

Press Release: April 24, 2024

Primates' Meeting 2024 to be held in Rome for pilgrimage, consultation, and meeting with Pope Francis

Senior archbishops, presiding bishops, and moderators of the churches of the Anglican Communion will meet in Rome for the 2024 Primates' Meeting (April 29-May 3). Conceived as a pilgrimage, they will pray and study Scripture together, visit holy sites in Rome, and reflect together about the mission and witness of the Church in the world.

In the first gathering of Anglican Primates to be held in Rome, the Primates' programme will include a meeting with Pope Francis and conversation with Cardinal Grech about the meaning and promise of synodality for the whole Church.

The city of Rome is full of historical and spiritual significance for the whole Christian world. Pope Gregory the Great sent Augustine of Canterbury on mission to England in 597. Especially since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), Rome has been a centre of inter-Christian encounter and ecumenical research.

In and around their meeting, the primates will undertake a pilgrimage in the city, visiting both St Peter's Basilica and the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls (where St Paul the Apostle is buried), besides visits to Tre Fontane, Santa Maria in Trastevere, and the Community of Sant'Egidio.

The primates will be hosted by Archbishop Ian Ernest, the Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome. The primates were due to meet in Rome in 2020, but the meeting was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Primates' Meeting is one of the 'Instruments' of the Anglican Communion, that works for unity amongst Anglican churches globally. The other instruments are The Anglican Consultative Council, The Lambeth Conference and The Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Primates' Meeting agenda is developed by the regional primates of the Communion who serve on the Primates' Standing Committee. The agenda will be finalised by common consent at the start of the meeting. Topics will include prayerful conversation about areas of conflict in the world and regional meetings to discuss issues of local concern.

The primates will also be asked to engage and respond to a paper by the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO), commissioned by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) in 2023. The paper looks at structure and decision-making in the Anglican Communion and offers proposals to help address difference and disagreement in the Anglican Communion. IASCUFO reports to all four Instruments of the Anglican Communion and will carry its paper to the next meeting of the ACC in 2026.



Speaking about the 2024 Primates' Meeting, Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said: *"The Primates' Meeting is an important time of pilgrimage and fellowship. Together, we will discuss common priorities and challenges in the global mission and shared life of the Anglican Communion. The Primates serve churches and communities around the world. Many come from settings where people are directly impacted by the instability of conflict, the challenge of climate crisis and the injustice of poverty. Together, we will pray for the needs of people and planet, the unity of God's Church and the witness of the Anglican Communion."*

Archbishop Ian Ernest from the Anglican Centre in Rome, said: *"The Anglican Centre in Rome seeks to be a living reality of the Communion's commitment to Church unity, working collaboratively with all Christians for justice and peace in the world. We are looking forward to welcoming Anglican primates to the centre for prayer, pilgrimage, and conversation."*

As secretariat to the Anglican Communion, staff from the Anglican Communion Office in London will support the Primates' Meeting.

Bishop Anthony Poggio, The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion said: *"At the Anglican Communion Office, we pray for all the primates of the Anglican Communion. We give thanks for the collaboration of the Anglican Centre in Rome and our sisters and brothers at the Vatican, who have worked so hard to support this important meeting."*

It will be the first Primates' Meeting for seven of the Primates.

Since its establishment in 1978 by then-Archbishop of Canterbury Donald Coggan, the Primates' Meeting has coordinated closely with both the Anglican Consultative Council and the Lambeth Conference.

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