

# THE 39 ARTICLES

## Original version

[Book of Common Prayer]

## Contemporary translation

[Church Society]

1. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

1. *Faith in the Holy Trinity*

*There is only one living and true God, who is eternal and without body, indivisible and invulnerable. He is of infinite power, wisdom and goodness. He is the maker and preserver of all things both visible and invisible. Within the unity of the Godhead there are three persons who are of one substance, power and eternity – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

2. Of the Word or Son of God, which was made very Man.

The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance: so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men.

2. ***The Word, or Son of God, who became truly man***

*The Son, who is the Word of the Father, was begotten from eternity of the Father, and is the true and eternal God, of one substance with the Father. He took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary, of her substance, in such a way that two whole and perfect natures, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided. Of these two natures is the one Christ, true God and true man. He truly suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried, to reconcile the Father to us and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt but also for all actual sins of men.*

<p>3. Of the going down of Christ into Hell. As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also it is to be believed, that he went down into Hell.</p>	<p>3. <i>The descent of Christ into the realm of the dead</i>  <i>Just as Christ died for us and was buried, so also it is to be believed that he descended into the realm of the dead.</i></p>
<p>4. Of the Resurrection of Christ. Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man's nature; wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last day.</p>	<p>4. <b>The resurrection of Christ</b>  <i>Christ truly rose again from death and took again his body, with flesh, bones and all that belongs to the completeness of man's nature. In this body he ascended into heaven, where he is now seated until the last day when he will return to judge all men.</i></p>
<p>5. Of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.</p>	<p>5. <b>The Holy Spirit</b>  <i>The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. He is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God.</i></p>
<p>6. Of the sufficiency of the holy Scriptures for salvation. 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 an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the holy Scripture we do understand those Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.</p> <p>Genesis. Exodus.</p>	<p>6. <b>The sufficiency of Holy Scripture for salvation</b>  <i>Holy Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation. Consequently whatever is not read in Scripture nor can be proved from Scripture cannot be demanded from any person to believe it as an article of the faith. Nor is any such thing to be thought necessary or required for salvation. By holy Scripture is meant those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments whose authority has never been doubted within the church.</i></p>

Leviticus.  
Numbers.  
Deuteronomy.  
Joshua.  
Judges.  
Ruth.  
The First Book of Samuel.  
The Second Book of Samuel.  
The First Book of Kings.  
The Second Book of Kings.  
The First Book of Chronicles.  
The Second Book of  
Chronicles.  
The First Book of Esdras.  
The Second Book of Esdras.  
The Book of Esther.  
The Book of Job.  
The Psalms.  
The Proverbs.  
Ecclesiastes, or the  
Preacher.  
Cantica, or Songs of  
Solomon.  
Four Prophets the Greater.  
Twelve Prophets the Less.

And the other Books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine; such are these following:

The Third Book of Esdras.  
The Fourth Book of Esdras.  
The Book of Tobias.  
The Book of Judith.  
The rest of the Book of  
Esther.  
The Book of Wisdom.  
Jesus the Son of Sirach.  
Baruch the Prophet.  
The Song of the Three

*The books of the Apocrypha, as Jerome says, are read by the church for examples of life and instruction in behavior, but the church does not use them to establish any doctrine. They are:*

Children.  
The Story of Susanna.  
Of Bel and the Dragon.  
The Prayer of Manasses.  
The First Book of  
Maccabees.  
The Second Book of  
Maccabees.

All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account them Canonical.

7. Of the Old Testament.

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the Law given from God by Moses, as touching Ceremonies and Rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the Civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral.

7. *The Old Testament*

*The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for in both the Old and New Testaments eternal life is offered to mankind through Christ. Hence he, being both God and man, is the only mediator between God and man. Those who pretend that the Patriarchs only looked for transitory promises must not be listened to. Although the law given by God through Moses is not binding on Christians as far as its forms of worship and ritual are concerned and the civil regulations are not binding on any nation state, nevertheless no Christian is free to disobey those commandments which may be classified as moral.*

8. Of the Three Creeds.

The Three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture.

8. *The three Creeds*

*The three creeds, the Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, and that known as the Apostles' Creed, ought to be wholeheartedly accepted and believed. This is because their contents may be proved by definite statements of Holy Scripture.*

9. Of Original or Birth-sin.

Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam, [as the Pelagians do vainly talk;] but it is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is ingendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in the Greek, *Fronema sarkoV*, which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire, of the flesh, is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.

