

ARTICLE

Should The Episcopal Church Create a Missionary Diocese in Europe?

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Abstract

There are four Anglican jurisdictions in continental Europe. Two are national churches, Spain and Portugal; two are non-geographical jurisdictions serving persons not geographical regions. These four have overlaps among themselves; they also overlap with full-communion partners. The Episcopal Church's Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe is not officially a diocese, though it acts like one. Like the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe, its mission is not limited geographically. The competition unwittingly engendered creates conflict that detracts from the part of God's mission accorded to each Church. This essay argues that creating an official Episcopal diocese in Europe is not the way forward, if common care for that mission is and should be the primary concern of all.

Keywords: Anglican, Communion, ecclesiology, Episcopal Church, Europe, jurisdictions, mission

Should The Episcopal Church create a Missionary Diocese² in Europe? I will argue that answering the question (a) is urgent, for it concerns the mission of the Church; and (b) should rather be seen not only in terms of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe³ itself, but also in both the historical mission of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Church, to which every Episcopalian automatically belongs, and the individual histories and contexts of the Anglican and other full-communion jurisdictions existing in Europe. Specifically, the answer to this question can be provided not only by The Episcopal Church but also its Anglican and full-communion partners. For the four Anglican jurisdictions in Europe are each somewhat unusual. Among other things, each operates alongside at least one other full-communion partner.

The jurisdictional question is central because it continues to present clear and present obstacles to the common mission of the Anglican churches and our

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²For a definition, see the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church: Articles V and VI of the Constitution; Canons I.10, 11; also III.9.11 (c).

³See tec-europe.org (accessed 3 October 2019).

full-communion partners, as well as being able to employ each one's special charisms to specific local challenges to that common mission. A concerted effort needs to be made in order to facilitate the accomplishing of our share of God's mission in Europe and beyond.

If in fact this common mission is not shared among the churches, then the answer to this essay's question is a simple 'yes'. With or without the other churches, the Episcopal Churches in Europe have a mission to carry out, and they need to be clearly organized for that purpose.

Of course, I shall argue that we do indeed have a common mission, and the obstacles to being as fully a part of God's mission as possible across this continent must be swept aside, beginning with the jurisdictional question. First, I will summarize our history in Europe, then analyze the peculiarities of each Anglican jurisdiction, and conclude with a suggestion for a way forward.

How Episcopalians Came to Ask the Question

Since the dawn of the nineteenth century, American Episcopalians have worshipped in various cities of Europe. In 1859, the General Convention created a canonical status (Canon I.15) for these people to form congregations of The Episcopal Church, placing them in the jurisdiction of the Presiding Bishop. Soon thereafter they organized themselves into what they began to call 'the Convocation of American Churches in Europe'. In 2009, the General Convention began the process of approving the Convocation's desire to have its name in the canons of the Church appear as 'the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe', since American expatriates are now in the minority of these congregations, indeed, as are Episcopalians.⁴

The Convocation elected its bishop in charge (a term from the 1859 canon denoting a bishop to whom the Presiding Bishop's jurisdiction is delegated) for the first time in 2001, accelerating a process of acting more and more as a diocese of The Episcopal Church. In fact, in almost every respect the Convocation functions like a diocese, and in terms of numbers, is larger than several dioceses in the United States. In 1999 the Convention of the Convocation approved a strategic plan that called for the Convocation to become a diocese, in anticipation of the formation of an Anglican Province of Europe. Ten years later, a resolution at General Convention to study the development of the Convocation into a 'missionary diocese' of the church was referred to the appropriate standing commissions.

Defining the Problem: Chaplaincy and Parish

'... there may not be two bishops in a city'. So reads Canon 8 of the First Council of Nicaea (325 AD).⁵ This has been a basic tenet of catholic churches ever since, including Anglicans.

The text of the canon makes clear that this is in reference to certain purists ('Cathari'). The Nicene Fathers, when they were not composing their Creed, were considering the problem of 'Cathari' bishops (followers of Novatian) elected in

⁴It should be noted that unlike the several dioceses, General Convention has never approved the name itself.

⁵<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.vii.vi.xii.html> (accessed 3 October 2019).

order to offer a more rigorous interpretation than that of the ‘Catholic and Apostolic’ bishop already in place, as well as crossing into other dioceses to ordain priests and deacons more to their liking. Considering the spectacle of various African Anglican provinces setting up non-geographical jurisdictions in America in order to offer a more ‘orthodox’ bishop for the faithful than the one in place, we can conclude once again that there is truly nothing new under the sun.

