

The Alien Episcopalian - Many Christian Ways

	Roman Catholic	Orthodox	Anglican (Lutheran very similar)	Protestant
Clergy gender restrictions	men only	men only	men & women; LGBTQ+; men only in some nations	some denominations men only
Clergy celibacy	all clergy, unless previously married & become Catholic later	only bishops, drawn from ranks of monks	none, unless a priest is also a monastic	none; some denominations forbid divorced clergy
Apocryphal books in the Bible (Better name: Intertestamental Books)	integral to the Old Testament	integral to the Old Testament, with several books more than those recognized by the Roman Catholic church	separate section between Old Testament & New Testament; not used for doctrine	most denominations do not recognize them nor use Bibles that include them
Sacred art in churches	statuary & stained glass	icons	Anglo-Catholic statuary; stained glass in most except colonial & some contemporary parishes	stained glass use varies by denominations and by congregations
Christ on the cross	crucifixes & Christus Rex	crucifixes	Anglo-Catholic crucifixes; bare cross most common	bare cross common; some denominations no crosses
Saints	formal canonization proved by miracles; the virtuous living of the saints produced more grace than necessary and so is available to others alive or in purgatory; the saints intercede for us	formal canonization not proved by miracles; the saints intercede for us	all Christians are saints by virtue of baptism; we remember the more prominent saints (<i>Holy Women, Holy Men</i>) because of their example; saints are united to us in prayer	“saint” terminology usually avoided, except in cases of Biblical figures

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Monasticism	many distinct orders for men and women	no separate orders, but many monasteries for men and women	several monastic orders for men and women	none
Baptism	infants, as early as practicable, by sprinkling; no salvation without baptism (limbo?)	infants, by immersion, naked; no salvation without baptism	infants, by pouring; salvation not limited to the baptized	some infants; some require “believer’s baptism” age 8+; some by immersion; salvation not limited to the baptized
Communion timing	“first communion” celebrated between baptism and confirmation	receive Communion immediately after baptism	may receive Communion at any time after baptism	receive Communion after a profession of faith
Communion elements	people receive the bread (unleavened, not gluten free) and wine	people receive bread (leavened, often baked in people’s homes) and wine	people receive bread (of many kinds) and wine	people receive bread and wine; many use grape juice
Communion theology	bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ	bread and wine are the real body and blood of Christ, in a mystical way	“real presence” of Christ through, not in, the bread and wine	a “memorial” of the Last Supper
Confession	private confession traditionally required before receiving Communion	private confession required only after grave sin	private confession available, not required	private confession not typically practiced
Nicene Creed	added words that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father <i>and the Son</i> ” at Council of Toledo 589	uses original form of creed as adopted at Council of Chalcedon 451; as per John 15:26	has used additional words, but some national churches deleting it in new prayer book versions	all who use the creed add additional words; some use only the Apostles’ Creed; some use no creeds

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Church authority	all authority rests in the Pope, the vicar (agent, deputy) of Christ on earth; he is infallible when he speaks officially (1870)	every Bishop is a “living icon of Christ”; all have equal authority; Bishops meeting in synods have final say	Bishops, clergy, and laity govern national churches by representative democracy; some actions voted “by orders”	varieties of church governance; many based on authority of each local congregation
Clergy authority	clergy act “in the person of Christ”	clergy represent the Bishop	clergy serve specified roles: church governance, proclaim Gospel, administer sacraments, bless & declare pardon	clergy serve specified roles; in some selected by local congregation and serve only at its will
Sacraments	Eucharist, Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination, Penance, Marriage, Unction for the sick (includes formal and required “Last Rites” for the dying)	Eucharist, Baptism, Chrismation at baptism, Ordination, Penance, Marriage, Unction for the sick; prefers term “mysteries”	Eucharist, Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination, Reconciliation, Marriage, Unction for the sick; no sacramental Last Rites, but Ministration at the Time of Death often used	Some recognize only Communion & Baptism; some recognize no sacraments
Original Sin	figures prominently in doctrines; washed away in baptism	not recognized	not recognized (the word “original” does not appear in BCP)	recognized by Calvinists; overcome by “accepting Christ”
Marriage	no divorce under any circumstance; marriages “annulled” as if never took place	divorce allowed with the Bishop’s permission	divorce allowed; remarriage allowed with Bishop’s permission	divorce allowed in most; some do not allow

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Mary	her Immaculate Conception with no original sin (1854) and bodily Assumption into heaven (1950); she intercedes for us	“the Mother of God” as a worthy vessel for the birth of Christ; does not accept Immaculate Conception or Assumption; she intercedes for us	she is a very important example of faith; only Anglo-Catholics have devotions to her	little or no recognition of Mary beyond her motherhood of Jesus
Purgatory	all departed who are not going straight to hell pass through purgatory for purification before heaven	souls go into a state of waiting until Jesus’ second coming	no doctrine of purgatory	no doctrine of purgatory
Sign of the Cross	forehead, chest, left shoulder, right shoulder	forehead, chest, right shoulder, left shoulder	if used, follows Roman Catholic order	not used
Language of worship	local language; some emphasis upon return to Latin rite in some parishes	local language, yet immigrant communities often worship in language of homeland	local language; no other church uses a Rite I equivalent	local language
Bible Versions	any version certified as a “Catholic Bible”	no official English Orthodox version; RSV often used in worship	NRSV most common; some use NIV	NIV or other newer translations; some use only King James Version
Theology	legal, philosophical, & Biblical, with much emphasis on tradition	Biblical, mysterious, & symbolic, with much emphasis on tradition	balance of scripture, tradition, reason, and experience	mostly Biblical
Worldwide organization	one church under the Pope	self-governing national churches	self-governing national churches in communion with Lambeth	separate national & regional churches