

Witnessing an Emerging Diaconate Among Anglicans in Mexico

ems

TARA JERNIGAN, DMIN

Vol 6:2 2026

Tara Jernigan, DMin, serves as a priest in the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest (ACNA) and adjunct instructor at Trinity Anglican Seminary.

Abstract

This paper presents an examination of a renewed expression of the historic role of the diaconate on the leading edge of church expansion as it is emerging within the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest's ministry in Mexico.

Anglicanism in Mexico

The current growth of Anglican Christianity in Mexico, as is being realized in the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest, is not an initial planting of Anglicanism within the Mexican context. Anglicanism arose in Mexico in the middle of the nineteenth century as a reaction to challenging theological trends within the Roman Catholic Church. Initially, Manuel Aguas, a priest in the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico, sought connection with the Episcopal Church in the United States, having come to the belief that under the stewardship of the Roman Catholic Church "this Republic of Mexico . . . has not enjoyed the blessings of true religion" (Aguas, 1871). Aguas led a succession from the Roman Church, planting a movement he called the Iglesia de Jesus in 1859, and later soliciting the collaboration of the Episcopal Church of the United States (Ward, 2006, 170).

Aguas himself described both the initial success of the fledgling Church as well as the aggressive response it faced from both the Roman Church and the popular Mexican culture with which the Roman Church was deeply enmeshed. Aguas reported to the Episcopal Church in 1871 that "We have opened the Church of the former Roman Catholic Convent of San José de Gardia to the public, and a large congregation now attends there. We have established a Christian Association and also classes for young men who want to study for the ministry. In Central Mexico we have some fifty Christian congregations, and their numbers are increasing rapidly" (Dyer, n.d., 9). Other eyewitnesses at about the same time reported similar meteoric growth. Concerns for

the formation of clergy, building of churches, and printing of educational materials were high priorities for early Anglicans in Mexico. At the same time, Aguas reported “terrible persecutions” carried out by Roman Catholic Christians, including the burning of homes and physical assault on men, women, and children who were members of the new Anglican movement.

Three observations emerge from the early Anglican movement in Mexico which are relevant to the current Mexican interest in Anglican Christianity. First, Anglicanism initially emerged as a response to the faults within the existing Christian Church in the culture at the time. Liberalism and cultural Christianity became the impetus for a new Christian expression in Mexico in the nineteenth century, as identified by Aguas himself. Today’s Anglican resurgence articulates similar fundamental motivations as they point to the historical abuses of the Roman Catholic Church in Mexican culture and the current liberalism within Anglicanism as sources for their interest in the Anglican Church in North America. Other Mexican Christian leaders are emerging from Pentecostal and other Protestant movements, having noticed the challenges in their own ecclesiastical backgrounds, which have placed them on the so-called Canterbury Trail.

Second, early Anglicans had an immediate need for formation resources in Spanish as the Church grew quickly. Publication was a high priority for these early Anglicans as it is for Anglicans serving in Mexico today. The production of books, pamphlets, and liturgical texts remains a high priority. The lack of such resources in Spanish continues to slow the formation of new leaders in Mexico, though in its modern expression, this is also an opportunity for young, educated Mexican leaders to begin to take their place as theologians at the global Anglican roundtable. The problems of the current generation are expected to create the resources and leaders of the next (Dyer, n.d., 4).

Third, early Anglicans were eager to solicit funds and direction from the American Church. For example, Herman Dyer made the appeal, “To aid in strengthening and enlarging this work, the prayers and contributions of Christians are solicited. Funds are needed to sustain the laborers already in the field, to increase the number, to educate young men for the ministry, to establish an orphanage, to repair and open the grand old church of San Francisco, and to print and circulate books and tracts in the Spanish language” (Dyer, n.d., 4). Aguas himself continued to state the case more emphatically, saying, “We are collecting funds here to aid in its restoration among our brethren, but most of them are poor and can give but little, and therefore the work of reparation on the said church goes slowly. This delay is to us a cause of great sorrow. Will you and your friends aid us so as to push forward this work as quickly as possible?” (Aguas, 16).