In an open letter addressed to Archbishop Robin Eames, dated 16 October 2005, the then Archbishop of Nigeria, Peter Akinola, used the example of the various jurisdictions in Europe as an excuse for setting up a Nigerian ‘convocation’ in the United States. It would be purely and simply racist, he opined, not to allow the Nigerian church to do in America what the Church of England and The Episcopal Church have been doing in Europe since the nineteenth century.

Archbishop Akinola’s reasoning shares a widespread lack of understanding about the European situation, most notably that, unlike his church and others’ destructive intrusion into another province of the Anglican Communion, there is no Anglican province of Europe. While successive Lambeth Conferences since 1968 have resolved that the four Anglican jurisdictions in Europe (English, American, Spanish and Portuguese) should form a new province of the Communion, this has not happened.

The reasons for this failure are not only the differences of each of these jurisdictions, but also the realities of full communion among all Anglicans with the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht (‘the Bonn Agreement’⁶), as well as the Church of England’s similar relation to the Scandinavian and Baltic Lutheran Churches (‘the Porvoo Agreement’⁷), in which The Episcopal Church does not participate. These have created a peculiar mish-mash of jurisdictions whose complexity not only outstrips by far the Cathari situation the Nicene Fathers ruled upon, but also confirms the basic wisdom of their solution.

The Church of England has had chaplaincies for English expatriates in Europe dating back to the fifteenth century. The term ‘chaplaincy’ is crucial, for the Church of England still uses it to denote its European congregations (although this is increasingly in question). A chaplaincy is a congregation formed to minister to a specific group within a community – the military, for example, or seafarers. It exists to provide worship services and pastoral care specifically to those in that group. This differentiates it from a parish, which is a geographically defined congregation that serves not only the faithful of its particular denomination, but in Anglican tradition, the whole of its community. When the specific group the chaplaincy serves ceases to be present, so does the chaplaincy, whereas a parish is intended to be permanent. The idea that ‘we are only here for our own’ is exceptional, not normal.

When chaplaincies become permanent, they must, to be faithful to Anglican ecclesiology, begin to function as parishes. Historically, once a chaplaincy has been in place for a time, it begins to open up to its surrounding community, and take responsibility for mission and ministry not only among its founding constituency

⁶http://www.willibrord.org/bonn_en.html (accessed 3 October 2019).

⁷http://porvoocommunion.org/porvoo_communion/statement/ (accessed 3 October 2019).

but also to the whole community. Eventually the question is raised of becoming bilingual or launching congregations in the local language.⁸

Looking at the regional or diocesan level, since the diocese and not the congregation is the basic unit of Anglicanism, there is a need to provide episcopal oversight as well as other services to the congregations that they could not meet for themselves. This is of course the reason for the ministry of bishops, first of all, to unite congregations not only with their neighbors but also with the Church in its historical existence, well as the communion of saints, so they can be faithful participants in God's mission in creation. Then the diocese needs to provide for the many other elements that congregations cannot produce for themselves.

The development of dioceses then raises the need for becoming a province.

How Things Got to Be this Way

Their respective churches independently of one another established the English and American chaplaincies. This is perhaps because of the gulf that separated the mother church from her American daughter well into the nineteenth century.⁹ The situation rapidly became complicated, as neither church had planned to erect non-geographical jurisdictions. But it soon became much more complicated. The reaction to Vatican I engendered the Spanish and Lusitanian Churches, supported not by the Church of England but other churches of the nascent Anglican Communion. Both of the Iberian churches are true national churches, founded not by missionaries but by Spaniards and Portuguese. The Church of Ireland, following upon a request to the 1878 Lambeth Conference, supported the formation of the *Iglesia Española Reformada Episcopal*, by extending episcopal oversight to the founding congregations in 1880.¹⁰

The 1878 Lambeth Conference also recommended that the Church of England and The Episcopal Church work together to develop common mission in Europe and avoid conflict.¹¹ This was ignored.

