



**The Anglican Diocese of Fredericton
Layreader Training**

CHURCH HISTORY: THE REFORMATION

BY

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The English Reformation

Our look at the English Reformation begins in the 1500's. It begins in a time when there was only one Church in all of Western Europe, a church headed and ruled by the Pope in Rome. It begins at a time when national boundaries meant less than they do today. True, people regarded themselves as Englishmen, Frenchmen and Spaniards, but beyond and behind those distinctions everyone thought of themselves as a Christian who belonged to the Catholic Church. This Church encompassed all of Western Europe and transcended national boundaries. Englishmen of the 1500's who belonged to the Catholic Church in England had little sense of belonging to a particular national Church. This is in sharp contrast with our sense of being Canadian Anglicans.

The king of England for most of the first part the fifteenth century was the famous Henry VIII. King Henry reigned from 1509 to 1547. King Henry was eighteen years old when he came to the throne. Henry was a popular and a powerful king. As a young king he was an accomplished athlete. He could run, wrestle, dance and fight as a knight on horseback with the very best of his kingdom. He was well educated having been taught by hand picked private tutors. King Henry could speak and write, Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and English. He was also a fine singer and poet. As Henry VII's second son, he had been educated for a career in the Church. This was normal practice for second sons who would not inherit the crown. However, Henry's older brother Arthur, who was to have inherited the crown, died tragically while Henry was still a boy. Suddenly, Henry became heir to the throne of England. Given future events, it is important to remember that Henry VIII was by training and nature a devout son of the Church.

The England of Henry VIII was thoroughly Catholic. Although distant from Rome, the center of Catholic Europe, there were close ties between the English Church and the Pope. An Englishman of the day held one of the highest positions in the Catholic Church next to the Pope. This man was a cardinal and his name was Wolsey. Cardinal Wolsey exercised great power in England for he was a special representative of the Pope in his home country. He was a friend and close associate of the King. Cardinal Wolsey was also a servant of the King, as he was Henry's chief adviser and first minister.

Being part of the Catholic Church, England, as the rest of Europe, fell under the financial and legal jurisdiction of Rome. In short, this meant that certain taxes had to be paid by the English to Rome. Among these was a tax called Peter Pence. Originating in the tenth century, this was a tax of one pence per English household which went annually to Rome. As well, the English clergy had to pay special taxes to Rome. Included among these taxes was an annates tax that amounted to one third of a bishopric's yearly income. This tax had to be paid to Rome upon the appointment of a Bishop to an empty post. Rome was also involved in the appointing of clergy to high positions such as those of bishop and archbishop.

As well, there was an entirely separate church court system that operated outside and beyond the civil or common law system. This court system judged according to church law and the judges were church officials and only clergy were tried by this system. Since it was entirely church run, it was not always unbiased and fair. There was the further complaint that the

sentences handed out by these courts were needlessly mild. The civil courts commonly handed out capital punishment for serious crimes such as murder and rape but the church courts never handed down such severe sentences. This led to charges of there being two levels of justice in England, one for the clergy and another for the laity.

Although these courts were only for clergy, the definition of "clergy" had become very broad over the years. By this time, the term "clergy," included more than just people who were monks, nuns, friars, bishops, priests and deacons. There were all those who belonged to the so called 'lesser orders' such as sidesmen, warden, bell-ringer, candle-makers and collection takers. These people also sought out and received justice from the much milder church court system. They actively sought this privilege out but this was clearly an abuse of the system. By King Henry's time, there was definite resentment of the separate church court system and complaints over its abuse. The extent and depth of this resentment of special privileges and positions for the clergy are difficult to gauge but it was clearly present. This displeasure with the clergy is often called anticlericalism by historians.

There were other problems with the Church in Henry's time. Among the higher clergy, namely bishops, archbishops and abbots (the rulers of monasteries) there was the practice of absenteeism and non-residence. This meant that a man would get himself appointed to a bishopric but would never go there and never do any of his episcopal functions. Sometimes they would hire an assistant who would do the work for very little pay – barely enough to live on. The error of this practice is clear once one realizes that men wanted these appointments simply because large incomes came with these appointments.

A bishopric would include many churches and religious houses (of monks and nuns and friars) and much land. These would all pay fees, taxes, rents and tithes to the holder of the bishopric. In short, these bishoprics were sought out for their incomes. It was common for a single man to hold several such appointments at once and pay little or no attention to them save for the income they provided. This practice was called pluralism. Sometimes the holders of these offices would be foreigners who lived as far away as Rome and never came to England. Often, the men with these great incomes worked for the King – Henry personally seeing to it that they obtained the bishoprics and their incomes. Cardinal Wolsey was one such man.

Religion for the average person in Henry's day was quite different from what it is today. The local parish church was the single largest, most impressive and important building in the community. The church building dominated the skyline and the surrounding countryside. The church was also the central and dominating influence in the community and in individual lives. A person was involved with and in the church from cradle to grave. Church events punctuated an individual's life from baptism and marriage to burial. The Church year provided the framework for time. There were the major festivals such as Michaelmas, Christmas, Candlemas, Easter and Whitsunday. There were the seasons, both of penitence (Advent and Lent) and of Joy (Easter and Whitsuntide). There were days of great celebration and merrymaking such as Shrove Tuesday and the harvest celebration. Also, there were days of sobriety and seriousness such as Ash-Wednesday and Good Friday. Everyone attended Church each Sunday and on all major

festivals and holy days. There were also local saints, holy places and relics that were revered and honored. Also, if one could possibly afford it, there were pilgrimages to make both within England and beyond. Within England the shrine of Saint Thomas a ' Becket at Canterbury was a site of international importance. However, apart from the very special exception of making a pilgrimage, the average person lived the entirety of their lives within five miles of their place of birth. There was neither the need nor the desire to travel as we do today.

The major public service on Sundays and all holy days was always the Mass or Holy Communion. The entire service, including the scripture readings, was in Latin. No one except the priest in an average parish understood any of what was being said. Sometimes even the priest did not understand all that was said for he was usually a local man with little formal training. At the service no one but the priest received the Holy Communion. People came to watch what little they could see through the rood screen at the front of the church. The laity received perhaps once a year and then only the Body of Christ. They came to be present for the Mass, to pray a little and to adore the consecrated elements as the priest elevated them. This was the highlight of the service for the people. In these services there was precious little stress on the need to forgive one another and to love one's neighbors, except during the passing of the 'peace'. All the 'peace' involved was passing around a holy picture for everyone to kiss. At the end of the Mass a loaf of blessed holy bread, not Holy Communion, would be passed around and everyone would take a piece. This was no substitute for receiving the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ.

For the laity, the rest of the time at service was spent talking and looking at the paintings and carvings of religious scenes in the Church. There was always a crucifixion scene. These usually had St. John on one side of the dying Christ and the Virgin Mary on the other. Another constant scene in every church was the Doomsday or Judgement Day picture that was always found over the exit to the church. The laity mostly stared and thought on these two scenes, Christ dying for their sins and Christ as Judge of both the living and dead. Preaching was almost nonexistent in the average parish church and if it did exist it was of a very poor quality. The average parish priest of this time knew that he was not sufficiently educated to preach and so he avoided it.

