

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC PERMANENT JOINT COMMISSION

First Meeting - Windsor, 9th - 15th January 1970ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS SINCE JANUARY 1968

1. Since the issue of the Malta Report there has been no outstanding change in Anglican/Roman Catholic relations, but there has been a steady growth in friendliness, mutual understanding and readiness to co-operate where possible.
2. From many Anglican Provinces it is reported that difficulty over the canonical requirements for mixed marriages is not only an irritant but is pastorally harmful to the laity of both communions. Progress in the solution of this problem, which is concerned with Canon Law, but hardly at all with theology would seem, in the opinion of widespread reporters to be of urgent necessity.
3. Theological discussion in Britain and in the U.S.A., Canada and Australia has reached a high level and concern about Baptismal and Eucharistic doctrine is general. Both seem to bring large measures of agreement, except that the former tend to be considered in isolation from the Gift of the Holy Spirit, Confirmation and First Communion, although Anglicans generally are glad that the new Roman Catholic Baptism service for Infants seems to imply that Confirmation should precede First Communion.
4. The action of the Roman Catholic Episcopate in the South-East Pacific in allowing acts of economy where Anglicans are unable to communicate in their own churches has been warmly welcomed, but there is some confusion on both sides about the possibility of inter-communion especially in view of the statements in 'De Ecumenismo' that the Holy Eucharist is a means to as well as an expression of unity. There is sporadic inter-communion by individuals on both sides and a weakening of discipline in this matter.

We have received the following reports from a selection of Anglican Provinces and Dioceses:

5. Australia:

Contacts are many and various, e.g. in the sharing and building together of churches, interchange of pulpits at Episcopal level and combined Bible Study. In Perth Anglicans lent money to the Dominicans to build a Retreat House and the Roman Catholics print the Anglican monthly newspaper. There is a joint working party of the Australian Council of Churches and Roman Catholics in South Australia. Much study of Eucharistic and Baptismal doctrine has taken place, and there have been agreed statements on both. Other conferences have embraced mixed

marriages, world poverty, Vatican II, Uppsala and Lambeth 1968, World unity, Justice and Development, and Sodepax. In Western Australia there has been co-operation on a syllabus for Christian Education in State High Schools.

6. Canada:

There are reports of widespread activity and co-operation with joint discussion at all levels. There have been joint consecrations of shared churches by Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops. The Canadian Catholic Conference and the Canadian Council of Churches work in harmony. From the detailed report received it is obvious that more has been done in Canada than anywhere else in relations between the two Communion.

7. Central Africa:

There have been oecumenical conversations and a joint meeting with President Kaunda. Anglicans have given Roman Catholics Holy Communion when they have been isolated from their own churches. There has been joint prayer for peace.

8. East Africa:

It is reported that conditional re-baptism has largely ceased and that there has been co-operation in Masasi in the face of Islam.

9. England:

During the Week of Prayer for Unity in January 1968 the Archbishop of Canterbury preached in Westminster Cathedral and in the following year Cardinal Heenan preached in St. Paul's Cathedral. On both occasions there was an enthusiastic welcome from mixed congregations.

The visit of Cardinal Suenens to York has been widely publicised and gave great encouragement. Theological Conferences are regularly held in the London, Southwark, Chichester, Salisbury, and the North-West and North-East areas.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Roman Catholic Relations has been reformed under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Barking with Prebendary Henry Cooper as its part-time Secretary. It is organised in five centres of promotion and is encouraging local and diocesan contacts, as well as theological, pastoral and practical discussion - both spontaneous and official. There are a number of shared churches and notable projects at Crippenham and Thames Mead where Roman Catholics and Anglicans are together building churches.

Mixed Marriages still pose many painful problems, and although there is much good will no appreciable change in Roman Catholic conditions has come about. There have been conferences of mixed couples at Spode House, the Dominican centre in Staffordshire, and the

British Council of Churches/Roman Catholic Working Group discussed the matter at Heythrop. Nothing could do more at present to improve relations than the solution of this problem.

10. Hong Kong:

Relations are friendly and there is a joint Council of Christian Education. The Anglican Bishop has preached in the Roman Catholic cathedral. Here also marriage difficulties are a stumbling block to progress.