9. *Original or Birth-sin*

*Original sin is not found merely in the following of Adam's example [as the Pelagians foolishly say]. It is rather to be seen in the fault and corruption which is found in the nature of every person who is naturally descended from Adam. The consequence of this is that man is far gone from his original state of righteousness. In his own nature he is predisposed to evil, the sinful nature in man always desiring to behave in a manner contrary to the Spirit. In every person born into this world there is found this predisposition which rightly deserves God's anger and condemnation. This infection within man's nature persists even within those who are regenerate. This desire of the sinful nature, which in Greek is called *phronema sarkos* and is variously translated the wisdom or sensuality or affection or desire of the sinful nature, is not under the control of God's law. Although there is no condemnation for those that believe and are baptized, nevertheless the apostle states that any such desire is sinful.*



10. Of Free-Will.

The condition of Man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

10. *Free Will*

*The condition of man since the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works for faith and for calling upon the name of the Lord. Hence we have no power to do good works which are pleasing and acceptable to God, unless the grace of God through Christ goes before us so that we may have a good will, and continues to work with us after we are given that good will.*

11. Of the Justification of Man.

**We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings; Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.**

11. ***The justification of man***

*We are accounted righteous before God solely on account of the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through faith and not on account of our own good works or of what we deserve. Consequently the teaching that we are justified by faith alone is a most wholesome and comforting doctrine. This is taught more fully in the homily on Justification.*

12. Of Good Works.

**Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's Judgement; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.**

12. ***Good works***

*Although good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow on after justification, can never atone for our sins or face the strict justice of God's judgment, they are nevertheless pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ and necessarily spring from a true and living faith. Thus a living faith is as plainly known by its good works as a tree is known by its fruit.*

13. Of Works before Justification.

Works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or [as the School-authors say] deserve grace of congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

13. *Works before justification*

*Works done before receiving the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit are not pleasing to God. This is because they do not spring out of faith in Jesus Christ. Nor do they make people fit to receive grace or [as the schoolmen say] to deserve grace of congruity. On the contrary, because they are not done as God has willed and commanded that they should be done, it is undoubtedly the case that they have the nature of sin.*

14. Of Works of Supererogation.

**Voluntary Works besides, over and above, God's Commandments, which they call Works of impiety: for by them men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake, than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that are commanded to you, say, We are unprofitable servants.**

14. **Works of supererogation**

*The concept of voluntary works besides, over and above God's commandments, which are sometimes called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogance and impiety. By them men declare not only that they render to God their proper duty but that they actually do more than their duty. But Christ says: "So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants.'*

15. Of Christ alone without Sin

Christ in the truth of our nature was made like unto us in all things, sin only except, from which he was clearly void, both in his flesh, and in his spirit. He came to be the Lamb without spot, who, by sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the sins of the world, and sin, as Saint John saith, was not in him. But all we the rest, although baptized, and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things; and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

15. *Christ alone is without sin*

*Christ, who truly took our human nature, was made like us in every respect except that of sin. From this he was clearly free in both body and spirit. He came to be the Lamb without blemish who, by the sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the sins of the world. Sin, as St John says, was not in him. But all the rest of us, even though baptized and born again in Christ, still offend in many ways. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*

16. Of Sin after Baptism.

Not every deadly sin willingly committed after Baptism is sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after Baptism. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God we may arise again, and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned, which say, they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

16. *Sin after baptism*

*Not every sin knowingly committed after baptism is sin against the Holy Spirit and unforgivable. Therefore the gift of repentance is not to be declared impossible for those who fall into sin after baptism. After we have received the Holy Spirit we may depart from the grace given to us and fall into sin, and we may also by the grace of God return and amend our lives. Therefore those who say that they are incapable of sinning any more in this life are to be condemned, as are those who deny the opportunity of forgiveness to those who truly repent.*



17. Of Predestination and Election.

Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby [before the foundations of the world were laid] he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through Grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.

As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal Salvation to be

17. *Predestination and election*

*Predestination to life is the eternal purpose of God, whereby [before the foundations of the world were laid] he has consistently decreed by his counsel which is hidden from us to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he has chosen in Christ out of mankind and to bring them through Christ to eternal salvation as vessels made for honour. Hence those granted such an excellent benefit by God are called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working at the appropriate time. By grace they obey the calling; they are freely justified, and made sons of God by adoption, are made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, they walk faithfully in good works and at the last by God's mercy attain eternal happiness. The reverent consideration of this subject of predestination and of our election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant and inexpressible comfort to the godly and to those who feel within themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, putting to death the deeds of the sinful and earthly nature and lifting their minds up to high and heavenly consideration establishes and confirms their belief in the eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ and kindles a fervent love towards God. But for inquisitive and unspiritual persons who lack the Spirit of Christ to have the sentence of God's*

enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God: So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchedness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.