At the same time, in 1880 some Portuguese Roman Catholics threw in their lot with the Spanish and formed their own Lusitanian Church, with the support again of the Irish Church.¹² Several of this writer's predecessors, among others, provided episcopal oversight over the years. Today it is known as the *Igreja Lusitana Católica Apostólica Evangélica*.

⁸This process has happened elsewhere, for example, in the transition of the English chaplaincies in Uruguay to the Spanish-language Diocese of Uruguay, as well as in Central and South America.

⁹The Preface to Bishop John Hobart's collection of sermons reads: 'On [Hobart's] arrival in England, he found that, in various publications, some of them extensively circulated, the charge is alleged against the great body of the Bishops and Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, of not faithfully inculcating the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel . . . ' (*Sermons on the Principal Truths of Redemption*, vol. 1 [London, 1824], p. x).

¹⁰Francisco Serrano Olivarez, *Contra vientos y mareas* (Barcelona: Editorial Clie, 2000), pp. 7-11. Interestingly, Episcopal Bishop Henry Riley, just consecrated in 1879 as missionary bishop to the Mexican *Iglesia de Jesús*, presided at the first meeting in 1880.

¹¹<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/127719/1878.pdf> (accessed 3 October 2019). See Resolutions 10-12.

¹²The Episcopal chaplaincy then present in Lisbon seems to have had some influence. Bishop Riley again was involved. See the relevant passage from Resolution 12 of the 1878 Lambeth bishops' encyclical, <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/127719/1878.pdf> (accessed 3 October 2019).

The Iberian churches developed, but not without controversy among Anglicans. It was not until 1980 that these Churches were fully recognized as members of the Anglican Communion. Their present status is that of extra-provincial dioceses under the metropolitanical authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury.¹³

The Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht trace their origin back to St Willibrord, who founded the See of Utrecht, Holland, in 695 AD. Having survived the Reformation, the archbishops of Utrecht came into conflict with the papacy for being ‘not Catholic enough’. This lasted throughout the seventeenth century and by 1724 with the election of Cornelius van Steenhoven, Utrecht was no longer in communion with Rome.

The same wave of sentiment that drove the Spanish and Portuguese movements against what were seen as the novel ideas of the universal ordinary jurisdiction of the Pope and papal infallibility also awakened similar communities which made common cause with Utrecht. The latter had already been calling itself ‘The Old Catholic Church’ since 1853 to distinguish itself from the ‘innovations’ of Pope Pius IX. These innovations passed by Vatican I, not only papal infallibility but especially the universal ordinary jurisdiction of the Pope, were to be the motive for what has since been called ‘the Old Catholic movement’.¹⁴ Those bishops who had voted against the innovations were pressured to change their votes for the good of the church – to make the *sacrificium intellectus*. Seven refused, and decided to join Utrecht.

The Old Catholic Churches today are in Holland, Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Poland and Austria.¹⁵ The Archbishop of Utrecht, in unbroken line from Willibrord, presides over the conference of bishops, but each church has some leeway in organizing its own life. In 1931 the Anglican Communion entered into full communion with the Union of Utrecht through the Bonn Agreement.

The Porvoo Communion dates from an agreement reached in 1994 among Anglican and Lutheran Churches in the British Isles, Europe and Scandinavia. It is described as ‘a communion of churches, mostly in Northern Europe, that have signed a declaration to ‘share a common life in mission and service’. The churches that signed the agreement are the Evangelical-Lutheran Churches of Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Finland and the Anglican Churches of Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England, as well as the Spanish and Portuguese Churches.¹⁶ The Episcopal Church decided at that time not to ask to participate.

However, after beginning a dialogue with the Church of Sweden, the two churches officially declared in 2018 that as they have usually acted since the eighteenth century as if they were in full communion, so therefore they are.

¹³Others presently are Bermuda, Ceylon and the Falkland Islands.

¹⁴The classic text remains C.S. Moss, *The Old Catholic Movement: Its Origins and History* (Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2005).

¹⁵There are also legitimate Old Catholic groups in America, which by agreement The Episcopal Church is responsible for certifying. The Polish National Catholic Church, despite its roots in the Old Catholic movement, seceded from the Union of Utrecht in 2003.

¹⁶The Episcopal Church has not yet asked to sign it, for theological reasons having to do with concerns about episcopacy.

These developments added yet more layers of complexity to the European situation with which we are dealing today. An example outside Europe might help clarify these.

