**LEICESTER DIOCESAN CATHOLIC FELLOWSHIP**

*‘The Church of England is part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It proclaims the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation.*

*(The Declaration of Assent)*

*We affirm:*

1. *That the Church of England is both Catholic and Reformed, and that both positions, alongside the spectrum between them, should be clearly and demonstrably evidenced and represented in the life and practice of the diocese;*
2. *That it is important and necessary to ensure that Catholic parishes are retained and encouraged both in terms of tradition and appointment of parish priests;*
3. *That the Eucharist is proclaimed as the central act of worship within the Church (i) and as the primary social (ii), political, missionary, and evangelistic (iii) activity of the whole Body of Christ, and from which all forms of ministry and mission flow;*
4. *That the Church’s primary objective, following the teaching and practice of Our Lord, is to live and proclaim the Kingdom of God. All other activity is subservient to this dominical requirement (iv);*
5. *That the doctrine of the Incarnation is the primary manifestation of the relationship of God with Christ bound by the Holy Spirit within the life of the Church, and is indicative of humanity’s and creation’s shared being with God (v) and (vi);*
6. *That the parish, served by well-trained priests, is the primary locus of the Church (vi). In particular, the Church of England, not being a membership Church, exists to serve and minister to all within the parochial community (vii), (viii) and (ix);*
7. *That given God’s identification with creation, we would urge active support and engagement with environmental concerns and the ‘Eco Church’ movement;*
8. *That the Church engages with social and political movements which enhance the reality of the emerging Kingdom of God;*
9. *That we belong to a worldwide church, aware of the risk of local problem-solving which can endanger our experience of belonging to the wider and international Catholic reality of which we remain despite our disagreements in time and space;*
10. *That none of the aforementioned detracts from other legitimate ecclesiological expressions within the Church of England, or loyalty and obedience to the diocesan bishop.*

*NOTES:*

1. *‘The ancient church and the modern church cannot envisage any Christian community without the celebration of the eucharist. There is an essential link between the local ecclesia and eucharist’ (‘Ministry: A Case for Change’ by Edward Schillbeeckx, SCM Press, 1981).*
2. *‘Certainly, it is clear that from earliest times the celebration of the Eucharist was the centre of the life of the Christian community. It was a eucharistic community, its fundamental experience of union with God being a social eucharistic experience ….. Christians today are called to help free the Eucharist from its social captivity so that it can again become the source of divine freedom and of human transformation.’ (‘True God’ by Kenneth Leech, Sheldon Press, 1985).*
3. *John Wesley considered the Eucharist to be a ‘converting ordinance’, participation in which would precede conversion.*
4. *‘… for the Church alone is the divine society founded to struggle against evil and usher in the Kingdom of God’. (‘Priesthood and Prophecy’ by John Orens in ‘Essays Catholic and Radical’, ed. Kenneth Leech and Rowan Williams, Bowerdean Press, 1983).*
5. *‘The relationship between Christ and the Church is …. one of intimate solidarity …. In speaking of the Church, we are thus not speaking of a collection of individuals, or of an organisation, but of a living organism, an extension of the personality of Christ’. (‘True God’ by Kenneth Leech, Sheldon Press, 1985).*
6. *‘…..the Church is the work of the Incarnation of Christ, it is the Incarnation itself’ (‘The Orthodox Church’ by Sergei Bulgakov, St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1988)*
7. *The parish church is ‘the central emblem of Anglicanism, and the commitment to nation and community that it represents, is completely undervalued.’ (‘For the Parish: A Critique of Fresh Expressions’ by Andrew Davison and Alison Milbank, SCM Press, 2010).*
8. *‘….. the origin of the word ‘parish’ is ‘one who lives beside’, the neighbour, often meaning the alien or the stranger. So, the ‘parish church’ sees everyone as neighbour, not just as potential converts, and is therefore able to represent them before God and to represent God before them.’ (‘The Parish Church’ ed. by Giles Ecclestone, A R Mowbray, 1988).*
9. *‘We have taught people down the five centuries of our existence (sic) that everyone lives in a parish, and everyone is welcome at the parish church’ (‘Lost Church’ by Alan Billings, SPCK, 2013).*

*Signed:*

*David Jennings, Stephen Foster, Johannes Arens, Barry Naylor, Terry Colling, Andrew Quigley, Robin Martin, Lisa Temperley-Barnes, Andrew Hall, Irving Richards, Qyan Arnachellum*