Furthermore, we must receive God's promises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us in holy Scripture: and, in our doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God.

*predestination continually before their eyes is a dangerous snare which the Devil uses to drive them either into desperation or into recklessly immoral living [a state no less perilous than desperation]. Furthermore we need to receive God's promises in the manner in which they are generally set out to us in holy Scripture, and in our actions we need to follow that will of God which is clearly declared to us in the Word of God.*

18. Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ.

**They also are to be had accursed that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law, and the light of Nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.**

18. ***Obtaining salvation only by the name of Christ***

*Those who presume to say that every person shall be saved by the rule of life, religion or sect that he professes, provided he makes diligent efforts to live by that rule and the light of nature, must be regarded as accursed. For holy Scripture declares to us that it is only in the name of Jesus Christ that men must be saved.*

19. Of the Church.

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same. As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith

19. *The church*

*The visible church of Christ is a congregation of believers in which the pure Word of God is preached and in which the sacraments are rightly administered according to Christ's command in all those matters that are necessary for proper administration. As the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria have erred, so also the church of Rome has erred, not only in their practice and forms of worship but also in matters of faith.*

20. Of the Authority of the Church.

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 a 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.

20. ***The authority of the church***

*The church has authority to decree forms of worship and ceremonies and to decide in controversies concerning the faith. However, it is not lawful for the church to order anything contrary to God's written Word. Nor may it expound one passage of Scripture so that it contradicts another passage. So, although the church is a witness and guardian to holy Scripture, it must not decree anything contrary to Scripture, nor is it to enforce belief in anything additional to Scripture as essential to salvation.*

21. Of the Authority of General Councils. General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered together, [forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God,] they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of holy Scripture.

21. *The authority of general councils*

*General councils may not be gathered together without the command and will of rulers. And when they are gathered together [since they are an assembly of men, among whom not all are ruled by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God], they may err. Indeed they sometimes have erred, even in things relating to God. Therefore anything commanded by them as necessary to salvation has no power or authority unless it can be shown to be taught by Scripture.*

22. Of Purgatory.

**The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration, as well of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.**

22. ***Purgatory***

*The Roman doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration [both of images and of relics] and the invocation of saints is a futile thing foolishly conceived and grounded on no evidence of Scripture. On the contrary this teaching is repugnant to the Word of God.*

23. Of Ministering in the Congregation.  
It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of publick preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have publick authority given unto them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

23. *Ministering in the congregation*  
*It is not right for an man to take upon himself the office of public preaching or of administering the sacraments in the congregation before he has been lawfully called and sent to perform these tasks. The lawfully called and sent are those who have been chosen and called to this work by men who have had public authority given to them in the congregation to call and send such ministers into the Lord's vineyard.*

24. Of speaking in the Congregation in such a tongue as the people understandeth.  
It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have publick Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people.

24. ***Speaking in the congregation in a language that people understand.***  
*It is plainly repugnant to the Word of God and to the custom of the early church for public prayer or the administration of the sacraments to be conducted in a language not understood by the people.*



25. Of the sacraments.

Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.

25. *The sacraments*

*The sacraments instituted by Christ are not only badges or tokens of the profession of Christians but are also sure witnesses and effectual signs of God's grace and goodwill towards us. Through them he works invisibly within us, both bringing to life and also strengthening and confirming our faith in him. There are two sacraments instituted by Christ our Lord in the Gospel - baptism and the Lord's Supper. The five that are commonly called sacraments (confirmation, penance, ordination, marriage and extreme unction) are not to be regarded as gospel sacraments. This is because they are either a corruption of apostolic practice or states of life as allowed in the Scriptures. They are not of the same nature as the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper since they do not have any visible sign or ceremony instituted by God. The sacraments were not instituted by Christ to be gazed at or carried about but to be used properly. It is only in those who receive them worthily that they have a beneficial effect or operation. As Paul the apostle says, those who receive them in an unworthy manner bring condemnation upon themselves.*

26. Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers, which hinders not the effect of the Sacrament.

Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God, and in the receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.

Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that inquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally being found guilty, by just judgement be deposed

26. *The sacraments are not rendered ineffectual by the unworthiness of the minister.*

*Although in the visible church the evil are always mingled with the good and sometimes evil people possess the highest rank in the ministry of the Word and sacraments, nevertheless since they do not do these things in their own name but in Christ's and minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry both in hearing God's Word and in receiving the sacraments. The effect of Christ's institution is not taken away by the wickedness of these people, nor is the grace of God's gifts diminished, so long as the sacraments are received by faith and rightly. The sacraments are effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, even though they may be administered by evil men. Nevertheless, it belongs to the discipline of the church that investigation be made into evil ministers. Those who are accused by witnesses having knowledge of their offences and who in the end are justly found guilty, should be deposed.*

27. Of Baptism.

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or new Birth, whereby, as by an

27. **Baptism**

*Baptism is not only a sign of profession and a mark of difference by which Christians are distinguished from those who are not baptized. It is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, through which, as through an instrument those who receive baptism in the right manner are*

instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.

*grafted into the church, the promises of the forgiveness of sin and of our adoption as sons of God by the Holy Spirit are visibly signed and sealed, faith is confirmed and grace is increased by virtue of prayer to God. The baptism of young children is undoubtedly to be retained in the church as that which agrees best with Christ's institution.*

28. Of the Lord's Supper.

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation [or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine] in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of

28. **The Lord's Supper**

*The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the mutual love that Christians ought to have among themselves. Rather, it is a sacrament of our redemption through Christ's death. To those who rightly, worthily and with faith receive it, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and similarly the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. Transubstantiation [the change of the substance of the bread and wine] in the Supper of the Lord cannot be proved from holy Scripture, but is repugnant to the plain teaching of Scripture. It overthroweth the nature of a sacrament and has given rise to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper only in a heavenly and spiritual manner. The means by which the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not instituted by Christ to be reserved, carried about, lifted up or worshipped.*

Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

29. Of the Wicked which eat not the Body of Christ in the use of the Lord's Supper.

The Wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as Saint Augustine saith) the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather, to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.

29. ***The wicked who partake of the Lord's supper do not eat the body of Christ.***

*The wicked and those who lack a living faith, although they physically and visibly 'press with their teeth' (as St Augustine says) the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, nevertheless are in no way partakers of Christ. Rather, by eating and drinking the sign or sacrament of so great a thing, they bring condemnation upon themselves.*

30. Of both kinds.

The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay- people: for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.

30. ***Reception in both kinds***

*The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the laity. For by Christ's institution and commandment both parts of the Lord's sacrament ought to be administered to all Christian people alike.*

31. Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross.

The Offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.

31. *The one oblation of Christ finished upon the cross.*

*The offering of Christ made once is the perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. There is no other satisfaction for sin but this alone. Consequently, the sacrifices of masses, in which it was commonly said that the priest offered Christ for the living and dead so as to gain remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits.*

32. Of the Marriage of Priests.

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God's Law, either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful also for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.

32. ***The marriage of priests***

*It is not commanded by any decree of God that bishops, presbyters or deacons take a vow of celibacy or abstain from marriage. So it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion when they judge that this will promote godliness.*

33. Of excommunicate Persons, how they are to be avoided.

That person which by open denunciation of the Church is rightly cut off from the unity of the Church, and excommunicated, ought to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful, as an Heathen and Publican, until he be openly reconciled by penance, and received into the Church by a Judge that hath authority thereunto.

33. ***The excommunicated: how they are to be avoided.***

*Any person who has openly been denounced by the church and justly cut off from its fellowship and excommunicated is to be regarded by the whole body of the faithful as a "pagan and tax-collector" until he is openly reconciled by repentance and received back into the church by a judge who has the necessary authority in such matters.*



34. Of the Traditions of the Church.

It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever through his private judgement, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, [that others may fear to do the like,] as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren.

Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.

35. Of Homilies.

The second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine, and necessary for these times, as doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth

34. **The customs of the church**

*It is not necessary that customs and forms of worship be exactly the same everywhere. Throughout history they have differed. They may be altered according to the differing nations, times and habits of people provided that nothing is commanded contrary to God's Word. Whoever by his own private judgment openly, willingly and deliberately breaks those customs and forms of worship of the church which do not contradict the Word of God and are approved by common authority, is to be openly rebuked. This is so that others will be afraid to act similarly, and in so doing offend against the common order of the church, to undermine the authority of the state's representative and to wound the consciences of weak Christians. Every particular or national church has authority to command, change or abolish the ceremonies or forms of worship of the church which are appointed only by man's authority provided that everything is done for the building up of Christian people.*

35. **The Homilies**

*The second book of homilies contains godly and wholesome teaching which is necessary for these times, as does the first book of homilies published during the reign of Edward VI. We therefore judge that they ought be read diligently and distinctly in the churches by the ministers so that they may be understood by the people.*

in the time of Edward the Sixth; and therefore we judge them to be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people.