Lively and sound preaching did exist but outside the parish structure. This was provided by traveling preaching monks. These orders of friars were not tied down to a particular monastery. Their preaching was both entertaining and educational. The orders of friars were devoted to personal humility, poverty and chastity. They set up the first hospitals, they cared for the elderly and the outcast, in short, they provided many much needed social services. Theirs was a calling to spread the gospel both by example and word and as for the word they were usually very good preachers. Their work with the poor and outcast and their preaching was greatly appreciated by the laity. However, sometimes they were resented and suspected of undermining the parishes by the local clergy. Despite these difficulties the friars carried on their work faithfully and proved to be a very positive force in the spiritual and social life of the nation.

Questions for Study

1. Imagine yourself in church on Sunday, March 8, 1525. You are in St. Peter's Church, in the village of Anywhere, England. Describe what you see and hear.

2. Explain: Absenteeism.

Pluralism

Peter Pence

3. List five points about the church services of England in the first half of the 1500's that needed reform.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

The Beginnings of Reformation

We saw in the previous lesson the state of religion in England during the early part of the reign of Henry VIII. The need for reform was clear. However, it was not evident who would bring reform about and how.

The obvious place to start would have been within the church itself, but this would have been difficult if even possible. A few bishops saw the need for reform but change was difficult and slow to accomplish. Many problems, such as pluralism, were larger than any particular diocese and even the troubles within a particular diocese such as poor preaching would be difficult and expensive to remedy. Where would clergy be trained, how would it be paid for, who would minister to the people while the priest was off being educated for several years? To further complicate matters, changes in things like the form of services involved the whole church, not just in England, but all over the known world and this would mean involving Rome.

In the 1500's, simply to communicate with Rome took time, sometimes months for a letter to go one way. Once it reached Rome it would get bogged down in bureaucracy, political intrigue and apathy. It was common to use bribes so that matters would get dealt with more quickly. Each king and country had paid envoys, ambassadors and even cardinals who for loyalty and money represented their particular interests at Rome.

Further, the institution that needed the reform was unlikely to reform itself. The bishops guilty of pluralism and absenteeism were unlikely to pass laws against the practice and cut off their own livelihoods. Neither was Rome likely to give up its income from things like Peter Pence, the annates due upon episcopal appointments, nor the right to hear appeals of Church court cases referred to Rome. The church court system allowed cases to be appealed all the way to Rome and this system brought jobs, power and bribes to the Pope's court.

Given the need for reform and the fact that it was not likely to come from within the Church itself, initiative from the outside was the only possible solution. Moreover, the only outside force widespread and powerful enough was the king, Henry VIII. Henry, with his advisors, would effect the reform of the Church in England. The church through its national synod, Convocation, would be consulted as would the people at large through Parliament. Nonetheless, the initiative, direction and manner of reform would come from the King and his handful of picked advisors.

While reform originated with the King and his men and was directed by them, it was carried out by acts of Parliament. Through Parliament reforms were made law and they were enforced as the law of the land. Citizens who disobeyed suffered the consequences of breaking the laws duly passed by Parliament. Everyone knew that the laws of Parliament clearly reflected the will of the King himself.

A series of acts by Parliament between 1532 and 1539 effected the reform of religion accomplished during Henry's reign. Acts in 1532 and 1534 eliminated the practice of paying annates (a one-third tax to Rome) on the appointment of a man to a vacant bishopric. These acts also ended the payment of Peter Pence and the practice of Rome having to approve the appointment of new bishops. These acts ended undue and unwarranted foreign interference in English Church affairs. Along with an Act in Restraint of Appeals in 1533, which forbade the appeal of Church court cases to Rome, these Acts ended Rome's jurisdictional and financial influence in England. England was now a separate "empire" free from unwanted foreign influence and control.

Having proclaimed England a separate "empire" with a church within its borders, Henry and his advisors were now free to reform the relationship existing between the clergy and the crown. An Act for the Submission of the Clergy was passed in 1534 in which the clergy surrendered their ancient right to independently meet and pass church laws. They effectively handed over their right to govern themselves. In the future, they could neither meet nor pass any rule or law without the king's express permission. Finally, in 1534, Parliament passed an Act making Henry "Supreme Head of the Church in England with authority to reform and redress all errors, heresies and abuses" in religion. No longer was the Pope the head of the Church in England, nor were the archbishops or bishops, but King Henry himself. Further, this Act gave Henry authority to reform and redress "all matters religious in his realm of England." He would now use this authority to change the religious face of England.

Coinciding with these radical changes in the relationship between Church and King was Henry's continuing dynastic and matrimonial problems. Henry and England needed a male heir for the throne. The dynastic struggles of the Wars of the Roses were fresh in everyone's mind. No one wanted those bloody and chaotic times to return, especially not Henry, the second monarch of the victorious Tudor line. By 1533, Henry had been married to Catherine of Aragon for 24 years. She had borne him many sons, at least two, and daughters, perhaps as many as four, but only one daughter, Mary, had lived, all the rest had died in infancy. England had never been successfully ruled by a woman, the one instance of Matilda's rule a few centuries earlier had been a disaster. Henry did not want to leave his kingdom to such an unsure and insecure future. Catherine was now in her mid-forties and her chances of having a child, let alone a healthy male heir, were almost nonexistent. Henry was desperate. To complicate matters, Henry had fallen in love with his mistress, Anne Boleyn. He had been living with her since December 1532, had married her secretly in January 1533 and she was now expecting their first child in September of that same year. The long expected heir had to be legitimate. In Henry's mind the crude reality was that Catherine had to go.

As early as 1527 Henry had begun seeking a legal annulment of his union with Catherine. Annulments for people of power were quite common in the 1500's and King Henry had a strong case. In Henry's day, royal marriages were always arranged by the parents of the future couple while they were still children of a very young age. This had been the case for Henry and Catherine as well. Their parents had arranged their marriage. The children had not had any say at all. It was customary also for the parties not to meet before the marriage. It was also common to

be married by proxy. Royal parents would send their ambassador to the other kingdom and the ambassador would stand in and say 'I do' for one party. Such marriages were part of treaties and pacts between kingdoms. However, Henry's marriage to Catherine was different, she had been married to his older brother Arthur before he had died in 1509. Both sets of parents did not want to see the treaty fall to pieces so they pressured the Pope into granting a dispensation for Henry to marry Catherine. A dispensation was necessary since Holy Scripture (Leviticus XX: 21) forbids a man to marry his dead brother's wife. This was now the basis of Henry's case for an annulment. Add to the Scriptural prohibition the successive deaths of their children and Henry thought it was a matter clear for all to see that the union was contrary to God's will.

Under normal circumstances Henry would have been granted an annulment by the Pope with little or no delay. Unfortunately for Henry, times were not what they used to be. The Pope wanted to grant Henry his request but he could not. The Pope was in essence a prisoner of the Emperor of Spain, Charles V, who had conquered Rome a few years earlier. Charles V was Queen Catherine's nephew. The Pope could not insult the Emperor in whose power he lay. Throughout the late 1520's and early 1530's this was the situation and no annulment was forthcoming nor was it likely to be since the Pope was in the Emperor's power. Still, Henry's need remained and grew deeper and more desperate as the years passed. Henry concluded that Catherine must be put away.