This economic reality remains an open question for Mexican Anglicans; however, contemporary Anglican leaders have the witness of history to their advantage. The heavily funded churches planted by early Episcopal/Anglican missionaries proved weak, unsustainable by the Mexican people, and terminally foreign. In order for the Mexican Anglican Church to establish a long-term Christian witness, it must be fully supported by the Mexican people, both financially and in the formation of leaders. Economic disparity, both within Mexico and between Mexico and the United States, must not result in a system of lop-sided dependency if a viable Anglican expression is to take root in Mexico (Tighe 2023).

With regard to these preliminary observations, this paper presents an examination of a renewed expression of the historic role of the diaconate on the leading edge of church expansion as it is emerging within the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest's ministry in Mexico.

The Emergence of Diaconal Leadership in the Mexican Anglican Church

Early in the history of the Church, deacons proved essential in their ability to move with ease from one ministry or cultural context to another. The Biblical Phoebe, as an example, served as Paul's forerunner to the church in Rome (Rom 16:1-2). In his diaconate, Athanasius served alongside his bishop at Council of Nicaea of 325. The deacon Deogratias would have been completely lost to Church history, had he not written to Augustine of Hippo to request a little handbook to aid him in his catechetical ministry. In fact, the most significant points in the history of the diaconate were times of rapid Church expansion, either through evangelism (in particular, the first five centuries of the Church's history) or through the need for urgent ministry to rapidly growing populations (Jernigan 2023).

Francis Young points to the mid-nineteenth century in England as such an example saying, the "call for the renewal of the diaconate as an active order of ministry emerged from concerns about the speed of population growth in the cities and the inadequacy of the parish system as an effective model of ministry" (Young, 2015, loc 2108). In this setting, men and women were working in mines and factories while also being educated (including learning to read) and formed for parochial ministry. While the diaconate had previously been almost a hobby of the educated elite, it was eventually seen as valuable to form men for the order whose academic background was more familiar to the workers among whom they would serve. These deacons are a powerful indicator of the quotidian

mission field encountered today by bivocational clergy, both deacons and priests, in the United States, and this seems to be emerging as a viable model among Mexican leaders and seminarians who are unable to leave their secular sources of income to attend seminary or serve in congregations with limited funding.

Ministries like those of Deogratias and Young's Industrial age English deacons point to two fundamental principles in the formation of a ministry, particularly diaconal ministry, in emergent church settings like current expansion of the Anglican Church in Mexico. The first is the need for a diaconate which can remain connected, moving freely between the leadership of the Church and the mission frontier to which the deacon may have unique and specialized access. The second is the need for a diaconate of cultural insiders who are able not only to reach the people they serve but also to inform the ministry partnerships of the wider Church. Without the first, the Church cannot become authentic within the new cultural context; without the second, the emergent church movement will not be empowered to take its place in the global fellowship of faithful leaders.

In order to build a Church which is both distinctly Anglican and distinctly Mexican, the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest serves as one diocese in both the United States and Mexico. The unity of the diocesan model is essential to the flourishing of this ministry. While Anglican ecclesiology requires episcopal leadership in order to ordain Mexican leaders, the weight of the formation process does not rest solely on either side of the border. Leaders in the United States and Mexico serve together as an ordination committee, while each side of the border is responsible for identifying and nurturing a diaconal or presbyteral call among their people. Mexican clergy and lay leaders have equal responsibility for the diocesan discernment process, including for vocations originating in the United States, as those from the United States share responsibility for encouraging and discerning Mexican vocations. It should be noted that the purpose of this model is not to teach the Mexican leaders how to lead, but to allow for a unified ministry in which both nationalities work together for the formation of leaders for the whole Church.

