Worshippers in the Anglican Church (known as Episcopalians in the United States) enjoy a close relationship with us Catholics. Our liturgies, and theology are almost identical. The structure of both Churches is also very similar. However, this was not always the case. In the mid 16th-century, Edward VI (Henry VIII’s son), influenced by Archbishop Cranmer, made the Anglican Church adopt the theology and worship of Protestantism, and the Anglican Church remained Protestant for almost three centuries.

During the 1830s, scholars in Oxford and Cambridge studied the origins of Christianity; this led them to rediscover the splendors of Catholic liturgy, and eventually to reconsider the relationship between the Anglican and Catholic Churches. Thus the Oxford Movement was born. They conceived the Anglican Church as one of three branches of the Catholic Church: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Anglican.

However, more traditional Anglican bishops wouldn’t assign Oxford Movement priests to parishes, and so the Oxford Movement priests found themselves working with the poor in slums. This led them to create a social justice movement.

Some Anglican priests, such as John Henry Newman, eventually came to believe that the movement didn’t go far enough. He converted to Roman Catholicism in 1878, and was made a cardinal the following year. Pope Francis canonized him as a saint in 2019.

The Oxford Movement had profound effects on the Catholic Church. When these well-educated scholars converted to Catholicism, they brought new life into Catholic theology. The end result — a century later — was the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. Their research into ancient liturgy prompted many of the liturgical reforms enacted by the Council.

In fits and starts, the Oxford Movement began a gradual movement toward reunification between the Anglican and Catholic Churches. However, the Anglican Church’s ordination of women has been the major sticking point in the reunification process. This is too bad, since it isn’t really a core doctrinal issue in either Church. For the present time, we Catholics and Anglicans must content ourselves with being close friends, and work alongside each other to build up the kingdom of God.

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**Lenten Taizé Service**

3:00 - 4:00 pm

Saturday, March 5th 2022

~ in the Church ~

*All are welcome.*

*No experience is necessary!*