The jurisdictional and administrative break with Rome and the submission of the Church in England to Henry as its Supreme Head provided the route out for Henry. The church was now his church and the clergy his clergy, they owed him obedience and would do his will. In May of 1533, Archbishop Crammer of Canterbury, the chief bishop of the Church in England, declared Henry's marriage to Catherine contrary to God's Law and therefore invalid. Five days later Henry's secret marriage to Anne Boleyn was made public. Three days after that Anne was crowned queen. On September 7, Anne's first child, Princess Elizabeth, was born – not quite all had gone according to plan. Anne was young and they would try again. Catherine was named princess dowager and forced to spend the remaining three years of her life in dreary and miserable seclusion.

King Henry's reforming policies caused another very significant and highly visible change in English society. There was a sudden and permanent change in English religious, cultural and social life. Henry dissolved all the monasteries in England. Between 1536 and 1540 he took control of all monastic lands, buildings and incomes. Most of the residents of these institutions were paid pensions and then left fend for themselves. Absolutely everything was confiscated by the crown and then sold to the moneyed classes for quick cash – Henry was at this point desperate for money. This was the single largest redistribution of land and money since the Norman Conquest in 1066. Despite assurances that this money would be used to help reform the Church, only six new bishoprics were created out of all this enormous wealth. Henry's officials had hinted that large sums would go to existing parishes and that much would be done to upgrade and train the clergy. These promises were for the most part left unfulfilled.

Many of the approximately two thousand religious houses tried to secure exemption from the takeover either through bribing officials or by going to court, but all in the end failed. While monastic life was not as popular as it had once been, some houses being near empty and while gross abuses did exist in some areas, this was not universally the case. The King's henchmen who reviewed the monasteries before the takeover asserted that scattered abuses were commonplace and the norm. Further, it had been religious missionaries like Saint Patrick and Saint Augustine, who had first brought the Gospel to England. The monasteries had also kept learning alive for centuries. It was also the religious orders who had set up and ran the first hospitals and hostels. It was the religious orders who fed the poor and outcast daily. Suffering among the many as nine thousand evicted individuals involved undoubtedly resulted from the King's greed and there were cries of protest. Most notably, there was a brief but dangerous popular rising in the west of England, called the Pilgrimage of Grace. However, it was rapidly suppressed and its leaders hung.

The reforms of religion caused by Henry VIII were mainly administrative and jurisdictional. In these areas, Henry broke permanently and decisively with Rome. However, changes in the typical Sunday service were nonexistent. Services remained the same as they had been for centuries. The services of the Church were not reformed during Henry's reign. There was also essentially no change in the parish clergy – the same men remained at their posts throughout all these changes.

In 1536, Henry did issue an order through the bishops that every parish priest was to preach against the Pope's false claims of authority over the church in England. This was to be done for the next 13 Sundays in a row and frequently after that. The problems this posed for poorly trained and educated priests were enormous and little came of the scheme. As for actual beliefs, Henry proved himself very traditional and Catholic. In 1536, he published the Six Articles Act. The six points it dealt with were the traditional Catholic teaching on the nature of the consecrated elements at the Mass, communion in one kind only, the necessity of clerical celibacy, the need for the religious to observe their vows of chastity, the importance of private Masses and the necessity of private confession to a priest. Those who looked and worked for reform were grossly disappointed with Henry VIII. However, they knew enough to keep their mouths shut or they lost their heads.

Henry did however allow several significant signs of what the future might hold to go forward. It was during his reign that the first English Bibles were officially allowed to be set up in Churches. Before this, possession or distribution of English Bibles was a criminal offense – they were thought to promote heresy and divisions. Each parish church was to have one such Bible, a massive volume chained to the lectern. It was not for reading during public services but it was there for everyone to read or to listen to it being read. Henry even allowed the publication of a public service in English. The Litany was first published in 1544. Given that the Mass was still the predominant and normal service the Litany in English did not make much of an impression and the people are said not to have warmed to it at all.

A more significant effort at reform was made in 1547 at the end of Henry's reign. This was an effort to promote sound preaching. A Book of Homilies or sermons was produced which was to be read out at public service. This was a definite improvement over the parish priest's feeble efforts or his avoidance of the pulpit entirely. Most priests read sermons directly from this book. A few had licenses to preach given directly by the king. Other than this there was to be no preaching.

Henry himself did not intend to create a new church. New doctrines were not tolerated nor did he allow any meaningful changes in actual services or beliefs. However, he did allow one significant development that he clearly knew would lead to more extreme and meaningful reform. He allowed his son Edward, born of his third wife Jane Seymour in 1536, to be educated by staunch reformers. Clearly, this would lead to further and more meaningful reforms on Henry's death and Edward's succession to the throne. Henry VIII died in January 1547 and his unhealthy nine year old son became king of England. England would be ruled by a Council of Edward's "advisors" until he reached the age of maturity.

Questions for Study

1. Give two reasons why the Church in England did not reform itself in the early 1500's.
 - a.
 - b.

2. In his reform of the Church in England why did Henry work through Parliament?

3. List two ways in which Rome had direct influence in English Church affairs.
 - a.
 - b.

4. Give three reasons why Henry wanted an annulment from his wife Catherine. Which weighed heaviest on his mind in your opinion ?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

5. Why were all the religious houses in England abolished?

6. Name three minor changes introduced into the churches of England during the last part of Henry's reign. Why did these have no lasting effect?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

7. It has been said by a noted church historian that at the end of Henry's reign,
"...the religious life of the country remained much as it had always been. The parish Churches looked just as they had always looked; the services remained what they had always been ; the clergy behaved as their predecessors had for centuries." If so, then what had Henry changed ?

8. What one significant event did Henry permit that signaled more religious changes for the future of his realm?

Times of Change

Henry had arranged for a council of state to rule England for the seven years until Edward came of age at sixteen. Almost immediately this Council became dominated by one man, Edward's uncle, the Duke of Sommerset. Sommerset was a reformer. Given the absolute power of the State over the Church that he had inherited from Henry, Sommerset had all the tools for Reformation at his disposal. New and more meaningful reforms began when he achieved power. Reform of the form of services and in beliefs and doctrines were now to be achieved.

In the first month of Edward's rule, the Council issued orders abolishing many common religious customs that had prevailed for centuries. Customs abolished included candles on Candlemas, ashes on Ash Wednesday and palms on Palm Sunday. Acts of Parliament were passed repealing Henry's traditional catholic Six Articles Act and defending the most solemn part of the Holy Communion service from radical detractors and blasphemers who referred to the Consecration as hocus-pocus. This Act entitled the laity to receive the Holy Communion in both kinds. This was a most significant event for it restored the biblical and ancient custom of the Church by which both the clergy and laity received both the consecrated host and the consecrated wine.