The concept of partnership, therefore, is essential here. This is not a mission to Mexico, but the support of the Mexican mission, which finds its origin in the growth taking place within the Mexican faith community. Anglican Bishop Grant LeMarquand states the situation quite succinctly. As is the case in Mexico, "most Anglicans in the southern hemisphere are very aware that they are the recipients of mission . . . but we need to note that missionary endeavour is almost always a risky combination of love and courage, with arrogance and insensitivity. There are, of course, a multitude of

stories about the cultural myopia, ignorance, and just plain sinfulness of missionaries” (LeMarquand 2003, 11-12). In short, there is no room for this antiquated and colonial model in building a sustainable and distinctively Mexican Anglican community. Rather, the focus is to partner together to provide opportunity for Mexican leadership to emerge, be formed for ministry, and begin to produce the resources which future generations of Mexican Anglicans will need to thrive.

The resultant power imbalance in cross-border relationships remain a particular concern within the Mexican culture. Spanish conquest and the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church that accompanied it have produced a culture which holds active, lived memories of religious oppression of Christians by other Christians. Linguists Mark Branson and Juan Martinez make the same observation in the area of language: “When one language is imposed on others by force, the relationship between languages changes. Either the minority language is limited in its domain, or it is forced underground. In the worst of circumstances, the conquered language is eradicated” (Branson and Martinez 2011, 125). Conquered faith traditions, both minority Christian as well as native pre-Christian religions have been actively suppressed, often to extinction, within Mexico. This is a significant hurdle for any non-indigenous mission movement to overcome in any culture.

Of course, language suppression has long been a powerful method of cultural dominance and the eradication of the native cultural memory, from the Japanese Occupation of Korea (in which the Korean language was actively suppressed) to the forced Anglo-normalizing schooling of native children in the United States and Canada, to the daily use of Spanish or English in North America today. Linda Waugh brings the linguist’s perspective to play as well, saying that repeated studies indicate that “we must take into account the issue of symbolic power when studying those who are at the boundaries of linguistic and national identities” (Waugh 2020, 112). This is especially true in theological fields, as Spanish has not historically been accepted as a theological language, and it remains true that a fluency in English is a tremendous benefit for access to a theological education. At the same time, the true need of the Spanish-speaking church is to be equipped to convey the Gospel and to form the next generation of leaders in the Spanish language, without even the subtlest homage to English.

Historical language suppression offers one stark example. However, having been dominated by European language and culture in both the Spanish conquest and the Anglo missionary movement as well as the international influence of the Roman Catholic Church, the Mexican identity is deeply affected by the same need LeMarquand identifies in the Global South churches. The Mexican Anglican Church must be

recognized as a distinctively Mexican church, the result of the movement of the Holy Spirit within the Mexican context, and of faithful, trustworthy Mexican leaders. Albert Zabriskie-Grey identified this obstacle regarding Mexico in 1876: “It is almost impossible here to realize how in that beautiful land a profession of Protestant or truly Catholic faith amounts to almost a complete ostracism- makes a social pariah of a man” (Dyer, Gray, et al., 8). This remains an active cause for suspicion within the Mexican culture, whether by inherited memory or as an ongoing ministry concern in some regions.

Once more from the field of linguistics, Waugh defines an antidote to the problem of a history of suppressing distinctively Mexican culture, including for the immediate purposes of the Church and the Mexican reception of the Gospel. She offers a case study of “Karim,” who is described as having a “high level of economic, social, and cultural capital and its attendant symbolic capital” in his native setting. Waugh describes Karim as being “in an intermediate position, he occupies a hybrid space” since Karim has a high level of social capital in his native setting, is bilingual, and is able to engage with the mechanisms of authority both within his native language and culture and within the outside community which intersects with his own. In linguistic terms, Karim is capable of code-switching to represent the interests of his native culture to those in perceived authority while being empowered to serve and equip others within his native culture with a level of formation which might not be available to those who are not capable of crossing the linguistic or cultural barrier (Waugh 2020, 114). The historical upending of cultural norms has proven to be a barrier to the spread of the Gospel, while the current spontaneous growth of Anglicanism in Mexico leans heavily on the gifts and intuitions of the Mexican leadership. Therefore, it becomes our job simply to provide the tools for Anglican spiritual formation in Mexico; it is up to the Mexican leadership to design and build the Mexican Anglican Church.