The plan to establish an Anglican episcopate in Jerusalem in 1841 aroused great controversy. Conceived as a way of providing ministry to Anglicans and Prussian Lutherans in the Holy Land, Low- and Broad-Church sympathizers generally saw the new bishopric as a good thing, indeed, a way to return the episcopacy to Prussian Lutherans, whose king desired it. (Of course, the project had its critics in those parties as well.)

The High Church party saw it quite differently. First, the notion of exporting the Anglican succession to Jerusalem seemed to disregard completely the existing episcopacy in that city, creating an unacceptable overlapping jurisdiction.¹⁷ Second, they did not think the Prussian Lutherans were ‘orthodox enough’ to be eligible for the episcopacy. Third, they were afraid that the new bishop would strengthen his numbers chiefly by sheep-stealing from the Eastern Churches.

These objections to a project that so exercised English Anglicans in the 1840s keep arising over and over in Europe: how to justify creating overlapping jurisdictions of geography or of people: how to determine the orthodoxy or validity of our various partners or would-be partners; the fear of a proselytism that can only offend and make hostile the local historic church.¹⁸ These questions were raised again among Anglicans, often with similar passion, as relations with the Spanish, Portuguese, and Old Catholic Churches developed, and yet again with the Scandinavian Lutheran Churches. They are still not quite dead yet among us European Anglicans.¹⁹

Matters Pertaining to the European Anglican Jurisdictions

Each of the four jurisdictions has some peculiarities. Among the Spanish and Portuguese Churches, the first is that they were not formed by missionaries, as is the usual pattern of the development of churches of the Anglican Communion, but by local people and clergy who no longer wanted to remain in the Church of Rome after Vatican I. This made it difficult for each church to be recognized as Anglican, with a ‘correct’ *Book of Common Prayer* and structure. Moreover, they are now under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury. This in itself is historically not unusual – the same was once true for the South American dioceses that now form the Provinces of the Anglican Church of South America and *La Iglesia anglicana de Chile*. But the oddity is that there were English and American chaplaincies in both countries before the national churches formed. Today there are no Episcopal congregations in the Iberian Peninsula, but the ongoing presence and growth in the numbers of the

¹⁷The Anglican Bishop of that city is called ‘The Anglican Bishop *in* Jerusalem’.

¹⁸Many English and Episcopal congregations meet in buildings belonging to other churches.

¹⁹Surely it should be clear that the same concerns are being raised all over again around the Communion: what if anything can justify planting an overlapping jurisdiction into an existing one; questions of doctrinal sufficiency or even heresy; and destructive proselytism, this time among Anglicans. See Pierre Whalon, ‘Anglicans in Europe: A Model?’ at <http://anglicansonline.org/resources/essays/whalon/europemodel.html> (accessed 3 October 2019).

Diocese in Europe congregations are a continual source of friction. Who, in fact, has geographical episcopal jurisdiction in Spain and Portugal?

The Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe has, as noted, a presence on the continent that predates the Reformation. The Bishop of London had oversight of these from 1633 until 1842, when the Diocese of Gibraltar was formed for southern Europe, and northern Europe was delegated to a suffragan bishop of London, the Bishop of Fulham. These culminated in the foundation of the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe in 1980. Today the Diocese has some 250 congregations across Europe and Asia, from the Canary Islands to Ulaanbaatar, Casablanca to Trondheim. These range from seasonal preaching stations to well-established churches hundreds of years old. None of them presently surpasses the ‘pastoral-size’ category.²⁰

Until fifty years ago or so, it could be said that the Episcopal congregations in Europe shared the chaplaincy concept for their *raison d’être*. However, beginning in the 1960s under Stephen Bayne (Bishop in Charge, 1960–68), this began to change, as he confronted what he called the ‘Episcopalian clubs’ with a robust theology of mission.²¹ A similar process has been underway in the congregations of the Diocese in Europe.

As this writer has the privilege to be licensed as an honorary assisting bishop in that Diocese, I have had ample opportunity over the years to witness the liveliness of these congregations and the faithfulness of their leaders, clergy and lay, often under conditions unimaginable in the United States. There are nevertheless some peculiarities, which the Convocation shares with the Diocese in Europe.