Of the Names of the Homilies.

1 Of the right use of the Church

2 Against peril of Idolatry

3 Of repairing and keeping clean of churches

4 Of good Works: first of fasting

5 Against Gluttony and Drunkenness

6 Against Excess of Apparel

7 Of Prayer

8 Of the Place and Time of Prayer

9 That Common Prayers and Sacraments ought to be ministered

in a known tongue

10 Of the reverend estimation of God's Word

11 Of Alms-doing

12 Of the Nativity of Christ

13 Of the Passion of Christ

14 Of the Resurrection of Christ

15 Of the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Body and

Blood of Christ

16 Of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost

17 For the Rogation-days

18 Of the State of Matrimony

19 Of Repentance

20 Against Idleness

21 Against Rebellion

36. Of Consecration of Bishops and Ministers.

The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth, and confirmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering: neither hath it any thing, that of itself is superstitious and ungodly. And therefore whosoever are consecrated and ordered according to the Rites of that Book, since the second year of the forenamed King Edward unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same Rites; we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.

36. ***The consecration of bishops and ministers***

*The book for the consecration of archbishops and bishops and for ordaining presbyters and deacons, published in the time of Edward VI and confirmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, contains all things necessary to such consecration and ordination. Nor does it contain anything which of itself is superstitious and ungodly. Therefore whoever is consecrated or ordained according to the services of that book, since the second year of Edward VI to the present time, and whoever will be consecrated and ordained according to those services in the future, we declare to be rightly, duly and lawfully consecrated and ordained.*

37. Of the Civil Magistrates.

The King's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England, and other his Dominions, unto whom the chief Government of all estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction.

Where we attribute to the King's Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended; we give not to our Princes the ministering either

37. ***The state and its civil representatives***

*The sovereign has the chief power in the realm of England and his other possessions. The supreme government of all in this realm, whatever their station, whether ecclesiastical and civil, and in all matters, belongs to him and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction. When we attribute to the sovereign the chief government [a title which seems to have offended some slanderous persons] we do not grant our rulers the ministry of either God's Word or of the sacraments. This is also made clear in the Injunctions published by Queen Elizabeth I. By this title we acknowledge only the prerogative which we see in holy*

of God's Word, or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scriptures by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evildoers.

The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.

The Laws of the Realm may punish Christian men with death, for heinous and grievous offences.

It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars.

*Scripture God has given to all godly rulers. They should rule all people committed to their charge by God, whatever their station or rank, whether ecclesiastical or secular, and restrain with the civil power those who are stubborn or practise evil. The bishop of Rome has no jurisdiction in this realm of England. The laws of the realm may punish Christian people with death for heinous and grave offences. It is lawful for Christian men at the command of the state to carry weapons and serve in wars.*

38. Of Christian men's Goods, which are not common.

The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

38. ***The possessions of Christians are not common to all***

*Contrary to what some Anabaptists claim, the wealth and possessions of Christians are not common, as far as the right, title and possession of them is concerned. Nevertheless, everyone ought to give freely to the poor from what he possesses, according to his means.*

39. Of a Christian man's Oath.

As we confess that vain and rash Swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle, so we judge, that Christian Religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching, in justice, judgement, and truth.

39. A Christian's oath

*We believe that the vain and rash swearing of oaths is forbidden to Christians by our Lord Jesus Christ and St James. However, we judge that the Christian faith does not prohibit the swearing of an oath when the state requires it, if in a cause where faithfulness and love justify it, and according to the prophet Jeremiah's teaching, in justice, judgment and truth.*

We are most grateful to **Church Society** for their kind permission to use the contemporary translation of the Articles: the original, together with a number of useful articles and commentaries on the Articles can be found at [www.churchsociety.org/issues\\_new/doctrine/39a/iss\\_doctrine\\_39a\\_intro.asp](http://www.churchsociety.org/issues_new/doctrine/39a/iss_doctrine_39a_intro.asp)

**ST JOHN'S**  
CHAPELTOWN  
*here for God, here for you*

