

IARCCUM - Communion in Mission

Press Release

Bishops call for new steps on the way to unity

Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops came away from an international meeting at Mississauga, Ontario, more resolved to do all in their power to build upon the considerable agreement in faith they already share. Those present came from 13 regions of the world and were convened by Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the Vatican's Council for promoting Christian Unity, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey.

After a week involving prayer together, worship, and a review of some 35 years of ecumenical dialogue and cooperation, the bishops are convinced that it is possible for Anglicans and Roman Catholics to mark a new stage in their search for unity.

While very aware of the well-known difficult problems that have to be faced before full unity is achieved, the bishops experienced and reviewed a degree of common faith during their time together, such that they believe greater cooperation and mission is possible than at present. They called for a Joint Commission to oversee the next steps and how relationships can develop further in different places.

At the top of the Commission's agenda will be the preparation of a joint affirmation of faith. This would formally express the degree of agreement that already exists between Anglicans and Catholics. All at the Mississauga meeting believed that this extensive common faith needs to be officially acknowledged and celebrated, and that this should logically have consequences for the life of the two churches.

Because at least two bishops came from each of 13 regions around the world, the meeting had the chance to take a detailed look at the situation in a variety of places. All emphasised how greater unity would strengthen the mission of the Church of Christ. In their final hours together, each pair of bishops discussed how they could return home to foster greater cooperation and a fresh commitment to seeking unity. They will bring their ideas to their fellow bishops.

At the end of the meeting the participants will release a statement entitled Communion in Mission, which describes their experience together and commitment to a significant step forward.

They expressed a particular vote of thanks to the Roman Catholic and Anglican dioceses of Toronto and their bishops for all the help received in the arrangement of the meeting; and to the director and staff of the Queen of Apostles Centre for the very special welcome they had received.

Commenting on the week, the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Carey said it had been "a heartening and hopeful meeting which encourages us to press forward towards the visible unity of the Church".

Cardinal Cassidy added: "If the experience we have had here could be more widely shared our relationship would progress more rapidly".

One bishop commented: "We leave here with hearts filled with hope for greater unity".

Mississauga, 19 May 2000

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Statement from Mississauga Meeting, May 2000

1. This meeting of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops from 13 countries, convened by His Eminence Edward Cardinal Cassidy and His Grace Archbishop George Carey, gathered at Mississauga, near Toronto, Canada, from 14-20 May 2000. Our meeting was grounded in prayer and marked by a profound atmosphere of friendship and spiritual communion. We began on Good Shepherd Sunday, conscious of our common vocation as shepherds of the Good Shepherd, with a responsibility to lead God's people forward in active hope towards that unity in truth and holiness which our Lord wills for his Church.
2. We came together to address the imperative for Christian reconciliation and healing, in a broken and divided world. We were also conscious of the fact that Christian people around the world are celebrating two thousand years since the birth of Jesus Christ. In this year of Great Jubilee, in which the churches are acting co-operatively for the remission of unpayable Third World debt, we are aware of the need to leave behind all past deficits with which our churches have themselves been burdened, so as to enter the new millennium renewed in deepening unity and peace.
3. At this meeting we have naturally focussed on the special relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion as expressed in the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council. We also recognised the progress which has been made in our relations with other Christians and we recommit ourselves to the ecumenical endeavour with all Christian churches.
4. As day by day we prayed together and meditated on scripture in the chapel of Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre, we realised afresh both the degree of spiritual communion we already share in the richness of our common liturgical inheritance, but also the pain of our inability to share together fully in the eucharist. As we listened to experiences from the different regions we were struck by the extent of interchurch collaboration, particularly common action for social justice and joint pastoral care in which Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy and lay people are involved. We noted with concern some of the problems our disunity causes to the mission of the Church, and recognised the opportunities for shared endeavour presented to us in the service of our fragmented world. As we reviewed the results of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), we came to appreciate the very impressive degree of agreement in faith that already exists. This alerted us to the serious

obligation to intensify the process of reception of those agreements at the local level.