First, other than Gibraltar itself, the Diocese is non-geographical in jurisdiction. Wherever the ministry of the Church of England is called for (often by British ambassadors), the Bishop must see to it that such ministry is provided. So for instance, a new effort was recently begun in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. But that does not make Mongolia part of the Church of England.²²

Second, the long history of establishing such congregations means that all the Diocese’s congregations are called ‘chaplaincies’. There is debate within the Diocese about this appellation, for the reasons I gave above. The fear of upsetting the local historic churches by proselytism is still present, however unfounded it actually may be. Furthermore, just as with the Convocation in the United States, taking a church in Europe has some stigma attached to it in England, as if the clergy were somehow taking on an easier or lesser ministry, something like being chaplain on a cruise liner. Ministry in Europe in either jurisdiction is, however, very demanding, and only truly able priests can be effective. Like the Convocation, the Diocese in Europe has not been counted in statistics of the Church of England. For these reasons, both the previous Bishop of Gibraltar, Geoffrey Rowell, and I worked hard to raise the visibility and credibility of our respective jurisdictions within our homelands, with real success.

²⁰Roughly, average Sunday attendance of 200 or less.

²¹As first executive of the Anglican Communion, Bayne was the architect of ‘Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence’ the landmark agreement of the 1963 Anglican Congress that transformed the Anglican Communion. See his biography by John Booty, *An American Apostle: The Life of Stephen Fielding Bayne, Jr.* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997).

²²Similarly, I provided episcopal ministry to a house church of several Episcopalians in Almaty, Kazakhstan for several years. They have since moved on.

The Diocese in Europe is a part of the Church of England, and yet that Church does not claim jurisdiction outside the provinces of Canterbury and York. The 1995 Constitution of the Diocese states that it is 'deemed' to be in the province of Canterbury (Article 2), and the Bishops of Gibraltar hold allegiance to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Besides the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, a bishop named by the Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council makes the appointment of the Bishop with them (Article 6a), another singularity of this diocese.

The Diocese in Europe is supported not only by its congregations, but also by the Church of England through its Church Commissioners. The bishops used to live in England and the diocesan office is in London, outside the Diocese – which would not be allowed in The Episcopal Church. However, with the appointment of Robert Innes, former Dean of Holy Trinity pro-cathedral in Brussels, the present Bishop of Gibraltar now lives and works principally in that city.²³

The Convocation faces many of the same hurdles faced by the Diocese in Europe. It is non-geographical, originally responding to the needs of Episcopalians for the pastoral ministry of the church. Until my election in 2001 by a special convention of the Convocation, and my consecration specifically as suffragan bishop in charge, the Presiding Bishop had appointed the Convocation's bishops in charge from among the House of Bishops. It has had trouble being taken seriously in its homeland. It is dependent to a significant extent upon the largesse of the General Convention through the budget of the Presiding Bishop for the support of the Bishop in Charge. And like the Diocese in Europe, it operates within the jurisdictions and congregations of other full-communication partner churches, not to mention alongside the English diocese itself.

The Episcopal Church has let its Convocation develop without much attention to the growth of its diocesan structures.²⁴ The canonical structure remains basically what was set up in 1859, providing for diocesan bishops to take on the added responsibility of being 'in charge' of the European congregations on behalf of the Presiding Bishop, who was also until 1940 a diocesan. The first bishop in charge, according to the archives, was William Leonard, then Bishop of Ohio, appointed in 1897 by Bishop John Williams, XI Presiding Bishop, himself also Bishop of Connecticut at the time. (However, there is record of other bishops serving briefly in the role before Leonard. My successor, Bishop Mark Edington, is the twenty-sixth bishop in charge.) Most of the bishops in charge were diocesans. Since 1971, with the appointment of Edmond Browning (then Missionary Bishop of Okinawa), the position has been deemed that of a suffragan to the Presiding Bishop. This was apparently done to facilitate the payment of the expenses of the bishop in charge, who functions like an English 'area bishop', and not in the usual suffragan role in an Episcopal diocese.²⁵ Since 1994, the position has become full time.

²³Bishop Innes is the first priest from the Diocese to be appointed bishop, and the first bishop consecrated specifically for the Diocese. The possibility of a 'hard Brexit' would vastly complicate matters, however.

²⁴Perusing Canon I.15, which allows for the establishment of congregations of The Episcopal Church where no Anglican jurisdiction exists, and comparing it with the mission and ministry of the Convocation, clearly demonstrates this.

