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**For Immediate Release**

***New Society for Anglican Catholic Clergy Inaugurated in New Haven***

New Haven, CT This past week in New Haven, over fifty priests from the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada gathered to inaugurate a new society for Anglo-Catholic Clergy in their tradition.

Over the past several years The Episcopal Church and The Anglican Church of Canada have often been seen as at the center of a storm of controversy in the Anglican Communion. The Society, with already over 130 priests from the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada on the rolls, draws its membership from clergy across the perceived theological divide in the church. Gathered at New Haven were clergy of a range of ages and years of experience, men and women priests, those supporting recent developments in the Anglican Communion and those who question, all representing the wide spectrum of belief and practice in North American Anglicanism. They came together, united by their belief in God's action through the Sacraments and Christ's presence in Eucharist, embracing one another as colleagues in the same church.

Canon Andrew Nunn, the Rector General of the Society of Catholic Priests in the UK, was present to induct those gathered in New Haven. Before beginning the inaugural liturgy, Canon Nunn paused to tell the new Society that he had earlier spoken with the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, who was praying for the Society as it began in North America. In addition to being the Primate *primus inter pares* (first among equals) of the Anglican Communion, Archbishop Williams is also the patron of the Society of Catholic Priests.

In addition to the Inaugural Liturgy and business meeting where members present elected officers and adopted a manual, those gathered attended three presentations on the spirituality and practice of the priesthood from professors at Berkeley Divinity School at Yale and The General Theological Seminary.

In the days since the Conference began, the Society has continued to receive a steady stream of membership applications. The Society Convener, David Cobb, attributes this to the hunger within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada for relationship in a catholic context. The Society Communications Director, Robert Hendrickson, agrees, saying that in the Society, "The complexity of difference meets the simplicity of devotion."

The Society of Catholic Priests in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada draws its heritage from a similar Society founded in the Church of England in the nineties. With membership nearing one hundred and fifty clergy, the Society exists to help all clergy flourish as priests in the Catholic Tradition and to encourage spiritual growth and Catholic Evangelism. More information on the Society can be found at their website: <http://www.theSCP.org/>.

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