

**Concordat of Understanding
Between
The Anglican Church in North America
and
The Philippine Independent Catholic Churches of Jesus Christ
April 24, 2024**

I. Preamble:

In the Name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Thankful for the Scriptural truth that it is “good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Ps.133:1), and conscious of the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus Christ that we “should all be one” (John 17:21), we celebrate our agreement that it seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us that the Anglican Church in North America and the Philippine Independent Catholic Churches of Jesus Christ enter into full communion and partnership for the sake of the Gospel on the basis of mutual acceptance of the following three principles:

1. The Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) shall assist the Philippine Independent Catholic Churches of Jesus Christ (PICC) (Known in this document as *Iglesia Catolica Filipina Independiente (ICFI)*) in its efforts to minister to its members resident in the United States of America.
2. Each Communion agrees to admit members of the other Communion to participate in the Sacraments.
3. Full Communion does not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essential tenets of Christian Orthodoxy as put forth in the Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Jerusalem Declaration of 2008.

II. Brief History:

The PICC emerged from the PIC over doctrinal and moral issues. The PICC preferred the word Catholic to describe the universal church’s historical confession, and to stress the Catholic “universal commitment to the Gospel for all people”. Yet the mother church (PIC) also used the designation PICC therefore the emerging jurisdiction now refers to itself as *Iglesia Catolica Filipina Independiente (ICFI)*.

After the Philippine Revolution of 1896-98, the PIC formed a national church to protest the Spanish clergy’s control of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines. They separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1902 and were excommunicated by Pope Leo XIII. Initially, the PIC clergy were all former Roman Catholic priests. They were episcopally led and episcopally governed. However, after August 3, 1902, many groups around the country joined the PIC in its efforts to form a national church. The PIC then became the umbrella that sheltered various groups and knit them together to become one Philippine national church.

A few months after the PIC was established, its leadership began a quest for Apostolic Succession but to no avail. In the 1930's, the PIC was drawn to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA (PECUSA). After much dialogue with the Episcopal Church, the PIC amended her Constitution and Canons in 1947 under the name "Iglesia Filipina Independiente" (IFI) to express her difference and independence from the Roman Catholic Church and to secure Apostolic Succession. PECUSA bestowed the gift of Apostolic Succession on the PIC/IFI on April 7, 1948, and since 1960, has been in full communion with the Episcopal Church. In 1961, the PIC was accepted into full communion with the Church of England and the Old Catholic Churches. PIC bishops have been regular participants in Lambeth Conferences.

In 1977, difficulties arose when the PIC adopted a new Constitution and Canons "full of infirmities, departing from the spirit of 1902." The PIC departed from its original episcopal form of polity and its Catholic ethos. Instead, they embraced a congregationalist polity. This led to dissension within the PIC. Those who maintained the original values of the Philippine Independent Catholic Church became a minority within the denomination and their national officials were expelled from the national office by those who wanted to depart from the original catholic ethos and doctrine of the church.

In 2003, those who maintained the original values (doctrine) and catholic ethos of the PIC decided they had had enough and registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission as the Philippine Independent Catholic Church to affirm and reclaim their heritage. The PIC responded legally and the SEC registration of January 8, 2003, was revoked. On April 10, 2019, the PICC, using a new name, was registered as the "International Conference of Philippine Independent Catholic Churches of Jesus Christ" (ICPICCJC). This action was approved by the Magisterium of the ICFI meeting in Labo, Ozamis City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines on November 9, 2018.

III. Present Declarations of Apostolic Faith, Order and Gospel Commitment:

Apostolic Faith - A brief summary

The ICFI fully subscribes to the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral¹ and the Jerusalem Declaration² (See End Notes). Further expressions of its Apostolic Faith can be found in its Declaration of Faith and in its Articles of Religion.

---Declaration of Faith---

WE BELIEVE IN

We, The Bishops, Priests and Lay members, delegates to the General Synod (G.S.) of the Philippine Independent Catholic Church held in the City of Manila on the 5th day of August, A. D. 1947, do reiterate our Faith and publicly declare that:

1. The Holy Trinity:

One God, true and living of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. And that in the unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power and eternity – the Father who is made of none, neither created nor begotten; the Son who is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten; the Holy Spirit who is of the Father and the Son, neither made nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

2. Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God:

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, after she had conceived by the Holy Spirit. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.