²⁵For instance, four of the five suffragan bishops of the Diocese of London have, as area bishops, specific geographical oversight, and function like a diocesan in many respects.

This arrangement also exists today with four congregations of the Pacific, now under the oversight of the Bishop of Hawai'i as bishop in charge. It functions well in that situation, where the churches are few and no other Anglican churches are at work. But the Convocation, with its nine settled parishes and many mission congregations, is much larger, and has developed over the years the full panoply of an Episcopal diocese's structures: an annual convention (synod) that elects a bishop, the bishop in charge's *cathedra* or seat (the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity in Paris, the largest Anglican congregation on the Continent), a constitution and canons, a standing committee (with its ancillary committees, e.g., finance), a commission on ministry, an education department, a youth department, a disciplinary board, and a bishop's office – all, except the board, quite active. Moreover, the Convocation is adding congregations to itself, within a context of overall growth in the other Anglican dioceses, as well as the Old Catholics in certain regions. We have moved from the model of overseas chaplaincies with delegated episcopal oversight to the reality of a diocese, without a corresponding shift of canonical structures.

In the canon law of The Episcopal Church, the term 'convocation' occurs three times, other than as part of the name of the churches in Europe. In all cases it refers to the organizing meeting of a new diocese. It is as if we in Europe are forever getting organized.

Finding a Way Forward: Mission Comes First

As stated above, the Convocation of Episcopal (then American) Churches in Europe, meeting in convention in Nice, France, in 1999, passed a strategic plan that included both becoming a diocese of the Episcopal Church and helping to form an Anglican Province of Europe. The Anglican Communion requires that no fewer than four dioceses are necessary in order to form a new province. Since 1995 the bishops of the four jurisdictions had already been meeting as the College of Anglican Bishops in Continental Europe (COABICE) and had presented together a resolution to the 1998 Lambeth Conference for developing 'appropriate provincial structures' in Europe.²⁶

Before asking to become a diocese, the then bishop in charge, Jeffrey Rowthorn, and clergy and lay leaders, decided upon the step – intermediate, as they saw it then – of electing for the first time the next bishop in charge. After an initial plan for sharing jurisdiction across Europe was rejected at a COABICE meeting in Frankfurt in 2000, the Anglican Communion Office facilitated a 'Partners in Mission' or PIM consultation (the prerequisite process for forming a province). The consultation ended in Madrid in May 2003, with the understanding that the historical separations among the four Anglican jurisdictions and the jurisdictional question itself needed more work, especially by creating local networks.²⁷ The consecration of a partnered gay bishop in The Episcopal Church later that year overshadowed the resolve to pursue this, and nothing has been done to further the PIM recommendations other than that the bishops continue to meet.

²⁶See <http://www.tec-europe.org/who-we-are/our-partners-in-europe/>

²⁷The documents are available at <http://www.europeconsultation.anglican.org/may03PIMreport.html>

In November 2006, after signing a 'Porto Covenant' for relations among the four jurisdictions, a decision was made that the COABICE should meet in conjunction with the International Bishops' Conference of the Old Catholic Churches.²⁸ This has continued since.

Nevertheless, the ultimate goal of a European Province living out European Anglicanism, set within the larger ecumenical context, cannot be abandoned. First of all, it is utterly consistent with the historic missionary strategy of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church in the United States to help other peoples of other nations develop their own local, indigenous and autonomous Anglican Episcopal churches. One-quarter of the provinces of the Communion owe their existence to this mission of the American church. The fact that our largest diocese is in Haiti and is francophone, and that we have ten other non-anglophone dioceses located outside the confines of the United States, is proof that The Episcopal Church is still called to this mission.

Second, the identities of the Anglican, Old Catholic and Lutheran Churches are not the same, for their histories are significantly different, and this has led to differences of theology and practice that should not be minimized in some quest for ecumenical uniformity. These identities, these ways of being church, each have what I have called their own charisms, gifts of the Spirit graciously provided for participating in God's mission in creation and with humanity. Living out the mission of Anglicans in Europe, especially as more non-Anglo-Saxons become Anglican/Episcopalians, will also require appropriate provincial structures.

