



The joy of being a part of the Traditional Anglican Communion



As Anglicanism has fragmented over the past forty years, many separate and sometimes quite odd groups have emerged. Almost all are well-meaning, and genuinely seek to preserve “Orthodox Anglicanism”, although that in itself is sometimes difficult to define, but often, as they have developed, they have disagreed and split and split again, resulting in a multitude of groups worldwide, each claiming to be the ‘sole custodian’ of true Anglicanism in the world.

Being part of a world-wide Communion has been what has brought the Traditional Anglican Communion through many of the teething troubles that have damaged some of our brethren. When some leading TAC figures were determined to go to Rome, the voice of the *Communion*, through the Bishops of the College of Bishops, kept us together and steered us through what were very dangerous waters. No one person, no matter how persuasive, is permitted to carry away the Communion. That is the unified power of being a *Communion*. Had we been a smaller, less organised and cohesive group, they could well have done as they pleased.

Being part of the world-wide Traditional Anglican Communion does very important things for us, its members, and I believe we need to take note of our blessings.

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Firstly, it gives us a living **fellowship**. We can go to Canada, England, Mozambique, Australia, Zimbabwe, the USA, India, Guatemala, Zambia and many other places and find like-minded brothers and sisters of the faith, worshipping and believing just as we do. That makes us strong and keeps us connected. It reminds us of our unified Anglican life. Fellowship is family, and family is security.

Secondly, being a part of the TAC keeps us all **accountable**. Our Concordat, and our common life as member churches in a true Body of Christ does not allow me, or any individual Bishop or leader, to take our people down an erroneous path. It also keeps clear orthodox Christian teaching amongst all our people, our Bishops and clergy. I *need* the Communion, and, amazingly, the Communion needs me!

Thirdly, it keeps us **humble**. As we see the considerable accomplishments of many of our people in many different places of the world, we can be spurred on to greater acts of faith and charity ourselves. We can be taught by the quiet wisdom of Bishop Craig Botterill, be refreshed by the holiness and sharp humour of Bishop David Robarts, learn from the dignity and intensity of our Acting Primate, Archbishop Samuel Prakash, be refreshed by the theological insights of Bishop James Hiles. The energy and Apostolic zeal of Fr Wellington Murinda helps us remain focussed on our task as preachers of the Gospel, whilst the innovative discipline of Fr Andrew Mukuyamba and Bishop Ruben Rodriguez, despite facing grinding poverty amongst their people in Zambia and Central America respectively, challenge our own lifestyle and our levels of generosity. Equally, our brethren in different parts of the world find themselves challenged and excited by our African expression of Anglican life, and so the Communion works both ways; teaching, challenging, supporting, inspiring.

The Traditional Anglican Communion is not the *only* path; we cannot be that arrogant, but I believe, most completely, that leaving the Canterbury Anglican Communion for the TAC was the one and only time I could justify such a radical change of church affiliation. The Traditional Anglican Communion offers all of us our one chance to continue in the faith of our fathers; it offers us a clean slate and the chance to excel for Christ in His service in a strong, unified Anglican expression.

Here, in this Communion, I can be at home and be at peace.

God bless you.

+Michael, Southern Africa.



Dynamic ministry in the Eastern Cape Regional Deanery

Ministry in the Eastern Cape Regional Deanery is difficult. There are great challenges of poverty and unemployment, and the parishes are far apart. Ministry is largely rural, and those of you who have exercised such a ministry know that it is time-consuming and requires great patience.



Despite their difficulties, this area has shown remarkable growth. The Regional Dean, Fr Augustine Koliti, and his band of very able clergymen have steadily built up their parishes and their witness as clergy of the TAC. These are not the kind of idle boasts that are found in many websites, but real, tangible parish growth and development. Their most recent addition has been Fr Jongikhaya Gwayi, a man of considerable ministerial experience and great pastoral zeal, Licenced to the TAC at the Clergy Retreat in December. In May, I was privileged to journey to the Eastern Cape and enjoy fellowship with our wonderful clergy there. We held a Regional Deanery meeting and dealt with many issues facing the church and ministry in the Eastern Cape. I was also able to see some of the achievements in terms of parish growth in the area. I left excited, inspired and filled with gratitude to Our Lord who has given me such fine brothers in the faith!



Fr Gwayi teaches some of his faithful people



One of the rural villages of the Eastern Cape

There are a multitude of 'Anglican' churches in this area, mostly based around a single person with a few clergy. The problem of schism between groups has been great and there have been bitter power struggles. Fr Augustine Koliti has had his hands full with these people, but he has shown great skill and wisdom in managing and guiding those wishing to find a more stable church environment within the TAC. He has not welcomed whole parishes and communities, as one would expect, but has asked for individuals to come with their families and worship in the already established parishes and prove their commitment, both to Our Lord Jesus Christ and to the TAC, over a considerable period of time. Only once he has satisfied himself with their genuine desire to be a part of the church in Southern Africa and the wider TAC, has he allowed

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them to take any leadership roles and begin new works in the communities in which they live. We have always maintained that we are not a church that chases numbers, but that we are looking for deep and lasting commitment from our people; a commitment that will carry the TAC into the future and build a spiritual home for our people. I commend Fr Augustine for his wise leadership.

Back to the time of my visitation. Our first visit was to **Mqonci**, a rural area deep inland and difficult to get to. Here Fr Gwayi showed us an almost completed church, still needing a floor and ceiling, and introduced us to the local chief and the people. The church was an impressive structure, able to take about 200 people. The local leader, Chief Mtwesi, was made a Lay Minister at the large Sunday service.