3. The Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit, the Lord and the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together we worship and glorify.

4. One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church:

The Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, which is the Body of Christ, founded by Christ for the redemption and sanctification of mankind, and to which Church He gave power and authority to preach His Gospel to the whole world under the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

- - - Articles of Religion - - -

The ICFI has 20 Articles of Religion which affirm and comment upon various aspects of Catholic Faith and practice. Fifteen Articles have to do with doctrine and five articles have to do with specific liturgical customs. Several of the Articles that should be pertinent to the Concordat are:

1. Salvation:

Salvation is obtained only through a vital faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as Lord and Savior. This faith should manifest itself in pure thoughts, words, and deeds.

2. Holy Scriptures:

The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and nothing which cannot be proved thereby should be required to be believed.

3. The Creeds:

The Articles of the Christian Faith as contained in the ancient Creeds known as the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are to be taught by this Church and accepted by the faithful.

4. The Sacraments:

The Sacraments are outward and visible signs of our faith and a means whereby God Manifests His goodwill towards us and confers grace upon us. Two Sacraments, *Baptism*, and *Holy Communion* commonly called the Mass, ordained by Christ Himself, are held to be generally necessary to salvation.

Baptism is necessary for salvation. It signifies and confers grace, cleansing from original sin as well as actual sin previously committed; makes us children of God and heirs of everlasting life. It affects our entrance into the Church of God. It is administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation, whereby, through the imposition of the Bishop's hands, anointing and prayer, baptized Christians are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and confirmed in the Faith.

Reconciliation, the confession of sins as commanded by Jesus Christ. Absolution being granted according to the Sacred Office of the Keys exercised only by those occupying the sacerdotal office (bishops and priests).

The Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, taken and received by the faithful for the strengthening and refreshing of their bodies and souls.

Holy Unction, whereby the sick, especially one in danger of death, is anointed with oil with prayer. He receives, if necessary, remission of sins, the strengthening of his soul and if it be God's will, restoration to health.

Holy Orders, a Sacrament by which Bishops, Priests, and Deacons are ordained and receive power and authority to perform their sacred duties.

Holy Matrimony, a Sacrament in which a man and a woman are joined together in the holy estate of matrimony.

5. The Holy Eucharist:

The Holy Eucharist, commonly called the Mass, is the central act of Christian worship. It is the Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death. Those who partake of it receive the Body and the Blood of Christ. All who purpose to make their communion should diligently try to examine themselves before they presume to eat the Bread and drink the Cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith a man receives the Holy Sacrament, so is the danger great if he receives the same unworthily. The Mass is to be said in the local vernacular, or the language of the majority of the people in attendance at the time. Mass is to be said in a way that is understood so that the people may be instructed and edified.

The authorized Order for the celebration of the Mass is that set forth in the Prayer Book adopted by this Church. Archbishop Schleiffer supports the use of the Offices and Sacramental Rites of the 2019 ACNA Book of Common Prayer.

6. Sacred Ministry:

From Apostolic times there have been three Orders of Ministers in the Church of God: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. These Orders are to be reverently esteemed and continued in this Church. No man is to be accepted as a lawful Bishop, Priest or Deacon, or permitted to execute any functions pertaining to these Orders, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto according to the Canons of this Church, and in accordance with the Order prescribed by this Church for making Deacons, Ordaining Priests and Consecrating Bishops.³

7. Celibacy or Chastity of Clergy:

Bishops, Priests and Deacons are not commanded by God's law to marry or abstain from marriage. Therefore, at their own discretion, they are hereby explicitly permitted to either marry or abstain from marriage, especially those in religious orders or congregations, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.

12. Purity of Life:

Holiness, obedience to God's Commandments, and a zeal for His honor and glory are incumbent upon Clergy and Laity alike, therefore all should be trained in a clean and disciplined life, not neglecting prayer, study, and the exercise of moral discipline.