Uniquely Mexican, Uniquely Anglican

Historically, deacons have served with distinction in times of the Church’s rapid expansion. Biblical deacons Stephen and Philip are prototypical of the deacon, making clear use of their social capital as Greek-speaking converts to Judaism (similar to Karim’s ability to code-switch to serve his native Tunisian culture above). The first deacons had access to both the Greek-speaking widows and the service ministries of the new Christian movement in Jerusalem. These first deacons were uniquely equipped to serve not only in a service role but in a catechetical role during a time of rapid expansion for the Church. These first deacons were ordained as a direct result of the

Church's growing pains following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, including care of the vulnerable and the ongoing need for catechesis and continued missionary expansion. Significant to the question at hand, all seven of the first deacons ordained in Acts 6 seem to have been Greek-speaking Christians. The neglected widows being Greek speakers themselves are being provided with more than food services, but ministers who truly speak their language. These deacons represent a missionary strategy on the part of the Apostles to bring the Gospel to the most easily overlooked populations by raising up indigenous leadership to perpetuate the Church's mission. These early deacons represent cultural and linguistic insiders among the Greek speaking widows they serve. Thus, John Collins even presumes that the nature of the table ministry was not simply the distribution of daily nutrition but also a distribution of the Gospel itself (Collins 2002, 57).

This pattern has certainly continued through the remainder of the biblical deacon narrative. Acts 6-8 is a tour de force of the rapid expansion of the church as deacons proclaim the Gospel amid persecution and quite literally from Jerusalem (Stephen), to Samaria (Philip), and towards the ends of the earth (Philip's ministry to the Ethiopian official). Likewise, Phoebe (Rom 16:1-2) is also a deacon in a situation of rapid missionary expansion, serving as Paul's forerunner, carrying his letter to the Church at Rome. Later deacons would do the same, as Lawrence of Rome, Ephraem Syrus, Deogratias, James of York, and countless others lived out their ministries deeply rooted in and aware of the daily challenges of the expansion of the Church in their local context (Jernigan 2023, 52).

The concerns of Industrial Age England cited in Young have equally begun to emerge in both the United States and in the Mexican ministry contexts. Within Mexico, Anglican churches are normally small church plants in large urban communities. While the growth potential is high in each of these settings, the majority are served by clergy (or lay leaders who are in our clergy formation process) who also remain in their secular work in order to support their families and church planting efforts. The unfortunate legacy of the mission model of the early Anglican missionaries was to create churches that became dependent on largesse from the church in the United States and on the work of missionaries to sustain the churches. When the funding dried up or the missionary moved on, the church tended to collapse. Mexican ecclesiastical leadership still reports this phenomenon as ongoing in their communities today.

In this mission context, as in similar church planting contexts within the United States, the role of bivocational clergy takes a central place. It is often a matter of sustenance for the minister's family, especially when serving in smaller, missionary

contexts; however, bivocational ministry is also a leveraging point for the community's successful growth. It is often within these workplace points of access that the Gospel can reach those within the communities who are most in need of Christ's saving grace. For example, one deacon is serving in his community both in his secular work as a nurse as well as planting a small but growing congregation in northern Mexico. His secular gifts allow the church to reach out with an occasional pop-up medical clinic. Another minister serving in the south of Mexico is a professor whose ministry not only allows him to reach and mentor students, but he has formed a cohort of rising leaders who share formation and fellowship with one another as well as work together to plant local congregations. Additionally, some of the diocese's Mexican seminarians and clergy have begun working to translate and contextualize Anglican resources, which are beginning to emerge in Spanish, such as the Book of Common Prayer and the Catechism, to the broader Mexican context in order that the generation which comes after them will be well resourced in Spanish-language materials that are uniquely Mexican and distinctively Anglican.

These models of ministry, while profoundly diaconal in the historic sense, have not been sourced in directives from the United States but are beginning to emerge as the result of the creative efforts of gifted Mexican leaders who know their communities and are growing in their ability to exercise ministries in ways that make sense in their unique contexts. Additionally, younger lay leaders are influencing the ministry in Mexico through a robust use of communications, videography, graphics design, and social media, which may eventually be the leveraging point for a ministry and secular career for the next generation of bivocational leaders.