The church in Mqonci. Chief Mtwesi is the tall man in the middle of the left photo



The church at Mqonci – a real work of faith!

Another view of the church at Mqonci



Mtentu:

The next stop was **Mtentu**, a village very close to the final resting place of former President Nelson Mandela. This beautiful and completed church structure is already in use and we enjoyed prayer and fellowship with the community. The church is in a lovely setting, surrounded by rolling hills, and we were welcomed by enthusiastic members of the local community.



The beautiful setting of the church at Mtentu.



The people of this area have worked extremely hard to build a centre for worship and meeting that allows the church to be a focal point for the community. Fr Gwayi and his local leadership are to be heartily congratulated on bring this project to fruition. Mr Mapoyi (*seen in the lower left photo on the next page*) was particularly involved in the construction and completion of the church. His sacrificial giving allowed this project to succeed.

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Community leaders with Fr Koliti and Fr Gwayi and the attentive congregation inside the church.

We left Mtentu with a farewell song and an impromptu dance by Deacon Lennox Busani!



On to Butterworth....The Parish of St Monica:

The focal point of the visit was the area around the market town of Butterworth. Here, the main parish centre of the area has just been completed - the new and very lovely church of **St Monica**. Butterworth is a rural town with a large population, and the planting of the church here, in a prominent position, is part of the strategy to raise the profile of the TAC in the area, and show people that we really mean business!

The name of St Monica was chosen for the parish because she is honoured throughout Christendom as a virtuous and holy woman. St Monica was the mother of St Augustine of Hippo, the great Fourth Century Saint and a native of North Africa. Her intercessions and tears were instrumental in his conversion to Christianity. Our prayer is that her intercessions will allow the parish to flourish and the Gospel to be carried out from this community!

The impressive new Parish church of St Monica, Butterworth



The entire area gathered at the Parish church of St Monica for a Festival Mass. We enjoyed what can only be described as a truly African celebration. The service had many facets; the blessing of the new building, Licencing of 30 Lay Ministers, Confirmation and First Holy Communion for over 100 Candidates, the Licencing of three clergymen, and the Institution of the Rector of the parish, Fr Gwayi. Our service began the night before with Solemn Evensong, and continued with songs and vigils through into Sunday, finally ending at around 14h00! Exhausting, exhilarating, uplifting, unifying are just some of the words one could use to describe the amazing event. The commitment and sheer hard work of all the community is to be highly commended, and the leadership and dignity of the clergy was a pleasure to behold. We are assured of growth and progress in the Eastern Cape with such energy and drive amongst the people of God.

I have a gallery of pictures that will probably speak louder than words and will give you, the reader, a glimpse into these celebrations. I wish I had an audio of the accompanying noise....it was a joyful noise to the Lord indeed!



A warm, noisy and enthusiastic welcome!

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Fr and Mrs Gwayi



Two of the local ladies welcoming us to the churches



Solemn Sung Evensong



Some of the young people



Getting ready for lunch tomorrow



It always amazes me to see how the women of the parish throughout our Diocese are able to feed every single person that attends the service, in this case, more than 300 people for the evening, morning and after the main service received a full meal. Not a man, woman or child ever leaves hungry, and it is all done with such grace and love. Our mothers are tremendously organised and theirs is a real ministry to the people of God. We acknowledge them and thank them for all they mean to all of us.

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The blessing of the church building (above)

Consecrating the Altar (Below)



Blessing the new Altar and Sanctuary

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Some of the newly Licenced Lay Ministers



Fr Jongikhaya Gwayi is presented as the Rector of The Parish of St Monica, Butterworth.

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While the Candidates streamed forward for Confirmation, the choir sang and sang and sang!



A holy moment....the Sacrament of Confirmation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the seeker of a devout and godly life.



The Holy Mass



Concelebration at the newly consecrated Altar



The Invitation.



The Clergy are impeccably presented and disciplined at the altar. I have the highest regard for their commitment and zeal in their ministry. With such dedicated clergy, the church can only go forward in the service of Christ Our Lord in the Eastern Cape.

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*Fr Fonya, Fr Geleba and Fr Madonzwa receive their Licences from the Bishop.
 (Fr Augustine Koliti, the Regional Dean for the Eastern Cape is on the right)*



A present for the Bishop, the Dismissal and a Confirmation picture with Fr Gwayi and Fr Koliti



I do hope that you have enjoyed this account of the vibrant life of the TAC in Southern Africa. In October, I will be visiting the area again for the Feast of St Francis of Assisi (The Festival will be the Patronal Feast of the Parish of St Francis in East London) and I will let you have a further update on the growth of the church there.

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Pentecost

The new exterior of Holy Cross, Pretoria was perfect for Pentecost!



At St Andrew's Mondeor, all wore red and the Sunday School made tongues of fire





I leave you with the beauty of sunrise over the Indian Ocean at East London. Our Lord is the source of our lives and our hope for the future. His mercy extends to all people, but without a faithful witness, many will be lost. His Church is the vehicle of grace and hope for all people, and we are blessed to be a part of that holy family, with that holy task.

It is my prayer that as you have read this Ad Clerum, you have been encouraged in your own walk of faith, and given courage to press forward as a true disciple, wherever it is you have been called to serve.

**“O Lord Jesus Christ, help me to be a bright and burning
light in a dark world. Amen”**

May Our Lord Jesus Christ bless, preserve and keep you.

In Christ

Bishop Michael Gill
Southern Africa