15. The Saints:

Persons universally recognized for their holiness of life, loyalty and courage, especially the Blessed Virgin and the New Testament Saints, are to be held in reverent remembrance. Veneration of Saints is not contrary to God's commandments as revealed in the Scriptures; but their deification (adoration) is condemned by the Church as a monstrous blasphemy. Veneration of the Saints must not obscure the duty of the faithful to a direct approach to God through Jesus Christ. Honor rendered to the Saints must in no wise detract from the honor due the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity.

- - -Apostolic Order- - -

On April 7, 1948, The Rt. Rev. Isabela de los Reyes Jr. and two other Philippine bishops were consecrated to the Sacred Episcopacy by Bishop Norman S. Binstead of the PECUSA Missionary District of the Philippines, assisted by his suffragan Bishop Robert F. Wilner and the Rt. Rev. Harry S. Kennedy, PECUSA Bishop of Hawaii.

The three newly consecrated Philippine prelates then consecrated all the other Philippine bishops and ordained all priests and deacons according to the PECUSA rite. Hence, the Apostolic Succession of the PIC was established through the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America and from PECUSA through the Church of England.

A few years later, European Old Catholic bishops assisted in Philippino Episcopal consecrations and the Old Catholic lines of the European Bishops was added.

Succession of Supreme Bishops since 1947:

Most Rev. Isabelo de los Reyes, Jr. D.D., Supreme Bishop IV (1947 to 1971)

Most Rev. Macario V. Ga, D.D. , Supreme Bishop V (1971 to 1994)

Most Rev. Armando L. de la Cruz, D.D., Supreme Bishop VI (Nov. 22, 1994 to present)

Dioceses/ Provinces of the ICFI:

The ICFI, as it is often popularly called, has approximately three million members and is composed of the following Provinces and Dioceses:

Province of Metro Manila:

Metropolitan Archdiocese of Metro Manila

Diocese of Cavite

Diocese of Pampanga and Bulacan

Diocese of Zambales and Bataan

Province of Northern Luzon:

Metropolitan Archdiocese of Cagayan Valley
Diocese of Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan
Diocese of Abra, Ilocos Sur and La Union

Province of Easter Visayas and Japan:

Metropolitan Archdiocese of Eastern Visayas
Diocese of Cebu City
Diocese of Bacolod City
Diocese of La Carlota
Diocese of Zamboanga and Misamis Occidental

Province of Mindanao:

Diocese of Davao del Norte
Diocese of Digos City
Diocese of Davao de Oro
Diocese of Davao Oriental
Diocese of Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental
Diocese of Caraga

Province of the United States of America

Province of the United Kingdom, European Union & Madagascar

- - -Gospel Mission- - -

The ICFI is diligently involved in serving God in holiness and righteousness and is actively seeking to work with churches worldwide in ministries of evangelism and in the making of disciples of Jesus Christ among all nations. It's Article of Religion 17, Attitude Toward Other Churches, states: "Opportunity is to be sought for closer cooperation with other branches of the Catholic Church, and cordial relations maintained with all who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior."

The ICFI is very engaged in humanitarian aid ministries among the poor and the building of clinics and schools, especially kindergartens. It has a vital ministry of drawing Philippino people together in community wherever they are scattered throughout the world and establishing churches and a Christian presence wherever Philippino people are to be found. The ICFI is committed to reaching out to all people and all nations with Christ's good news of salvation and healing.

Endnotes:

1. Chicago - Lambeth Quadrilateral

- (a) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- (b) The Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

- (c) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself--Baptism and the Supper of the Lord--ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.
- (d) The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.

2. Jerusalem Declaration GAFCON 2008

1. We rejoice in the gospel of God through which we have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Because God first loved us, we love him and as believers bring forth fruits of love, ongoing repentance, lively hope and thanksgiving to God in all things.
2. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God written and to contain all things necessary for salvation. The Bible is to be translated, read, preached, taught and obeyed in its plain and canonical sense, respectful of the church's historic and consensual reading.
3. We uphold the four Ecumenical Councils and the three historic Creeds as expressing the rule of faith of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
4. We uphold the Thirty-nine Articles as containing the true doctrine of the Church agreeing with God's Word and as authoritative for Anglicans today.
5. We gladly proclaim and submit to the unique and universal Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, humanity's only Saviour from sin, judgement, and hell, who lived the life we could not live and died the death that we deserve. By his atoning death and glorious resurrection, he secured the redemption of all who come to him in repentance and faith.
6. We rejoice in our Anglican sacramental and liturgical heritage as an expression of the gospel, and we uphold the 1662 Book of Common Prayer as a true and authoritative standard of worship and prayer, to be translated and locally adapted for each culture.
7. We recognize that God has called and gifted bishops, priests and deacons in historic succession to equip all the people of God for their ministry in the world. We uphold the classic Anglican Ordinal as an authoritative standard of clerical orders.
8. We acknowledge God's creation of humankind as male and female and the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between one man and one woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy and the basis of the family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard and call

for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence for those who are not married.