Cultural Literacy and the Flourishing of the Gospel

Anglicanism, historically identifying as both catholic and reformed, has often found itself unable to bridge this chasm. The vibrant and painful divisions of the Reformation in Europe and the Christian-on-Christian persecutions and political manipulations which followed as the Anglican Church took root in its native soil are still felt in many parts of the Anglican world. Anglicans have probably not felt the pain that Mexican Christians have experienced from the Roman Catholic Church. In his nineteenth-century report to the Episcopal Church in the United States, Manuel Aguas did not overstate his situation as he referred to the opposition as "our fanatical enemies, among whom are very rich and powerful persons, who spend their money lavishly in publishing newspapers and other publications to try and crush us" (Aguas 1871, 16).

The Roman Catholic Church had established itself by force in what would become Mexico, while Anglicanism arrived concurrently with the United States' western expansion into what was then Mexican territory. Anglicanism may also have been seen as the conquistador's religion, being first brought into Mexico by American troops in 1847 for the comfort of the anglophone and Protestant United States military. José Manuel Villalpando stated: "On September 14, 1847, the first public Anglican religious service on record was celebrated in Mexico City. That day, the invading North American troops raised the Stars and Stripes on the flagpole of the National Palace . . . The Episcopal religious services continued to be celebrated in Mexico during the occupation of the City by the invading army, until the middle of the year 1848" (Villalpando n.d. 513, translation mine). At this point, Roman Catholicism had been so deeply integrated into the Mexican cultural identity that suspicion of anything remotely Protestant would lead to divisions and result in the aggressive suppression and even persecution of the fledgling Anglican movement just a few decades later.

Modern Mexican people maintain a strong cultural memory of the early imposition of the Roman Catholic faith by Spanish conquistadores, tainted by cultural superiority, forced suppression of native religious practices, oppression, and bloodshed. More contemporary popular piety in the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico came to include a cult-like veneration of Our Lady of Guadalupe, along with state-wide suppression of non-Roman expressions of Christianity. It was so heavy-handed that it resulted in a cultural backlash that sought to remove ecclesiastical, particularly clerical, influence from the public square (Anaya 2024). In short, Mexican Anglicanism placed itself between Protestant fears of institutionalized excesses of the Roman Catholic state and Catholic historical memory of a Protestantism imposed by an occupying force.

In his provocatively entitled book *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church and the Causes which Hinder It*, Roland Allen explains the problem quite clearly only a generation later, saying, "Even if the supply of men and funds from Western sources was unlimited and we could cover the whole globe with an army of millions of foreign missionaries and establish stations thickly all over the world, the method would speedily reveal its weakness, as it is already beginning to reveal it. The mere fact that Christianity was propagated by such an army . . . would inevitably alienate the native populations who would see in it the growth of the domination of a foreign people. They would see themselves robbed of their religious independence" (Allen 2018, 22). Allen adds that this model serves only to propagate missionaries and mission stations, not the mission of the Church: "A thousand thousand [of such missionaries and ministries] would not suffice; a dozen might be too many" (Allen, 2018, 22).

Anglicanism remains a minority voice on the Mexican Christian landscape. The primary expressions of Christianity in Mexico remain Roman Catholic, often influenced by popular piety and a history of tumultuous relations between the Roman Catholic authority structure and the Mexican state. Protestant missionary work has led to a rise of Pentecostal expressions of Christianity, and centers of such missionary work continue, especially in ministry hubs in Puebla and Juarez. Often these missionary movements come from the United States, but more recent missionary work from South Korea has planted churches and at least one seminary, and has influenced the Protestant movement in both of these cities. Meanwhile, the few expressions of Anglicanism in Mexico today are tied to the liberal leaning Episcopal Church.

These three factors have left the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) with a unique set of opportunities and liabilities as we serve alongside the Mexican people. For many, raised in the Roman Catholic tradition, the liturgical tools and recognizable structure of the Anglican Church are a profound comfort. However, for some evangelical Protestants who have come alongside the Anglican diocese, there remains a deep reluctance to use the liturgical tools in the Book of Common Prayer (*Libro de Oracion Commun*). For others, these are powerful tools that hold a deep attraction.

