



Principles for our French Episcopal communities

(applicable to all)

The Rt. Rev. Pierre W. Whalon, D.D.

Bishop-in-charge

The American Churches In Europe

1.) Where the Good News of Jesus is preached and the Sacraments of his New Covenant are faithfully celebrated, there the Church is found. It needs two more things to live fully: liturgies which appeal to the original Christian tradition, using the whole Bible and the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; and ministers ordained by bishops as successors of the Apostles who proclaim the Word of God and celebrate the sacraments faithfully.

2.) We do not proselytize—we evangelize, as is the duty of every Christian regardless of denomination. Our communities will have healthy growth only when our neighbors find a friendly welcome which respects their need to « work out their salvation with fear and trembling » (Phil. 2 :12), and meet people who manifest lives transformed by love.

3.) The reason the Church exists is not to moralize. All people must without fail choose good and avoid evil. Christians are supposed to transcend mere morality in loving their neighbors as themselves.

4.) It should be clearly understood that we do not exist to be Episcopalians but to become disciples of Christ, nourishing ourselves from his riches, and to form other disciples of Jesus attracted by our way of being Christian.

5.) The Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, and we will strive to live out these so-called “notes” of the true Church especially by serving the poor and marginalized.

6.) We will try to govern ourselves so as to be guided by the Holy Spirit. This requires that all members take responsibility for our common life, and that we practice shared leadership between clergy and laypeople.

7.) We rejoice to share in the great tradition of the Anglican Communion. It falls to us to discover and live out the French (European) expression of this very ancient tradition.

Principles for our French Episcopal communities

8.) No one is to boast of the superiority of our way of being Christian, or denigrate other Churches.

9.) Our communities must be centers of learning in which the Scriptures and the whole of the Christian tradition are available to all.

10.) In all times, joyous, sad, prosperous and impoverished, we will found our hope on God and God alone, knowing that Christ has once and for ever delivered us from evil, sin and death; and awaiting the gifts of the Spirit pour out upon each person to accomplish joyfully together the mission of Jesus' Church.

English: 19 November 2004