9. We gladly accept the Great Commission of the risen Lord to make disciples of all nations, to seek those who do not know Christ and to baptize, teach and bring new believers to maturity.
10. We are mindful of our responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation, to uphold and advocate justice in society, and to seek relief and empowerment of the poor and needy.
11. We are committed to the unity of all those who know and love Christ and to building authentic ecumenical relationships. We recognize the orders and jurisdiction of those Anglicans who uphold orthodox faith and practice, and we encourage them to join us in this declaration.
12. We celebrate the God-given diversity among us which enriches our global fellowship, and we acknowledge freedom in secondary matters. We pledge to work together to seek the mind of Christ on issues that divide us.
13. We reject the authority of those churches and leaders who have denied the orthodox faith in word or deed. We pray for them and call on them to repent and return to the Lord.
14. We rejoice at the prospect of Jesus' coming again in glory, and while we await this final event of history, we praise him for the way he builds up his church through his Spirit by miraculously changing lives.

3. Sacred Ministry

Ordination of Deacons and Priests may be opened to women, but this is not being considered at this time. (Pg 25 of the ICFI Constitutions and Canon) There is no provision for women to be consecrated as Bishop.

The Concordat

The Establishment of a "Joint Council":

In order to implement the terms of this Concordat, the ACNA College of Bishops, with the concurrence of the Supreme Council of Bishops of the ICFI have approved a "Resolution of Implementation" whereby the Primate of the ACNA and the Obispo Supremo of the ICFI, acting together, have approved the establishment of a "joint council" to advance mutual responsibility and participation in the furtherance of the mission of God's kingdom. The aim of the council is:

1. To promote mutual understanding between the ICFI and the ACNA.

2. The ACNA shall assist the ICFI in its efforts to minister to its members resident in North America.
3. ICFI members resident in North America shall be invited to assist and participate in the broader life and work of the ACNA.
4. Both the ACNA and the ICFI shall establish appropriate lines and structures of authority for the purpose of mutual responsibility and accountability.
5. The Primate of the ACNA and the Obispo Supremo of the ICFI shall designate representatives to sit in council to deepen our relationship with one another and to formulate strategies for mutual ministry and mission. Areas of mutual ministry and mission could include Theological Education, Leadership Training, Christian Stewardship, Christian Education, Church Planting, Evangelism, and Congregational Development.
6. The Bishops of the ACNA and the ICFI are invited to attend and have a voice at each other's meetings.

Partnership in Congregational Development:

1. The ACNA and the ICFI shall jointly develop strategies for evangelism, mission and congregational development in areas where there are opportunities in doing mission together.
2. The ACNA and the ICFI may develop joint congregations through mutual agreement in accordance with their respective canons.
3. The ACNA and the ICFI shall define appropriate lines of authority and accountability. In the ICFI it shall be in the form of "duly recognized clergy," and in the ACNA this shall be as "canonically recognized clergy."
4. ACNA clergy serving ICFI congregations may be licensed to officiate by the ICFI diocesan bishop and ICFI clergy serving within a diocese of the ACNA may be licensed to officiate by the ACNA diocesan bishop.
5. The ICFI and ACNA shall engage in clergy and lay collegiality and fellowship both at a diocesan and congregational level.
6. The ICFI and the ACNA may share participation in the consecration of bishops and other significant liturgical events.
7. The ACNA may include the ICFI on the list of those entities that are eligible to apply for grants such as Matthew 25 and the Anglican Relief and Development Fund.

Prayer for Mission

"O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the

coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen”

(ACNA Book of Common Prayer 2019)

Signatories:

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Date: _____

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