Historically, Anglican Christianity has been at its best when it walks the via media tightrope. Stretched between the expectations and comforts of cultural Roman Catholicism and the lively expressions of the Pentecostal minority, Anglicanism in Mexico is developing a unique voice. However, overshadowed by a historical narrative of suppression from both the Mexican government and the colonial movements from outside of Mexico, Mexican Christians can easily identify with Allen's statement that they have been historically robbed of their religious independence. Expressions of Anglicanism in Mexico must be authentically Anglican but also authentically Mexican. The definition of the latter becomes the challenge for young Mexican theologians and leaders being raised for ministry in the Anglican Church (ACNA) in Mexico today.

The Role of the Diaconate in Uniquely Mexican Anglicanism

Cross-cultural ministry partnerships require a particular charism from leaders in both cultural contexts. The willingness to respond in humility and extend grace to one another (and have a sense of humor) in moments which uncover differing expectations, cultural misunderstanding, or failure of language is not limited to a sending or receiving culture when both nationalities are full partners in ministry. Leaders who emerge in this ministry environment must be willing to work as partners with those whose cultural,

linguistic, and educational backgrounds are different. However, ministry leaders who are willing to serve alongside one another, in particular emerging Mexican leaders who are willing to partner with leaders outside of Mexico, are uniquely placed to shape the future of the Mexican church. The aim is eventually to allow the Mexican Church to take its own place in the Province of North America as a diocese in its own right, producing academic and spiritual materials for the Spanish-speaking church both in Mexico and among immigrant communities in the United States. This partnership model has already begun to bear fruit and stands in sharp contrast to the patterns of the earlier Anglican missionary efforts in Mexico. While the identified needs remain the same, the solutions, especially as they arise from Mexican leaders in ministry partnership, are very different. Early Anglican missionaries identified four major areas in which they sought help from the Episcopal Church in the United States: funding, publication, education, and liturgy. Dyer and Aguas, for example, specifically pointed to the need for funding in order to publish materials in Spanish as well as for education. Alfred Lee pointed to the need for liturgical resources saying, “A simple liturgy was prepared and proved a very efficient aid in diffusing the principles of the Gospel and building up congregations” (Dyer et al., n.d., 16, 22).

Partnership with trusted Mexican leaders allows each of these needs to be met within the Mexican cultural context and to provide resources in Spanish which expect to have an impact beyond the boundaries of Mexico and the Diocese of the Southwest. Mexican leaders who have the charisms normally associated with the historic diaconate are well suited to this task and environment. Diaconal leaders, for example, must understand that they are accountable directly to their bishop, even if they live and serve at some distance from the bishop and others who may be overseeing their ministries. Ancient deacons were often emissaries of their bishops; contemporary deacons in Mexico must be especially prepared for high-trust ministry settings as their oversight is often from a distance and in concert with leaders who are not always fluent in Spanish.

Within this particular need, ministry groupings have begun which allow for pastoral and mentoring relationships for emerging leaders who support themselves through secular employment. While such bivocational clergy and lay leaders in the United States often struggle to stay connected with a clergy and formation community which expects that ministry is the source of paid employment (though clergy in those situations are rapidly becoming a minority within much of the Church), Mexican leaders are able to set a new pattern for the flourishing of their communities. Deacons, normatively bivocational and historically engaging secular employment as a means of access to the local mission field, are no different from anyone else in these formation groups.

Of course, bivocational clergy and lay leaders in Mexico also reduce (though to date do not eliminate) the need for financial support from the United States. However, the ongoing problem of economic disparity and the need for funding and resources in Mexico identified both in the early missionary letters (Dyer, et. al.) to the Episcopal Church's College of Bishops as well as in Roland Allen's writing is somewhat reduced by partnerships which are not intended to be long-term support, but instead relational and offering only short-term and limited financial support. The Mexican people are responsible for informing the financial need, supporting their own churches and clergy, assisting the leaders from the United States to culturally adapt when it comes to money (and often dramatically reducing our costs in the process), to identify when unrestricted gifts in the past have proven more harmful than helpful, and to begin to anticipate future obstacles that might arise from well-intentioned gifts from outside of Mexico.