Anglicans have always practiced subsidiarity, the principle that a society should as a matter of justice delegate its decision-making to the level of organization most competent to address the matter at hand. Thus the local level is ideally where all decisions should be made, except for those decisions that affect other local communities in the region, other regional communities in the nation, other nations in the world. It is also what I call a 'two-way street'. In other words, local organizations centered on subsidiarity have a hierarchy, acceding to higher bodies appropriately structured to be able to help the local community flourish.²⁹ Congregations need a bishop and a diocese; dioceses need a province; provinces need a communion, and vice versa.

Therefore the long-term goal of an Anglican Province of Europe cannot be set aside. However, it seems clear that for several reasons, the formation of such Province must wait until greater clarity is achieved among the provinces of the Communion, as well as the European jurisdictions. Therefore, an intermediate step is now necessary.

As I hope has become clear, the development of the Convocation has far outstripped the canonical framework of scattered congregations coming under the jurisdiction of the Presiding Bishop, as in the Pacific. In order to pursue its mission, the

²⁸At this time of writing, the Bishop of West Virginia represents The Episcopal Church to the International Bishops Conference.

²⁹The first use of the term in governing bodies is in the Treaty of Maastricht of 1992, creating the European Union. Its origin as defined is in Catholic social teaching, although the basic idea has existed since antiquity. See Pierre Whalon, 'The Key to Understanding The Episcopal Church', *Sewanee Theological Review* 61.2, pp. 523-546.

Convocation must have its own appropriate structures. Moreover, this development has taken place alongside the birth and growth of other full-communion partners, as well as the Diocese in Europe, leading to a number of issues – sometimes contentious – that are peculiar to all the churches in question in Europe, and the Convocation in particular.

The overarching question is not one of jurisdiction, however, but of mission. Like all churches of Jesus Christ, the Convocation and the other churches in Europe are called to participate in God's mission in creation and 'restore to unity all people with God and each other in Christ'.³⁰ But while this mission is truly global in scope and general in definition, its realization is always local and concrete.

Pope Benedict XVI called for an ecumenical movement to 're-evangelize' Europe.³¹ However one understands this, there is certainly a pressing need for new and effective witness of all the churches in Europe, providing fresh hope in Christ for the value of human living in the future that God's mission is creating. The Anglican jurisdictions are called to help provide that witness along with the other churches, bringing forth, like the well-instructed scribes in Jesus' parable, 'both old and new from their storehouse' of the treasures of Anglican Christianity (Matt. 13.52).

The Convocation's share of this mission began over 200 years ago when expatriate American Episcopalians began to worship together. Today, parishes and mission congregations of the Convocation provide critically important ministries to people who do not belong to them. Operating the only daytime refugee center in Rome, running an ecumenical homeless feeding program in Paris, caring for Germans deported from the United States after a jail term, are just a few examples of parochial outreach of great value to the communities in which they are located. There are mission congregations which do not use English at all, providing mission and ministry with economic or political refugees, and lately, new Italophone congregations. The members of the clergy are evenly divided between Americans and non-Americans; add those with dual nationality and Americans are in the minority. That trend is accelerating, judging from the ordinands presently in process for the diaconate and priesthood.

The fact that English has become the *lingua franca* of Europe, as well as the continual growth in numbers of 'world citizens', makes English-language ministry relevant to a lot more than just Americans and British people. For instance, Nigerians form the largest national group at St Paul's-Within-the-Walls, Rome, at this point. At the same time, the development of bilingual selections of the Book of Common Prayer published by the Convocation has made the Prayer Book tradition available to many others who are not necessarily anglophone.³² The growth of congregations exclusively using other languages is an ongoing trend, and the South American example of anglophone chaplaincies becoming Latin American parishes may be an aspect of the future in Europe as well.

³⁰*The Book of Common Prayer 1979*, p. 855. Note that this is a gloss of Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, ch. 5.

³¹Cardinal Karl Koch, the present head of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, has stated that this goal cannot be met by the Roman church alone, but must be undertaken ecumenically. There is now a new dicastery for 'New Evangelization'.

³²See <http://www.tec-europe.org/administration/order-bilingual-book-of-common-prayer/> (accessed 3 October 2019).

The continuation of four separate Anglican jurisdictions in Europe seems likely, and it is still to be expected that one day they shall move toward a European expression of Anglicanism in an autonomous Province of the Communion. Over the past 22 years, progress has been made in understanding the height and depth of the challenge.

