

John Knox distinguishes between the "deeper," "inward" unity of the church and its "formal," "outward" unity (or, really, its historic lack thereof!). The first he analyzes as having two components: "the shared life" and "the common faith," which are related, he says, as the more "empirical" to the more "ideational" respectively. The shared life itself, then, also turns out to have two components: "a common memory of the event" and "a common participation in the Spirit"—both of these being reflected, presumably, in the common faith (although whether Knox ever clearly says that they're so reflected I simply don't know). As for the outward unity, he speaks of it in many different ways as involving "common forms" (or "common features") of "organization and practice," "polity and cult" (or "polity and worship"), "order and discipline," "creed and cult," "belief and practice" (or "theology and practice"), "—in sum: "outward institutional or organizational structures and procedures."

Reflecting on this, as well as on statements made about the church in some of the excerpts in *Anglicanism* I've read recently, I've had what I take to be further insight into the meaning of the *communio sanctorum* referred to in the Apostles' Creed.

The Anglican theologians of the seventeenth century distinguish between two communities, in the sense of two kinds of "communicating" or sharing. There is the one kind characteristic of "the called," who communicate or share in or with "the profession of supernatural verities revealed in Christ, use of holy Sacraments, order of Ministry, and due obedience yielded thereunto," which communicating, being "discernible," is "visible." And there is the other kind of communicating or sharing characteristic of "the chosen," or "the elect," who alone communicate or share in or with "those most precious effects, and happy benefits of saving grace," which communicating, being "not discernible," is "invisible" (*Anglicanism*: 44).

Assuming that, whatever else it means, *communio sanctorum* (1) is not just another, verbally different way of saying "holy catholic church"; and (2) can be, and perhaps should be, translated both as "communication or sharing in or with holy persons" and "communicating or sharing in or with holy things," one may say that, in a broad

sense, it comprises both kinds of communicating or sharing—both the kind characteristic of the called, and thus of the visible church, and the kind characteristic solely of the elect, and thus of the invisible church. In either case, the distinction between "the holy catholic church," on the one hand, and "the communion of saints and/or holy things," on the other, is the distinction, in my terms, between the church as the primary sacrament or means of salvation, on the one hand, and the community in faith and witness—in both, in the case of the elect, or solely in witness, in the case of the called—on the other. Such community in faith and/or witness is brought about by rightly using the visible church as the primary sacrament and/or participating in rightly administering it as such to others.

In any case, being the communicating or sharing in or with holy persons or holy things that the holy catholic church exists to bring about, the *communio sanctorum* is clearly distinct from "the holy catholic church" itself, i.e., the visible church so referred to in the Creed. But if it is distinct from the holy catholic church, it is also distinct from, and so not to be simply identified with, the invisible church. Although the elect alone are truly sanctified and therefore truly holy, the called, being called to be holy by the holy catholic church, are, in their way holy, namely, by their communicating or sharing in or with the witness of faith and the holy persons who bear it as well as the holy things through which it is borne.

Whatever else this means, it means that the invisible church is not to be identified simply with the community of those who are saved, or those who exist authentically rather than inauthentically. Therefore, if membership in the visible church is not a necessary condition of being saved, neither is membership in the invisible church such a necessary condition. On the other hand, and contrary to what I have held heretofore, membership in the visible church *is* a necessary condition of membership in the invisible church properly so-called. Although one can belong to the called and not belong to the chosen, one cannot belong to the chosen unless one belongs to the called.

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