During the year 1547, Royal Injunctions were issued in order to promote and aid the cause of reform. These Injunctions called for the removal of all but two candles on the altar and forbade the ringing of bells at the Mass. The injunctions also instructed each Parish to obtain a copy of the Book of Homilies and demanded the removal from churches of all paintings, sculptures and images that tended to superstition. The vestry records of many churches attest to the zeal with which some parishes executed these injunctions. There was a wholesale auction of extremely valuable paintings, vestments, sculptures and church plate. Centuries' worth of accumulated memorials were carried off or sold at ridiculously low prices. This purported act of reform was mingled with more than a little covetousness and greed by those who carried out the Injunctions in the name of reform.

The next and more significant phase of reform during Edward's reign came in 1549 with the publication of the first English Prayer Book. Primarily the work of Archbishop Cramner, this book was issued by authority of the King and Parliament. Clergy who refused to use it would be imprisoned. This Act also permitted clergy in the Church in England to marry – an opportunity of which many quickly took advantage. The publication of the first complete service book in English was a very momentous event in the history of the English Church. However, it did not take any informed person by surprise. It had been clear for some time that such a book was being prepared. It seemed Cramner had begun work on it during the last years of Henry's reign.

The first English Prayer Book was not a significant doctrinal break with the past. In essence, the Prayer Book was an English translation of the traditional Latin forms of service that had been in use in England for centuries. Nonetheless it was a significant reform because for the first time in history all the main services of the Church were in English. Also, this new book was in contrast with the previous wide variety of Latin service books used. This one form of Common Prayer was to be used throughout all the realm and its dependencies.

The Communion Service of the 1549 Prayer Book was different from our present one mostly in structure, but also, to a lesser degree, in content. The service began as ours does with the Lord's Prayer and Collect for Purity. Then it omitted the Ten Commandments and sung a ninefold "Lord have mercy upon us." The "Glory be to God on high" was positioned during the first part of the service. Following the collect, epistle, gospel and creed came two lengthy exhortations that are now found after the service in our present Prayer Book, (pg. 88-91). After the offertory there was the prayer of Intercession (pg.75-76 of our present Prayer Book) which was combined with the Prayer of Consecration. Next came the Lord's Prayer which was said before anyone received the Holy Communion. Then followed the Invitation to Confession, Confession, Absolution and Comfortable Words all of which followed the Prayer of Consecration instead of preceding it as in our present Book. As in our book, the Prayer of Humble Access was said immediately before reception. The "O Lamb of God . . ." was said while people received communion. Verses of Scripture were provided to be said after Communion along with the familiar Post-Communion Prayer and the blessing.

In contrast to our present Prayer Book, morning and evening prayer in the first English Prayer Book began with the Lord's Prayer and ended with the third collect. Making the sign of the Cross was retained not only in the Holy Communion service, but also in Baptism, Confirmation, Matrimony and the Visitation of the Sick. This retention was said to smack of popery and bothered the more extreme reformers greatly and they railed against it constantly in their sermons.

Even given the fact that reform was expected and desired in Edward's reign Sommerset's reforms met with opposition. There was a popular rising in Cornwall against the new services. These disturbances resulted in the ousting of Sommerset by the Duke of Northumberland. He took over as the new leader of the ruling Council. Northumberland was an unprincipled man and a radical reformer. The pace of change reached its peak under his rule. The extent and speed of reform that had occurred under those who had come before Northumberland was insufficient for him and his party of extreme reformers.

With the fall of Sommerset those with more conservative religious sentiments had hoped that the tide of change would be halted or would even be turned back. Their hopes were soon dashed with the issuing of a King's letter that called for all the Latin service books to be defaced, destroyed and burned. Their existence threatened the continued use of the new Book of Common Prayer.

In 1550 Northumberland had Parliament pass another Act against traditional books, vestments and church ornaments. This resulted in a further sacking of the treasures of the English Church. Some more radical bishops had the stone altars torn out of all their churches. All bishops who spoke out or who did not seem to have sufficient reforming zeal were deprived of their offices and imprisoned. This was all in preparation for the Second Act of Uniformity that issued in the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI in 1552.

The structure of the 1552 Prayer Book is strikingly similar to our present book. The service began, as in 1549, with the Lord's Prayer, this was followed by the collect for purity and the Ten Commandments. Next, just as in our present Canadian book, came the collect for the King, followed with the collect for the day, the epistle, gospel, creed and sermon. Having been presented with the Word of God written in the first part of the service then came the offertory, intercession and mandatory exhortation. One of the exhortations, now found in our book on pages 88-92, had to be said at every Communion service. Only after the congregation was exhorted to prepare themselves for the sacrament did the invitation, confession, absolution and comfortable words follow. The proper prefaces were next, followed by the Prayer of Humble Access (currently found after the consecration prayer on the bottom of page 83). Finally, there was the consecration prayer, the actual communion of the clergy and people, the Lord's Prayer, post-communion prayer, the "Glory be to God on high . . ." and the final blessing.

Except for a few minor points, the Holy Communion service in the Prayer Book of 1552 is the same as the one we presently use. The basic structure and flow of the service are what is found in our present 1962 Canadian Book of Common Prayer. The principles of our reforming fathers shine through clearly. The service is in English, the language of the congregation, but the English is reverent and austere, it is not colloquial or street language. Scripture is used extensively, explicitly in the epistles and gospels, Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer and sentences and implicitly in the creed, collects, intercession, consecration and the Glory be to God on High. Scripture is also clearly interpreted and explained for example in the sermon, but also in the exhortation, invitation to confession and the post-communion prayer.

In short, it has been said that there is not anything in the Communion service which is not scriptural. All the elements in the service are either taken from the Bible directly or are paraphrases of Scripture or are in line with Scripture and not contrary to it. Epistles and Gospels are an example of direct scripture in the service. Paraphrased Scripture is seen in the collects and the creeds. The prayers, i.e., the Prayer of Humble Access, are all designed to be in line with Scripture and not contrary to it. Our Reforming fathers also saw to it that their new services made for more congregational participation along with increased understanding. Congregations could now follow, understand and participate in the service. They could now participate in the service by responding but more importantly by praying along with the priest.

The reforming zeal and measures of Northumberland and others ended abruptly on July 6, 1553 with the death of King Edward. The king was only 15 when he died of a lung infection, but his death signalled an end to all reform, radical or otherwise, in the Church of England. Edward was followed by his half-sister Mary, a staunch and zealous Roman Catholic.

Questions for Study

1. What made it so easy for Somerset and Northumberland to reform the Church in England?
2. List three important reforms in religion brought about during Somerset's time in power.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. Were there any drawbacks to the reformers' zeal or methods?
4. What two significant events in religion occurred in 1549?
5. List three general improvements in religion brought about by the two Prayer Books of Edward VI.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
6. What would you say are the relationships between our 1962 Canadian Prayer Book and the two Prayer Books of Edward VI?

Counter-Reformation

With the death of Edward died the hopes and aspirations of the reforming party. Mary, the daughter of Katherine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first wife, came to the throne. Mary was a staunch Roman Catholic determined to turn back the clock and undo all that was done under both Edward's and her father's reigns. She would not have the English Bible, the Prayer Book, married clergy or any service whatsoever in English - all was to return to the old Catholicism.