At the same time, there has been growth in the self-understanding of the Old Catholic Churches, and what full communion means with Anglicans. As they have questioned more and more sharply what the English and the Americans in particular think we are doing in their jurisdictions, the need to include them as full partners in a visible search for unity of mission in diversity of ministries has become clear.

As an intermediate step, the inclusion of the Anglican bishops as seated members of the International Bishops Conference should be envisaged. This will mean changes on both sides. The Old Catholic Churches will have to figure out what canonical changes are needed. Meanwhile, the Anglican jurisdictions will have to work out what their participation in the Conference means in terms of their individual identities as well as their overall identity as different parts of the Anglican Communion.

A first step has been proposed by Joris Vercammen, Archbishop of Utrecht, and myself. We believe that the Episcopal bishop should serve as the Old Catholic Bishop of France and Belgium, with seat and voice both in the International Bishops Conference and the Episcopal House of Bishops. As both our jurisdictions are adding francophone congregations in both countries, such a move seems practical, and it also alleviates the neuralgic pressures of ‘overlapping jurisdictions’.

The main goal should be to have an annual forum where questions concerning the ongoing mission of the non-Roman, catholic churches in Europe could be brought, and decisions made to facilitate day-to-day growth in the scope and depth of our common mission. A light structure to facilitate the relationships among Lutheran, Old Catholic and Anglican jurisdictions would allow all to retain their particular characteristics, while being able to coordinate resources for mission and ministry across Europe.

Specifically, being in a wider context could significantly alleviate the ongoing tensions between the Diocese in Europe and the three much smaller Anglican jurisdictions. Working on issues of common mission with other partners can only strengthen each Church, not least by reducing redundancies.

In this setting, the answer to the question of this essay – should the Convocation become a missionary diocese of the Episcopal Church – is ‘no’. In fact, this has been the conclusion of a long process of consultation among our congregations. We want to remain as a flexible missionary enterprise, able to respond to new challenges and opportunities in Europe. I do not recommend at this point that the Convocation leave the jurisdiction of the Presiding Bishop.³³ There is a place for us in an emerging European Anglicanism, as well as in the wider scope of full communion with other churches. We should have the validation of the General Convention to be able to take as full members our seat in council with our partners.

³³A jurisdiction that obtains everywhere that there is no Anglican province is amorphous, and so is responsibility for it.

It would be tragic to discover at length that we do not share a common mission with other Anglicans. In fact, this would be a repudiation of the Anglican Communion's *raison d'être*. In that case, the Convocation should become a missionary diocese of the Episcopal Church, under the canons provided for the formation of such a body. Its territory could be defined as the previous Bishop of Gibraltar liked to speak of his jurisdiction: having geographical boundaries within which ministry with people is carried forth. Doing our share of the work of mission cannot be shirked.

Finally, to be able to carry the project of mission in Europe forward, discussion about emerging structures needs to happen not only with the Presiding Bishop but also the appropriate standing commissions of the church. The relevance of Canon I.15 to the mission and ministry of the Convocation needs to be completely re-examined. The Convocation's deputations to the General Conventions of 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2012 attempted in various ways to get serious attention to this issue, with limited success. If agreement is arrived at concerning an intermediate step toward a separate province, as I have proposed here, perhaps a special canonical provision could be made, mindful that the Nicene principle – one bishop for one city – remains the wisest guideline.

No precedent should be set that could validate the erection of more non-geographical jurisdictions in the Anglican Communion. The English and American churches ignored the sound counsel of the 1878 Lambeth Conference. The wisdom of that advice, based as it was on the ancient decision of the first ecumenical council, has been proven over and over. Had we followed it, the situation in Europe would probably be much clearer, and mission more effective as a result.

Besides paying due and immediate attention to this question within the Episcopal Church, we should solicit and consider all suggestions for moving forward from our Anglican and full-communication partners. It is also necessary to take a fresh look at becoming a signatory church of the Porvoo Agreement, the Meissen Agreement with the Lutheran Church of Germany, the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, and the Reuilly Agreement with the French Reformed churches, the *Église réformée unie*.³⁴

In the long run, God's mission will happen. The real question is therefore, to what extent will we be included?

³⁴The 2003 General Convention decided to study signing the Reuilly Agreement. The 2018 Convention approved entering into an official dialogue with the *Evangelische Lutherische Kirche in Bayern* (resolution C-059).