5. There is one specific point that has been driven home to us during the meeting. Over the last thirty years we have become familiar with the concept of 'degrees of communion'. Despite our acknowledged differences, we have regularly affirmed that we share in the fundamental communion of a common faith and a common baptism. This degree of communion holds within it the promise of the full visible communion to which God is calling us. Our experience at Toronto encourages us to believe that we have reached a very significant new place on our journey. We feel compelled to affirm that our communion together is no longer to be viewed in minimal terms. We have been able to discern that it is not just formally established by our common baptism into Christ, but is even now a rich and life-giving, multifaceted communion.
6. We have come to a clear sense that we have moved much closer to the goal of full visible communion than we had at first dared to believe. A sense of mutual interdependence in the Body of Christ has been reached, in which the churches of the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church are able to bring shared gifts to their joint mission in the world.
7. We appreciate that there are as yet unresolved differences and challenges which affect both Communion. These have to do with such matters as: the understanding of authority in the Church, including the way it is exercised, and the precise nature of the future role of the universal primate; Anglican Orders; the ordination of women; moral and ethical questions. Though interchurch families can be signs of unity and hope, one pressing concern has to do with addressing the need to provide joint pastoral care for them. Sometimes those in interchurch families experience great pain particularly in the area of eucharistic life.
8. However, we believe these challenges are not to be compared with all that we hold in common. The communion constituted by what we already share has within it an inner dynamic which, animated by the Holy Spirit, impels us forward toward the overcoming of these differences. Indeed, we have become conscious that we have embraced what may be described, not only as a new era of friendship and co-operation, but as a new stage of 'evangelical koinonia'. By this we mean a communion of joint commitment to our common mission in the world (John 17. 23).
9. The marks of this new stage of communion in mission are: our trinitarian faith grounded in the scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds; the centrality of Christ, his death and resurrection, and commitment to his mission in the Church; faith in the final destiny of human life; common traditions in liturgy and spirituality; the monastic life; preferential commitment to the poor and marginalised; convergence on the eucharist, ministry, authority, salvation, moral principles, and the Church as communion, as expressed in agreed

statements of ARCIC; episcopacy, particularly the role of the bishop as symbol and promoter of unity; and the respective roles of clergy and laity.

10. We believe that now is the appropriate time for the authorities of our two Communion to recognise and endorse this new stage through the signing of a Joint Declaration of Agreement. This Agreement would set out: our shared goal of visible unity; an acknowledgment of the consensus in faith that we have reached, and a fresh commitment to share together in common life and witness. Our two Communion would be invited to celebrate this Agreement around the world.
11. As our meeting proceeded we became increasingly aware that as bishops we ourselves have a responsibility to guide, promote, and energise the ongoing work of unity in our churches. We commit ourselves wholeheartedly to this task. Our action plan is appended to this statement.
12. The first recommendation of our action plan is that a Joint Unity Commission be established. This Commission will oversee the preparation of the Joint Declaration of Agreement, and promote and monitor the reception of ARCIC agreements, as well as facilitate the development of strategies for translating the degree of spiritual communion that has been achieved into visible and practical outcomes.
13. It is important to be clear that this new stage on our journey is but a step on the way to full and visible unity. Our vision of full and visible unity is of a eucharistic communion of churches: confessing the one faith and demonstrating by their harmonious diversity the richness of faith; unanimous in the application of the principles governing moral life; served by ministries that the grace of ordination unites together in an episcopal body, grafted on to the company of the Apostles, and which is at the service of the authority that Christ exercises over his Body. The ministry of oversight has both collegial and primatial dimensions and is open always to the community's participation in the discernment of God's will. This eucharistic communion on earth is a participation in the larger communion which includes the saints and martyrs, and all those who have fallen asleep in Christ through the ages.
14. However, the shape of full visible unity is beyond our capacity to put into words. "God will always surprise us," as we were reminded in a meditation shared with us: "God cannot be understood through our human system or correspond to our positive or negative predictions for the future. ... In our ecumenical efforts we should keep in mind that one day we will rub our eyes and be surprised by the new things that God has achieved in his Church."

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Action Plan to Implement Communion in Mission

A. Joint Unity Commission

Membership

The membership of the Commission to be predominantly bishops, to be appointed by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) and the Anglican Communion Office.

Accountability

The Joint Unity Commission will report to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations.

Mandate

The mandate of the Commission will include the following functions:

- to prioritise the ongoing work;
- to oversee the preparation of a Joint Declaration of Agreement and to plan the signing and celebration of the same;
- to promote and monitor the formal response and reception of the agreed statements of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC);
- to promote the coherence of other bilateral dialogues that Anglicans and Roman Catholics are involved in;
- to examine the range of possible ways, within current canon law provisions, to deal generously and pastorally with situations of inter-church marriages involving Anglicans and Roman Catholics;
- to explore ways of communicating the results of the Toronto Meeting to provinces and episcopal conferences not represented;
- to commission the production of resources (bible studies, videos, CD-ROMs, etc) to assist in making the work of ARCIC known throughout the churches;
- to encourage Anglican provinces and Roman Catholic episcopal conferences to set up national Anglican-Roman Catholic (ARC) dialogue groups where they do not exist;
- to invite one or two national ARCs to study the implications of our common baptism for the roles of men and women in the Church, the results of which to be shared at all levels of the churches;
- to promote co-operation locally on clergy formation, education, and other pastoral matters;
- to promote collegiality through:
 - encouraging episcopal participation in each others' meetings at the international, national and local levels;
 - encouraging a joint meeting of bishops at the level of provinces and episcopal conferences within 2 years;
 - examining ways of ensuring formal consultation prior to one Church making decisions on matters of faith and morals which would affect the other Church, keeping in view the agreed statements of ARCIC;
 - planning for a future review consultation of bishops within 5 years.

B. Follow up by Pairs of Bishops

The pairs of bishops from 13 countries present at this meeting will endeavour:

- to report back to the bishops of the province / episcopal conference within 6 months;
- to share the results of this meeting with the clergy and laity at the national and local church level.

C. Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission

ARCIC is invited to consider the following possible agenda items:

- the drafting of a document to link all the agreed statements produced by ARCIC, which would be a coherent summary of the work thus far. The papers produced for this meeting may form the basis of this work;
- a study of the place of Mary in the life and doctrine of the Church.

ARCIC is urged to consider commissioning a volume of the agreed statements produced since The Final Report which would include introductory essays and selections of relevant responses to the texts.

D. Annual Informal Talks

The Annual Informal Talks is a meeting of staff of the PCPCU, the Anglican Communion Office, Lambeth Palace, the Anglican Centre in Rome and the ARCIC co-chairmen. The next meeting in November will consider how the Joint Unity Commission and ARCIC will relate to each other.

E. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Anglican Communion Office

Staff from these offices will explore the publication in book form of appropriate papers, presentations, sermons, the liturgy Celebration of Common Baptism, and other documents from this Anglican-Roman Catholic Bishops' Meeting.

Toronto Meeting Name List

Anglican Participants

Archbishop of Canterbury: The Most Revd and Rt Honorable GEORGE L. CAREY
Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia: The Rt Revd JOHN PATERSON, Presiding Bishop & Primate

Australia: The Most Revd PETER CARNLEY, Primate & Archbishop of Perth

Brazil: The Most Revd GLAUCO SOARES DE LIMA, Primate of Brazil & Bishop of São Paulo

Canada: The Most Revd MICHAEL PEERS, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada

England: The Rt Revd JOHN HIND, Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe

India: The Rt Revd PETER SUGANDHAR, Bishop of Medak, Church of South India
Ireland: The Rt Revd Dr SAMUEL POYNTZ, Formerly Bishop of Connor
Nigeria: The Rt Revd JOSEPH A. OMOYAJOWO, Bishop of Ijebu
Papua New Guinea: The Most Revd JAMES AYONG, Primate & Bishop of Aipo Rongo
Southern Africa: The Rt Revd DAVID BEETGE, Bishop of The Highveld
Uganda: The Rt Revd Evans MUKASA KISEKKA, Bishop of Luweero
USA: The Rt Revd EDWIN F. GULICK Jr, Bishop of Kentucky
West Indies: The Most Revd DREXEL GOMEZ, Primate & Bishop of Nassau & The Bahamas

Catholic Participants

President, Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity: His Eminence EDWARD IDRIS Cardinal CASSIDY
Australia: Archbishop JOHN BATHERSBY, Archbishop of Brisbane, Chair, Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Brazil: Bishop ANTÔNIO CELSO DE QUEIROZ, Bishop of Cantanduva, Formerly Secretary General, Brazilian Bishops' Conference
Canada: Bishop GERALD WIESNER, OMI, Bishop of Prince George, President Canadian Bishops' Conference
England: Archbishop CORMAC MURPHY-O'CONNOR Archbishop of Westminster, Chairman, Bishops' Conference Department for Mission and Unity, Formerly Co-Chairman, ARCIC
India (Latin Rite): Archbishop HENRY D'SOUZA, Archbishop of Calcutta, President of Conference of Catholic Bishops of India, Latin Rite
Ireland: Bishop ANTHONY FAROUHAR, Auxiliary Bishop of Down and Connor, Chair, Bishops' Commission for Ecumenism
New Zealand: Bishop JOHN CUNNEEN, Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand Bishops' Conference Deputy for Ecumenism
Nigeria: Bishop LUCIUS UGORJI, Bishop of Umuahia
Papua New Guinea: Bishop DESMOND MOORE, MSC, Bishop of Alotau-Sideia, Chairman, Bishops' Commission for Ecumenism, Co-Chair PNG ARC dialogue
Southern Africa: Archbishop GEORGE DANIEL, Archbishop of Pretoria, Vice-Chairman, Bishops' Department of Ecumenism
Uganda: Bishop PAUL KALANDA, Bishop of Fort Portal, President Ugandan Bishops' Conference
USA: Archbishop WILLIAM J. LEVADA, Archbishop of San Francisco, Chairman-Designate, ARC-USA
West Indies: Archbishop SAMUEL CARTER, SJ, Formerly Archbishop of Kingston

Others Attending

Archbishop ALEXANDER BRUNETT: Roman Catholic Co-chairman of ARCIC
Bishop FRANK GRISWOLD: Anglican Co-chairman of ARCIC
Bishop WALTER KASPER: Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
Canon JOHN PETERSON: Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council

Guest Speaker Wednesday Morning
Father JEAN-MARIE TILLARD, OP

The Staff Team

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Canon DAVID HAMID (Anglican)
Monsignor TIMOTHY GALLIGAN (Catholic)
Archbishop of Canterbury's Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs
Canon RICHARD MARSH

Secretarial Assistants For the Meeting

Mrs CHRISTINE CODNER - Anglican Communion Office
Fr FRANCIS KODIYAN, MCBS - Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
Secretarial Assistant For the Archbishop of Canterbury
Mrs GILL HARRIS-HOGARTH - Lambeth Palace
Mississauga, 19 May 2000