The nineteenth century requests for funding were often paired with a request for written materials in Spanish for discipling and educating future Mexican leaders. This continues to be an ongoing concern. Scholars, universities, and other institutions of the Academy have historically failed to see Spanish as a theological language. This is even more true in the English-centered world of Anglicanism. Flexible models of diaconal ministry which combine Provincial standards, foundations in theological, catechetical, and pastoral formation, and a focus on local or diocesan needs for the diaconal order has allowed for Mexican leaders who may have undergraduate seminary formation in a non-Anglican tradition to build on that foundation with online seminary courses, local educational events, and contact with Anglicans in the rest of the Spanish-speaking world who can encourage and help to shape a vision for sustainable ministry in the Mexican context. This sustainability includes the translation of existing works into Spanish, but it is hoped that some of this group of young scholars will eventually take their place as producers of theological materials for the next generation.

The result thus far has indicated that models of the historic diaconate offer patterns which can be readily adapted to the Mexican ministry context among leaders who are passionate about the Scriptures and catechesis, and who are actively seeking healthy Anglican ministry models to plant and grow churches and raise the next generation of leaders. Instead of requesting funding, publication, education, and liturgy from sources outside of Mexico, it is hoped that Anglicans in Mexico increasingly will be the translators and educators for Spanish speaking Anglicans beyond Mexico. Many have already contributed to the translation of the 2019 Anglican Book of Common Prayer 2019 into Spanish, along with other resources which benefit the remainder of the Province. Others are beginning to translate and produce Spanish-language catechetical

resources. Their expertise is poised to benefit the remainder of the Anglican Church in the United States and Canada.

This is all still a work in progress. There is no way, at this early stage, that this could be anything other than a preliminary report. Nonetheless, in a generation's time, the goal of a uniquely Anglican and uniquely Mexican church can be expected to produce good fruit both within the nation of Mexico and beyond its geographic borders.

***Tara Jernigan, DMin**, serves as a priest in the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest (ACNA) and adjunct instructor at Trinity Anglican Seminary.*

Bibliography

- Aguas, Manuel. 1871. "A Letter from Manuel Aguas." <https://anglicanhistory.org/mx/aguas1871.html>. Accessed 5 August 2025.
- Allen, Roland. 2018. *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church and the Causes which Hinder It*. Yuma: Jawbone.
- Anaya, Alexis. Untitled workshop on the state of the Church in Mexico given at Trinity Anglican Seminary, September 2024.
- Branson, Mark L. and Martinez, Juan F. 2011. *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic.
- John N. Collins. 2002. *Deacons and the Church: Making Connections Between Old and New*. Harrisburg: Morehouse.
- Dyer, Heman Dyer; Gray, Albert Zabriskie, Aguas, Manuel; and Lee, Alfred. No Date. *The Mexican Branch of the Church: Described by Eye-Witnesses*. New York: Thomas Whittaker.
- Jernigan, Tara. 2023. *This Foundational Order: The Historic Diaconate for the Modern Church*. Newport Beach: Anglican House.
- LeMarquand, Grant. 2003. "The Changeless, the Changeable, and the Unchanging: Thoughts on the Future of Anglicanism." In *Anglicanism(s): Identity and Diversity in a Global Communion*. Berkley: Church Divinity School of the Pacific.
- Tighe, Steven. 2023. Plenary Address to Practical Anglican University. Puebla Mexico.
- Villalpando, José Manuel. No Date. "Establecimiento de la Iglesia Anglicana en México" in *La Biblioteca Jurídica Virtual del Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas del la UNAM*. <https://archivos.juridicas.unam.mx/www/bjv/libros/7/3100/34.pdf>. Accessed July 24, 2025.
- Ward, Kevin. *A History of Global Anglicanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Waugh, Linda. 2010. "Power and Prejudice: Their Effects on the Co-Construction of Linguistic and National Identities." *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 7, no. 2-3: 112-130.
- Young, Francis. 2015. *Inferior Office? A History of Deacons in the Church of England*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co.