11. India and Ceylon:

The agreed text of an Urdu Bible has been a notable achievement and there is co-operation over a Sinhala version in Ceylon. Most contacts are oecumenical rather than Anglican/Roman Catholic but there have been Anglican/Roman Catholic joint burials. In Ceylon the proposal for a Council of Churches/Roman Catholic Working Party was defeated but there has been co-operation between the National Roman Catholic Seminary and the Joint Theological College, between the University Chaplains, and in representations to the Government, notably over education. Mixed marriages are a considerable difficulty.

12. Ibadan:

The Bishops have exchanged pulpits.

13. Ireland:

There has been no appreciable advance and civil troubles in Ulster have obscured otherwise good relations although the Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic leaders have been working together for peace. This has received little notice in the press.

14. Japan:

A Japan Ecumenical Association including Roman Catholics has been formed.

15. Lagos - Nigeria

There were interchanges during Unity Week and there has been set up a Joint Seaman's House at Apapa. The Head of State, General Gowon was married in the Anglican Cathedral and the Apostolic Delegate and Roman Catholic Archbishop attended. All was very friendly.

16. Mashonaland:

There are friendly relations. The Roman Catholics sent observers to unity talks and it is proposed that there shall be a joint Episcopal Synod.

17. New Zealand:

The Roman Catholic Province still comes under the Propaganda but friendliness has increased. There is a joint working party of the National Council of Churches with the Roman Catholics, and there has been theological discussion on the subject of the Ministry. During the project 'Interview 1969' there was joint visiting and Roman Catholics have shared in inter-denominational services.

18. Scotland:

In 1969 the first official talks on doctrine between the Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church took place in Scotland. In December a joint Report on Baptism approved by both Churches was published. This stated that both Churches recognised the reality of each other's baptisms, and that a common text for a common rite of Baptism to be used separately in each Church was to be explored by their Liturgical Commissions. Approval was also given for a common Certificate of Baptism to be prepared, which could be used when either Church required the other to provide evidence of baptism.

19. South Africa:

All that is reported is that there is a Roman Catholic/Anglican commission in Cape Town and that Bishops have exchanged pulpits.

20. Uganda:

The great event was the visit of His Holiness the Pope, details of which will be familiar to everyone. The Anglican authorities in Uganda were grateful that His Holiness had included a special visit to the Anglican shrine of the Ugandan martyrs and that he had seen something of Anglican missionary work during his brief visit.

21. United States of America:

The Fifth Consultation of the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches in the U.S.A. took place in Jackson Mississippi in January 1968 to discuss what divided the two Churches. After studying official documentation and theological papers on the necessity and role of the ordained priesthood and the relationship of this ministry to the common priesthood and role of the laity in the Church, it was agreed that there was no basic difference of understanding on these topics and that whatever minor differences of understanding did exist they did not in themselves constitute the barrier to the two Churches celebrating and receiving Communion together. As at previous consultations, however, members attended one another's liturgies but did not receive Communion at each other's altars, since it was agreed that precipitate action by this group would not be to the advantage of the whole Church.

The Sixth Consultation took place in Liberty, Missouri, in December 1968 when the following subjects were discussed: the Essence of Episcopacy and Collegiality, and the Cultural and Sociological factors in inter-church relations.

22. Wales:

There has been a steady increase in friendliness. There have been several joint retreats and quiet days and occasional interchange of pulpits. There are Roman Catholic observers in most councils of churches and a number of conferences have been held. There has been co-operation over educational policy.

23. West Indies:

In Guyana there have been loans of churches and close, friendly co-operation.

J.R.S.

Supplementary notes on Anglican/Roman Catholic relations since
January 1968

(Numbers refer to paragraphs)

1. A reference might be made here to the enclosed analysis of the results of the Roman Catholic questionnaire to episcopal conferences concerning the Practical Proposals of Gazzada. (see also below, General Conclusions.)
2. Catholic opinion is divided on this subject; though a good many share Anglican concern about the slowness of progress towards a solution, there would not at all be agreement that the question of the "cautiones" is "concerned hardly at all with theology". (cf. Sub-Commission's report, section 1 "Obligations of the Parties", paragraphs 1 and 2.) Every effort was made, and the best advice taken, with a view to ensuring that the proposals of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Sub-Commission should be brought to the attention of those most closely concerned with new general legislation on mixed marriages.