Mary was greeted with much public celebration and genuine gladness as she returned to London. She had been essentially under internal exile under Edward's rule. The Tudor line of monarchs was to continue and Henry VIII's eldest daughter was on the throne. Mary was 37 years old when she came to the throne and the last twenty years had been very difficult and bitter for her. At the tender age of 16 her mother had been put away by Henry and Mary was herself declared illegitimate. For the following twenty years she lived in seclusion and internal exile; under constant watch and pressure to join the reforming cause. She never gave in. Now this bitter, tight-lipped woman was Queen and she saw it as her duty to return England to Roman Catholicism and Roman domination.

While she was greeted with initial joy, there were many who were worried and afraid at her coming to the throne. Many leading reformers fled the country for safer Protestant countries in Europe. Others stayed. They would soon feel the wrath of the determined Queen.

Mary saw to the removal of all married clergy and all who held or who would not renounce reformed views on matters of religion. In short, all clergy from archbishops on down who would not return to Roman Catholicism were removed from their parishes and deprived of their incomes. As many as 20 per cent of all the clergy were removed for such reasons. The number was not higher for reform in religion was a new thing, the Prayer Book had only been in existence for four years. Some did not clearly understand what was at stake, others did not have the courage to stand up for their faith, others simply went with the flow. The massive process of rebuilding altars, disposing of English Bibles, finding and fixing vestments and church vessels went ahead.

On January 12, 1554, Mary made a crucial political mistake - she announced a marriage treaty. She was not going to marry an Englishman, she was going to marry a Spaniard, Philip of Spain. This was highly unpopular with the entire English nation. Spain was a foreign power and traditionally an enemy of the English nation. The marriage went ahead and the grumbling began. This move was seen as an grave mistake and a national disgrace.

Mary continued with her counter - reformation. The Latin Mass was reintroduced throughout England and a special papal envoy arrived from Rome, a man with the powers of Henry's Wolsey, his name was Reginald Pole and he was an English Cardinal. Mary

persuaded Parliament to revoke all Edward's and her father's reforming legislation passed since 1528 - all except the act dissolving the monasteries. The monasteries could not be restored wholesale for all their land and goods had been sold and had passed into lay hands, therefore Parliament would not go along with their restoration. Cardinal Pole finally absolved the English crown and nation of their 'sin' and England again came under Roman domination.

However, all was not well in England. Mary was determined to stamp out all remnants of reformed religion including the people who had not fled and held reformed views. Heresy trials progressed and many were tried and executed for their beliefs. The form of execution used was burning at the stake. Men and women, rich and poor, educated and uneducated were tried and killed for their beliefs.

Among those who had not fled the kingdom were Bishops Latimer and Ridley and Archbishop Cranmer, the great reformer, servant of kings and author of the Prayer Book. All three had been under arrest since April of 1554.

Latimer was the son of a farmer, but had risen within the church because of his fame as a preacher. Preaching against social and religious abuses, he came to the attention of Henry VIII. He had supported Henry's break with Rome, the dissolution of the monasteries, and the subsequent reform of religion. At the time of his arrest, he was Bishop of Worcester. Ridley, also a reformer, was a friend of Cranmer and even helped in writing the first Prayer Book of 1549. He also was a bishop; at the time of his arrest he was bishop of London.

The two bishops were taken to Oxford University in 1554 to debate Roman Catholic teachers concerning Roman Catholic beliefs. They did not change their views and the two were excommunicated in 1555 and executed on Oct. 16, 1555, at Oxford. The following is a description of their martyrdom by a writer of the time, John Foxe.

Having both been led to the stake where they would be burned, Ridley, seeing Latimer, . . . ran to him, embraced and kissed him; and as they that stood near reported, comforted him saying: "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage (weaken) the fury of the flame or else strengthen us to abide it." With that he went to the stake, kneeled down by it, kissed it, and effectually prayed; and behind him Master Latimer kneeled, as earnestly calling upon God as he." Then followed a half-hour sermon against the "sins" of the two bishops, who when they asked to make reply were denied. Then, being stripped to their underclothes, " . . . Master Ridley, standing yet in his truss, said to his brother, "It were best for me to go in my truss still." "No", said his brother, " it will put you to more pain; and the truss will do a poor man good." Whereunto Master Ridley said, "Be it, in the name of God, " and so unlaced himself. Then, being in his shirt, he stood upon the stone, and held up his hand and said, "O, heavenly Father, I give unto Thee most hearty thanks, for that Thou hast called me to be a professor of Thee, even unto death. I beseech Thee, Lord God, take mercy upon this realm of England, and deliver the same from all her enemies."

Then the smith took a chain of iron, and brought the same about both Dr. Ridley and Master Latimer's middle, and as he was knocking in a staple, Dr. Ridley took the chain in his hand, and shook the same, for it did gird in his belly, and looking aside to the smith, said, "Good fellow, Knock it in hard, for the flesh will have its course". Then his brother did bring him gunpowder in a bag, and would have tied the same about his neck. (To kill him the quicker). Master Ridley asked what it was. "Gunpowder," his brother said. "Then, " said he, "I will take it to be sent from God, therefore I will receive it as sent from Him. And have you any, " said he, "for my brother? " meaning Master Latimer. "Yea, sir, that I have, " said his brother. "Then give it unto him, " said he, "immediately, lest ye come too late." So his brother went and carried of the same gunpowder unto Master Latimer.

Then they brought a faggot (dried firewood), kindled with fire, and laid the same down at Dr. Ridley's feet. To whom Master Latimer spake in this manner:"Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." And so the fire being given unto them, when Dr. Ridley saw the fire flaming up towards him, he cried, with a wonderful voice, " Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit. Lord, receive my spirit," and after, repeated this latter part often, " Lord, Lord, receive my spirit:" Master Latimer crying as vehemently on the other side, "Father of heaven, receive my soul!" who received the flame as it were embracing it. After that he had stroked his face with his hands, and as it were bathed them a little in the fire, he (Latimer) soon died, (as it appeared), with very little pain or none.

But Ridley lingered longer by reason of the badness of the fire, which only burned beneath, being kept down by the wood . . . finally, one of the standers-by, with a pole, pulled off the wood above, and where Ridley saw the fire flame up, he leaned himself to that side. And when the flame touched the gunpowder, he was seen to stir no more, finally . . . falling down at Latimer's feet.

Gruesome as the truth of history is, such was the brave and Christian manner in which these two bishops met their deaths. They did not deny their belief in the truth and usefulness of the reformed religion of the English Church. They died for things we take for granted, an English Bible, services in a language we can understand, communion in both kinds and the Book of Common Prayer.

When Bishops Latimer and Ridley were burned, Archbishop Cranmer was still in prison. Sixty-five years old, ill and under extreme pressure to recant, the elderly reformer wavered. Having to chose between a comfortable old age and death, he had signed a partial recantation, but shortly after regained his composure and refused to say any more. The Romanists were hesitant to burn an Archbishop of Canterbury but they finally gave up and sentenced the great reformer and author of the Prayer Book to the same fate as Latimer and Ridley. The following is Foxes' account of his martyrdom.

