

The Apostolic Constitution

Anglicanorum coetibus

A statement from Bishop Crispian Hollis

This Constitution, published by the Holy See on November 9th 2009, spells out the canonical structure whereby groups of Anglican clergy and faithful can enter into corporate union with the Catholic Church.

In establishing Personal Ordinariates, the Holy See is responding to “repeated and insistent petitions” from groups of Anglicans to be received corporately into full communion with the Catholic Church, while, at the same time, being able to preserve elements of their distinctive Anglican spiritual and liturgical patrimony.

Each Ordinate is subject to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the other appropriate Roman dicasteries.

The Ordinary may be a bishop or a priest appointed by the Holy See through the normal channels of consultation. He will be a member of his respective Episcopal Conference and must maintain close ties of communion and collaboration with the Bishop or Bishops of the dioceses in which the Ordinate is established.

There is much more detail in the Constitution and its complementary norms which safeguard the integrity of the Ordinate and its relationship with the local Catholic diocese and Bishops’ Conference.

I think that it is important to emphasise that this Constitution is about corporate reunion. It is not dealing with those journeys of faith by which individual Anglicans come into full communion with the Catholic Church.

I welcome all that is contained in these documents and I look forward to working out the implications of the Apostolic Constitution. At the same time, I would like to stress that our life and dialogue with the Anglican Church will continue to be an important priority and an urgent commitment.

Portsmouth

10th November 2009