

## **The Constitution of The Religious Society of St Simon**

The Society shall be called 'The Religious Society of St Simon' and is an integral part of the Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church. The society shall remain in perpetuity a component of LCAC and shall always defer to that church. The Patron will always be a member of senior clergy from the LCAC. The society will at all times conduct itself and its business with dignity and respect and to the Glory of God. Members may be drawn from any or all sections of society and from any religion, although the intent of the Society is principally Christian.

### **Origins of the Society**

This society was originally founded under the name Society of Free Christians in 1999 by Revd. George Stephen Callander, broadly following the spirit of the Revd. Joseph Morgan Lloyd Thomas and the Society of Free Catholics.

SFC was founded in parallel with the Society of the Divine Spirit, and for a time was the focus of that society's worship before the formation of the English Liberal Free Church, which subsequently adopted the name The Liberal Rite in 2007. Members over the years have come from different Christian traditions, both trinitarian and unitarian.

The intention of the society is to promote liturgical worship in the Catholic traditions within liberal Christian, non-credal, non-judgemental theology. The society is inter-faith, for, whilst the primary purpose is as above, where elements of common understanding and belief pervade all religions, areas of faith held in common across religions provides the basis for co-operation and togetherness. The scriptures and liturgies of the main religions share many common people, events and expressions.

In November 2006, the Society underwent re-organisation. The Catholic elements of the Society were re-constituted as the Religious Society of St Simon. Meanwhile, the more explicitly ecumenical and interfaith elements continued a separate existence as the Society for Humanistic Potential.

Today, the Religious Society of St. Simon is a dependent religious society of the LCAC. Membership is free of charge and open to professed Christians who publicly support the Society's aims and wish to commit themselves to its principles. Associate Membership is open to those of any faith who recognise the common people, situations and beliefs that transcend the religions and the common origins of those beliefs. Membership is open to both clergy and laity and the understanding of the term "Catholic" is interpreted widely across denominational barriers. Members of the Society use the postnominal letters RSSStS.

### **Statement of principles**

- The Society believes the uniting influence of liturgical language and worship in the Catholic traditions drawing members God-wards to be of more importance than the divisive influence of rigid dogmas or theological constraint.
- The Society believes the uniting influence of common beliefs and characters across the religions to be proof that the major religions have more points in common than is generally

accepted. Although a Christian Society, we recognise the importance of the other world religions, when they act in an inclusive, peaceful and ecumenical outlook.

- The Society actively encourages freedom of religious thought and practical expression.
- The Society believes in the living liturgy as well as the heritage and historic liturgies.
- The Society is wholly inclusive and supports the full and equal ministry of all people.
- The Society actively encourages religious study and research.
- The Society believes that disruptive, hostile or disrespectful beliefs are irreligious.

## **Members**

Members may be proposed or applications can be received from interested prospective members. Applications should be sent to the administrative address at the time being. The registered office of the Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church is the default address. The current membership list shall be maintained and available for display on the Society's website and the appropriate page on the LCAC website. Membership is a state of trust and can be resigned, suspended or revoked. Opinions expressed by members (even where in Society forums and pages) are not those of the Society. Where members hold differing views, opinions and belief, they shall respect all and every other.

## **Activities**

The Society shall from time to time organise meetings, events, visits and lectures, displays and exhibitions as the president and committee see fit. The Society exists as a forum and encourages discussion, exploration of ideas, philosophical thought and theological argument, whilst not promoting one over another.

## **Structures**

The Society shall always look to the LCAC to provide a Patron to convene and empower the Society. The Patron will choose a President to lead the Society on behalf of the membership and the church. Where appropriate, a committee, sub-committees or groups may be formed for the exercise of influence, or to organise events. Members themselves choosing who will sit on these groups.

*+ Adrian*

Rt Revd. Adrian S. Glover OCR, OSJ,

Patron, December 2010

### Document History

This document was originally displayed on various webpages 1999 - 2007

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