On his way to the stake, when he came to the place where the holy bishops and martyrs . . . were burned before him for the confession of the truth, he kneeled down and prayed God, but did not tarry long in his prayers, for he put off his garments to his shirt, and prepared himself for death. His shirt was made long down to his feet, which were bare; and his head . . . was so bare that one hair could not be seen upon it. His beard was long and thick, covering his face with marvellous gravity. Such a countenance of gravity moved the hearts both of his friends and enemies.

Then an iron chain was tied about Cranmer, and when they perceived him to be more steadfast than to be moved from his sentence, they commanded the fire to be set to him.

And when the wood was kindled, and the fire began to burn near him, stretching out his arm, he put his right hand into the flame, (with which he had signed the partial recantation), which he held so steadfast and immovable that all men might see his hand burned before his body was touched. His body did so abide the burning flame with such constancy and steadfastness, that standing always in one place, without moving his body, he seemed to move no more than the stake to which he was bound; His eyes were lifted up to heaven, and oftentimes he repeated, "This unworthy right hand! " so long as his voice would suffer (allow) him; and using often the words of Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! " In the greatness of the flame he gave up the ghost.

Such was the noble death of the learned archbishop of Canterbury, servant of Henry VIII, and author of the Book of Common Prayer.

The persecutions of Queen Mary earned her the title of "Bloody" from the English people. In all, about 300 people died in the same horrible manner as Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer. Mary's cruel violence against her own people, coupled with her unhappy and unprofitable marriage to Philip, a union that led to war with France, made her reign a most tragic and unhappy one. The agony however, for both England and Mary was short lived for she died on November 17, 1558. Mary died alone, both without the husband she had married, for he had returned to Spain and without children, for their union had never produced an heir.

Mary had returned England to Roman Catholicism and to foreign domination but at great cost to both herself and her people. The return was on shaky footing for the throne now went to Mary's younger half-sister Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry's first mistress Ann Boleyn. The Boleyn family had been noted promoters of the reforming party.

Questions for Study

1. What sort of life did queen Mary lead in the twenty years before she came to the throne?

2. What were the two reasons that Mary removed clergy from their parishes and incomes?
 - a.
 - b.

3. What crucial political mistake did Mary make during her reign?

4. Why were all the monastic lands and property not restored during Mary's reign?

5. What was the fate of those who refused to renounce their reformed views on religion during Mary's reign?

6. Who said, "We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." What does it mean?

7. List three things that the martyrs of Mary's reign believed in and shed their blood for.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

8. Was England's return to Rome secure at Mary's death?

The Elizabethan Settlement

With the death of Queen Mary, the young Princess Elizabeth came to the throne in November of 1558. Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII's mistress, Anne Boleyn, was 25 years old when she came to power. She was a thin, red-haired young woman but was soon to prove herself one of the ablest leaders England ever had. Elizabeth, personally very intelligent was to prove herself an exceptionally astute statesmen and ruler. Hers was an age that was to become famous in history. Her reign saw the literary talents of Marlowe and Shakespeare. It also saw the explorations of Hawkins, Raleigh and Drake and the first tentative settlements overseas in places like Newfoundland. These were also the years of Mary, Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada.

When Elizabeth came to the throne all was not well in England. The realm was in confusion and disorder. Politically, the nation was tied to a foreign power because of Mary's marriage to Philip of Spain. Religiously, the nation had returned, at least in form, to Roman Catholicism. Were the foreign ties to be broken or continued and strengthened? Was the reform in religion simply a brief historical fling or would Anne Boleyn's daughter return to the position of her brother and father?

At first, Elizabeth very wisely moved slowly and cautiously. She chose moderate, level headed advisors and ministers for her government and a moderate reformer for her Archbishop of Canterbury. The Archbishop's name was Matthew Parker. Archbishop Parker had been a personal friend of Bishop Latimer. The church was a problem. All her bishops were hand picked by Mary and were all ardent Roman Catholics, supporters and promoters of Mary's Counter-Reformation. As well, all parish clergy presently in place had at least externally conformed to the return to the old ways. All was not lost however. Many reforming exiles were returning from overseas and there were still to be found a few living reformers who had braved the storm of Mary's days. Elizabeth's new Archbishop was just such a man. He had quietly lived at peace during Mary's reign and had escaped the fires.

There was however a problem with many returned exiles. They had gone to Geneva during their exile and most had returned ardent Protestants, students and followers of John Calvin. These men wanted many changes in religion. Roman Catholicism was Satanism to them and the Prayer Book religion of Edward's reign was, to their minds, seriously flawed. The Prayer Book smacked much too much of "popish superstition."

Elizabeth's first Parliament met in January 1559 and passed two Acts of extreme importance concerning religion. These two Acts establish what is known to history as the Elizabethan Settlement of Religion. The first Act was another Act of Supremacy like that passed by Henry. It reenacted Henry's break with Rome and undid Mary's reunion with the Pope. It made Elizabeth "Supreme governor" of both Church and State and reestablished the administration of Communion to the laity in both kinds. There is evidence that this is as far as Elizabeth wanted to go, i.e., to the situation that prevailed at the death of her father.

Parliament however had other ideas. Under extreme pressure from the returned exiles, Parliament passed a second act, an Act of Uniformity. This act sought complete religious uniformity throughout all England and brought back the Prayer Book of 1552 with a few alterations. Vestments were to be retained and used and the words for administering Holy Communion from the 1549 and 1552 books were combined. The result was the form we have had ever since. Severe penalties were to be handed out to those who did not obey this law.

Through an oath to the Queen contained in the Act of Supremacy all of Mary's bishops except one were removed from their sees. Elizabeth would slowly fill their places with men in agreement with her religious settlement. As for the parish clergy, they posed no real problem with as few as 200 refusing to take the oath and use the slightly modified Prayer Book. The laity showed more independence, many, especially Roman Catholics, took the oath and attended church enough to conform outwardly but continued to attend Mass and practised their Faith privately. More extreme Protestants also conformed outwardly, though they considered the Prayer Book flawed and popish. They too met privately to conduct, what they considered, more properly biblical worship.

The Elizabethan Settlement established scriptural Prayer Book Anglicanism as the official, standard and devout expression of Christian worship in England. It became the norm and beloved jewel of Englishmen. However, as noted above, there were those on two sides of the Prayer Book's middle road who were dissatisfied. These two groups were Roman Catholics and the more extreme Protestants who became known generally as puritans.

In the sixteenth century what we call religious toleration was neither known nor practised. The idea was considered simply silly by the men and women of Elizabeth's day. If a person was to be an English subject then it followed naturally, to their minds, that they would be the same religion as their sovereign. To be otherwise was seen as highly suspicious and most likely treasonous. To be truly English and loyal one had to be Anglican. Similarly, to be Spanish and loyal meant that one was Roman Catholic.

Given that this was the outlook of the sixteenth century mind, one can readily appreciate the difficulty of being a member of the old Faith, Roman Catholicism, in Elizabeth's England. At first, the queen was fully willing to wink at her Roman Catholic subjects' solely outward observance of the official faith and worship. However, external pressures would make both her Roman Catholic subjects' position and her response much more difficult and severe.

At first, the pope pinned his hopes on Philip of Spain to reclaim the English throne for Roman Catholicism. However, Philip had too many problems of his own to even consider such a scheme. He also knew first hand how hostile the English were to foreign rule and how difficult a people they would be to conquer.

