we cannot allow ourselves to be distracted from our mission here and now. Build we must, and grow in strength as we go, guided at all times by the Holy Spirit with us, proclaiming the Gospel Message even to those who have closed their ears to the truth. The reality is simple; we are who we are. We must not falter or lack courage, and we must unite under the one banner.

Healing is a very important part of our Missionary work; this nation, this world, needs healing.. Forgiveness is an essential component of every Christian; this nation, this world, needs forgiveness. Charity is a crucial element of every Christian; this nation, this world, needs Charity. But above all else, each Christian being should be filled with God's Love. This nation needs that LOVE; this world needs that Love.

May God Bless You all

Yours In Christ Jesus

Father Ian Gray+