Further, when the subject was again under study at a recent plenary meeting of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, the recommendations of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Sub-Commission were kept well before the minds of those preparing the report, and full account was taken of them.

It is generally regarded as certain that the new Instructio or other document from the Vatican will follow closely the recommendations of the Episcopal Synod of 1967 - which will mean at least that the Sub-Commission's recommendation under section 1 will be accepted.

3. Some proof might be called for that the level reached in Britain, Canada and Australia was notably high.
4. One presumes that the vexed problem of intercommunion and the weakening of discipline will come up for discussion at 3.0 p.m. on Sunday, January 11, and that those concerned will address themselves to the theological arguments whether for the existing discipline or for a change in it.

5. Archbishop Young of Hobart, recently in Rome, gave an account of a five-a-side meeting of bishops (without consultants) who had discussed baptism and were about to discuss Ministry. It would be interesting to have some account of this, perhaps from our Australian member.
6. This impression of greater serenity and progress in relations in Canada is echoed on the Roman Catholic side, though there are some questions surrounding wider ecumenical relations, particularly of course with the United Church of Canada.
9. One wonders whether enough is being done in England to give the example that the rest of the Roman Catholic/Anglican world expects. Perhaps it is paradoxical that there should be this expectation when we are in fact the chief bearers of the burden of history, and seem sometimes (on both sides) not to have outgrown the atmosphere which weighed on Malines. A meeting at Wood Hall of Anglican and Roman Catholic leaders last summer seemed to offer a promising new type of approach. Perhaps someone might be asked to comment on it.
13. I should like to add to this that on a visit to Dublin shortly after the trouble last August I spent a long time in valuable discussion with the Archbishop of Armagh and his host the Revd. L.A. Elliot. I left convinced of their real anxiety to find every way of working for better relations - something which they realise cannot be done easily or quickly, since there is no "religious" question which exists in isolation in Northern Ireland. Yet they would admit that on no side have the forces of moderation hitherto spoken strongly or resolutely enough.
19. Mgr. Butelezi sent us a report of the meeting, of which Bishop Knapp-Fisher and Fr. Hill will no doubt be able to give further impressions. I add the resolutions passed:
 1. That a group from each of our respective hierarchies should meet after the plenary session of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of Southern Africa to be held in January 1970, in order to discuss the question of regular joint meetings of our hierarchies for the purpose of pursuing matters of common interest and suggesting points for our Commission to investigate. (cf. Malta Report, 14).
 2. That contact should be fostered between our theological colleges, and in particular that an exchange of lecturers take place between them in order that students of both Churches become better informed of each other's point of view.
 3. That there should be reciprocal representation on all liturgical and translation committees; that future translations into South African languages be done in joint consultation.
 4. That there should be continued co-operation over the arranging of retreats as regards accommodation and retreat conductors.
 5. That our hierarchies be asked to consider the possibility of joint Lent Books.

21. The Seventh Consultation took place at Palm Beach, December 8th - 11th 1969 and Canon Purdy accepted an invitation to be present. The meeting concerned itself mainly with drafting a report of its activities to date and some suggestions about its future work, which it intends to present to the Windsor meeting. The meeting seemed to generate on the Anglican side an increased sense of the need to clarify the implications of Episcopal involvement in COCU.

General Conclusions: Such knowledge as we have suggests there is an urgent need for better flow and co-ordination of information from all parts where Anglicans and Roman Catholics live side by side: this to provide a better basis for planning practical ecumenism, and especially educating our people. The history of the Gazzada proposals (cf. accompanying analysis) suggests that we need to pay much more attention to promoting action in the Churches at large. This involves:

Clearer formulation of our conclusions at each step;
Fuller examination of the problems of communication raised in Dublin;
Promotion of work and enlistment of collaboration in wider fields than those so far explored.

W.A.P.

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31.12.69