In 1568 an event of great danger to Elizabeth took place – Mary, Queen of Scots, fled to England. Mary was Roman Catholic and had a fairly good claim to the English throne. She was the daughter of Henry VIII's sister, Margaret. Mary also had always wanted to be Queen of England and she was constantly involved in plots to that end. These plots necessarily included the murder of Queen Elizabeth. By 1569 things were so heated that two of Elizabeth's

nobles in the north of England rose in rebellion. They demanded Mary be made queen and demanded a return to the old faith. Though aided and encouraged by the pope the rebellion was quickly and severely crushed.

The situation further deteriorated in 1570, with the "trial," excommunication and deposition of Elizabeth by a papal court in Rome. The result of this action, along with Elizabeth's condemnation, was a papal decree saying that all Roman Catholic subjects were absolved of their allegiance to their Queen. This placed Elizabeth's Roman Catholic citizens in a terrible corner, either they had to obey the pope or the queen. They had to either face excommunication by their Church or death from their Monarch. This amounted to a declaration of war by the pope and it forced Elizabeth's government to act. An Act of 1571 made it a treasonable act, punishable by death, to seek out, import or publish any document from the pope.

In the late 1560's foreign colleges and seminaries were set up to train Roman Catholic missionaries for the conversion of England. Young Catholic men in exile would go and train at these centres and on return to England prepare themselves for death if caught as many of them were. These missionary priests entered England secretly and were housed by sympathetic Roman Catholics. An entire underground system of practising Roman Catholicism was developed. Parliament responded with more laws that made it treasonable to draw anyone away from allegiance to the queen. In 1585 it became treasonable even to be a missionary priest. Those caught were tortured and executed.

In 1583 a plot was uncovered which threatened the life of the queen and Mary, Queen of Scots who was under arrest, was implicated. Finally, in 1587, it was decided that Elizabeth would not be safe until the focus of all such plots was dead. Elizabeth at first refused to sign Mary's death warrant, she hesitated, hedged, but finally gave in. Mary was beheaded on February 8, 1587.

Even with the death of Mary all was not over. England and Elizabeth were not yet secure. The year 1588 saw the launching of the great Spanish Armada against England. The plan was to land a great army and then to conquer England, kill Elizabeth and reestablish Roman Catholicism, if needed be, by force of arms. The English navy coupled with a terrible storm destroyed the proud Spanish fleet and only a few ships returned to Spain. This marked the end of foreign interference in English Church affairs. From then on Roman Catholics were left to fend for themselves in a clearly non-Roman Catholic land.

The threat to Elizabeth and her Settlement of religion from the more radical Protestant or puritan side was somewhat different from the challenge from Roman Catholicism. The puritans were not explicitly involved in an attempt to overthrow the monarchy. However, they were involved in an attempt to radically transform the nature of Elizabeth's Church, including her role as supreme governor of that Church.

At first, the puritan movement was led by the returned exiles. Having spent time at Calvin's Geneva these men were full of radical Protestant beliefs and regarded the Prayer Book

as much too popish and full of inexcusable superstitions. They objected most strenuously to the use of vestments. As well, they found fault with the use of the ring in Marriage, the sign of the Cross at baptism, saints days in the calendar and the singing of any part of the service, especially the psalms. Having lost their fight on these matters in Synod, the puritans turned their attention to Parliament and tried to achieve their goals through that body.

With this turn to Parliament the puritan cause took on a more dangerous agenda. The old complaints against externals in worship remained. Furthermore, by now, younger, more radical men had joined their ranks and they wanted a wholesale change in worship and the manner in which the Church was governed. The Prayer Book was to be replaced by a presbyterian service book and bishops were to be replaced with the presbyterian form of Church government. Government by bishops, they claimed, was wholly contrary to Scripture and had to go. Queen Elizabeth, astute as ever, was alarmed by this turn of events and saw in it a threat to her supremacy as head of the Church and eventually as head of the nation.

After the puritan's attack on the Prayer Book and bishops failed in Parliament, they turned to another tactic. They tried to educate the local clergy to the truths of their views on church government. They organized little Bible studies called "prophesying" during which they attacked bishops and expounded their so-called Biblical form of Church government. These groups would often meet after actual church services and then hold their own "better," services and combine them with a "Bible Study." At first, some bishops even encouraged these meetings failing to see the danger. Elizabeth however, insisted on their suppression.

The final and clearly subversive phase of the puritan movement during Elizabeth's reign reached a head in the 1580's. Having been defeated both in Synod and Parliament, the movement went underground and set up an entirely separate system of church government. This "classis" or presbyterian system operated in local parishes, deaneries and regions. Each parish would have a committee of ministers and lay people who would meet and worship as presbyterians. They would ordain, excommunicate, dictate morality and operate as a secret church within the Church. Elizabeth was deeply suspicious of the aims and outcome of such groups so they were discouraged and banned by her bishops.

The puritan "prophesying" and "classis" movement soon lost steam and was no longer a force by the 1590's. Some of its leaders had died and others had left for greener pastures. By the 1590's, the Prayer Book was accepted and had become a beloved, cherished and clearly scriptural means of worship. The clergy of the established church were now better trained, harder working and more devout. Therefore the puritans could no longer claim to have the best educated and hardest working clergy. Further, the vicious and uncharitable attacks on the church and her bishops that the puritans sometimes resorted to backfired and they lost much sympathy for their cause.

By the 1590's, with over ten years yet to reign, Elizabeth's settlement of religion stood firm. Her church had weathered the storms, attacks and detractions from both the puritans and Roman Catholics. The middle ground between the two extremes had been claimed and held by the Anglican Church of Queen Elizabeth.

Questions for Study

1. What two Acts of Parliament make up the Elizabethan Settlement of religion?
2. What do these two Acts reestablish?
3. What caused the bishops whom Mary appointed to resign?
4. What did sixteenth century men and women understand by "religious toleration?"
5. What two groups were opposed to Elizabeth's Settlement of Religion?
6. Did Elizabeth earnestly seek out and persecute her Roman Catholic subjects? Why?
7. What action by the Pope placed Elizabeth's R.C. subjects in an impossible situation?
8. List three puritan objections to the Elizabethan Settlement.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
9. Why did it become necessary to execute Mary, Queen of Scots?
10. List four specific Puritan objections to the Book of Common Prayer.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
11. Why did Elizabeth insist on the suppression of the puritan "prophesying?"
12. Why did the puritan "prophesying " and "classis" movements die out?

Elizabethan Church Life

The Elizabethan Settlement established Anglicanism as the official faith of the English people. The English Church saw itself as a "middle way" between Roman Catholic superstition and Protestant extremism. The great hallmarks of this church were the Bible and the Prayer Book, both in English. For the first time in their history, the English people entered a settled period of national life with both the Bible and their worship in their native tongue.

A typical church service in Elizabethan England would not be so different from the Prayer Book services of today. Churches of the realm had become more austere than in the days of King Henry VIII. Many ornaments and decorations were gone as were all the saints' statues, relics and observances. The purging of Edward VI's reign had destroyed many objects of art that had been used for superstitious purposes. Mary's brief revival was quickly undone and statues, vestments and hangings were again destroyed and confiscated.

The old medieval wall paintings of the crucifixion, judgement and various saints were replaced by the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments. Stone altars were replaced by wooden communion tables. The typical parish clergyman was now married with a family – a practice that the Queen personally disapproved of but one that was nonetheless tolerated. Also, the average clergyman was encouraged and aided in becoming better educated. They were to have their own Bibles, commentaries and notebooks. Further, despite the depleted numbers and morale of the clergy at the beginning of the reign, with time; the number, quality and conduct of the clergy improved considerably.

A typical Sunday service of the 1560's was Morning or Evening Prayer. Holy Communion was usually celebrated only once a month. In this can be seen a great and significant change in the nature and emphasis of worship. The Protestant stress on Scripture was evident in both the kinds of services used and in the services themselves. God's Word written was to be read, heard and preached. The Prayer Book services, including Holy Communion, contained more Scripture and had been purged of non-Scriptural teachings. These services had been written to contain only direct excerpts from Scripture or teachings fully in accord with the plain sense of Scripture.

The Elizabethan Church's great reverence for, and adherence to, Scripture is very clearly expressed in the 39 Articles of Religion, published in 1563. They were a reissue of the short-lived 42 Articles issued in the last year of Edward's reign. The Articles were not meant to be a comprehensive statement of Anglican doctrine, but rather a clear statement of where the Church stood on the controversial issues of the day. They deal with issues as diverse as the Trinity, Scripture, the Sacraments, private property and whether Christians can swear oaths. Over the centuries "The 39 Articles" have been an authoritative statement of Anglican belief and practice. Until recently, all Anglican clergy the world over had to sign and agree with them before they could be ordained.

The sixth Article deals with Scripture and lists what books are considered authoritative. It says that we read the Apocrypha "for example of life and instruction of

manners . . . but not to establish any doctrine." This statement shows Elizabeth's Church again adopting a middle way between Roman Catholicism that used these books as authoritative and Protestants who disregarded them wholly. The major point of the Article states,

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

Scripture and Scripture alone is the Word of God and contains His message for us. Only Scripture contains what we need to know and believe to be saved. The Church cannot require us to believe anything that is either not clearly in Scripture or not able to be proven out of Scripture.

Article XX speaks of Scripture and more specifically, the Church's relation to Scripture. It states:

The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

The Church is not above Scripture, but is bound and limited in what it may rightly teach by Scripture. It is to be a witness and keeper to what is written, not a creator or interpreter of new beliefs. The Church may make up new services, as it did at the Reformation. It also can decide matters of the Faith. However, in both, it is bound entirely by Scripture and may not make a service or a decision contrary to Scripture. Scripture is also implied to contain its own bounds of interpretation for all of it must be read and no one place or verse may be so interpreted so as to contradict another.

Clearly the Elizabethan Church did not simply revere the Bible as a great book full of truths from the past. But rather regarded it as the eternal, ever-true word of God, binding and authoritative for all people, in all places, at all times. It is because of this, that not only was the Bible read more in the services of the Church, but the very services themselves were subjected to the test of Scripture. When Scripture was not being directly read the prayers and praises were clearly in line with Scripture.

The services in Elizabeth's England were conducted by the priest and the people were encouraged to make the responses where appropriate. During Elizabeth's reign editions of the psalms with music were published and this form of hymn singing became greatly popular. The once monthly celebration of Holy Communion immediately followed Morning Prayer with those intending to receive going to the front of the church while others left for home.

The once monthly celebration of the Holy Communion reveals that the greater emphasis in the Elizabethan Church was upon Scripture and preaching. The popularity and influence of the old travelling friars and the more recent Protestant preachers proved beyond all doubt the power and importance of preaching.

The Elizabethan sermon was the true highpoint of services. Sermons were long and involved and ranged in length from thirty minutes to over an hour. However, due to the influence preachers exercised, Elizabeth carefully controlled both who preached and what they preached. One could only preach if licensed to do so by the Crown. Only those who undeniably supported the "middle way" and could defend it from the errors on either side were allowed to preach. Roman Catholic and puritan sympathizers were carefully weeded out. However, with the passage of time, Elizabeth's clergy had become better educated and the general populous more at ease with the "middle way." Because of this, more men became licensed to preach in the many parishes.

This strict control of preaching did lead to an important and interesting development however. Due to the shortage of loyal and learned preachers the English Church published a "Book of Homilies" in 1562. This work was a collection of thirty some sermons divided into suitable lengths to be read out by unlicensed clergy at sermon time. The first twelve were a reissue from a Book of Homilies published during Edward's reign in 1547. These sermons were on various subjects and for various times of the Church year. There were sermons on good works, prayer, the sacraments, marriage, and preparation for Holy Communion. The Homilies also dealt with major Holy Days and contained sermons for Christmas, Good Friday and Easter. Much attention was devoted to moral instruction with sermons against swearing, adultery, idolatry, drunkenness, idleness and wilful rebellion.

These sermons have come down to us and make for both interesting and instructive reading. Not surprisingly, the very first sermon of the collection concerns the "reading and knowledge of Holy Scripture." It states:

. . . in Holy Scripture is fully contained what we ought to do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to love, and what to look for at God's hands . . . In these books we may learn to know ourselves, how vile and miserable we be, and also to know God, how good he is of himself, and how he maketh us and all creatures partakers of his goodness.

The nature of the moral exhortations contained in these homilies is made clear in the first paragraph of the sermon against "Whoredom and Uncleaness," Although there want not, good Christian people, great swarms of vices worthy to be rebuked . . . yet above other vices, the outrageous seas of adultery, (or breaking of wedlock), whoredom, fornication, and uncleanness, have not only burst in, but also overflowed almost the whole world, unto the great dishonour of God, the exceeding infamy of the name of Christ, the notable decay of true religion, and the utter destruction of the public wealth; and that so abundantly, that, through the customable use thereof, this vice is grown into such height, that in manner among many it is counted no sin at

all, but rather a pastime, a dalliance, and but a touch of youth: not rebuked but winked at; not punished, but laughed at. Wherefore it is necessary at this present to entreat of the sin of whoredom and fornication, declaring unto you the greatness of sin, and how odious, hateful, and abominable it is, and hath always been reputed before God and all good men, and how grievously it hath been punished both by the law of God, and the laws of divers princes. Again, to shew you certain remedies, whereby ye may, (through the grace of God), eschew this most detestable sin of whoredom and fornication, and lead your lives in all honesty and cleanness.

The very plain language and direct approach is very evident and leaves no room for misunderstanding or debate. Sin is sin and will be punished as God warns. However, these sermons were also very practical in that they give directions how to avoid falling into such great error. In short, they were designed not only to warn and denounce but also to encourage and help.

Questions for Study

1. What were the two great hallmarks of the Elizabethan Church?
2. What had come to replace the wall pictures of the Judgement in Elizabethan churches?
3. What are the thirty-nine Articles of Religion?
4. Does the Anglican Church read the Apocrypha? Why?
5. Why did Elizabeth chose to license her preachers?
6. Describe the tone of the sermons in the "Book of Homilies."