

PRESS RELEASE

ARCIC-12/(b) (83)
FINAL VERSION

An encouraging start was made at the first meeting of the new Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC-II) established by Pope John Paul II and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Commission met in Venice from August 30 to September 6, 1983. Its membership is more wide-ranging than that of its predecessor (ARCIC-I), and includes representatives from five continents and twelve nationalities. This made possible a useful exchange of information on the actual state of Anglican/Roman Catholic pastoral relations in many parts of the world. Although there are places where little progress has yet been made, in the majority of cases regular co-operation is now taken for granted.

It was against this background that the Commission turned to its theological task of examining the remaining issues which have divided our two Communion. In doing this they took full account of wider ecumenical discussion.

Two papers from Australia treated justification by faith and the theology of the Church. Discussion of the Church, grace and salvation led the Commission to make these closely related issues its immediate priority.

Preparatory papers from England on the subject of the reconciliation of Churches and the recognition of ministries prompted the Commission to a wider discussion of how Anglicans and Roman Catholics can grow towards full communion. Essential to this process will be the response of both Churches to the Final Report of ARCIC-I which will show the extent of our

agreement in faith. In the meantime the Commission plans to ask the help of national Anglican/Roman Catholic commissions in a number of countries in the discussion of the theological implications of full communion and of the way towards it.

For its next meeting in twelve months' time ARCIC-II has commissioned further studies on the Church and salvation. A small group will work on this before the full Commission meets.

An important part of the Commission's life was its corporate prayer. On its first day the Commission was led in meditation by the two Co-Chairmen, Bishop Mark Santer of Kensington, England (Anglican), and Bishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor of Arundel and Brighton, England (Roman Catholic). On alternate days Roman Catholic and Anglican Eucharists were celebrated; at these the Commission was at one in prayer while respecting the sacramental discipline of each Church.

Cardinal Marco Ce, Patriarch of Venice, visited the Commission to express the warm welcome of the Church of Venice and to give an assurance of its prayers for the Commission and its work. This was reflected in the hospitality of the Sisters at the Casa Cardinal Piazza.

During the Commission's meeting, Pope John Paul II urged those present at his General Audience on August 31st, to earnest prayer at the beginning of this new stage in the dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church. A message of greeting was also received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who with the Pope in their Common Declaration in Canterbury last year gave the Commission its task "to continue the work already begun" by the previous Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission for the restoration of full communion on the basis of our unity in faith.

6th September 1983

Anglican Delegates

- The Rt. Revd. Mark Santer, Bishop of Kensington, England (Co-Chairman).
The Revd. Canon John Baycroft, Rector of St. Matthias Church, Ottawa.
The Rt. Revd. Ewen Donald Cameron, Assistant Bishop of Sydney, Australia.
The Revd. Professor Henry Chadwick, Emeritus Professor of Divinity,
University of Cambridge, England.
The Revd. Julian Charley, Rector of St. Peter's Everton and Warden of
Shrewsbury House, Liverpool, England.
The Revd. Dr. Kertright Davis, Associate Professor of Theology, Howard
University Divinity School; Washington, DC, USA.
The Rt. Revd. Dr. David M. Gitari, Bishop of Mount Kenya East, Kenya.
The Revd. Prof. Oliver O'Donovan, Regius Professor of Moral and
Pastoral Theology, University of Oxford, England. (1)
Prof. John Pobee, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Ghana.
Mrs. Mary Tanner, Study Secretary, Board for Mission and Unity of the
General Synod of the Church of England.
The Rt. Revd. Arthur A. Vogel, Bishop of West Missouri, USA.
The Revd. Professor Robert Wright, Professor of Church History, General
Theological Seminary, New York, USA.

Secretary

- The Revd. Canon Christopher Hill, Archbishop of Canterbury's Assistant
for Ecumenical Affairs.

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Roman Catholic Delegates

- The Rt. Revd. Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Bishop of Arundel and Brighton,
England. (Co-Chairman)
The Revd. Father Abraham Adappur, SJ, Lumen Institute, Cochin, India.
The Revd. Fr. Peter Damian Akpunonu, Rector of the Bigard Memorial
Seminary, Enugu, Nigeria.
The Most Revd. Brian Ashby, Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand (2).
Sister Mary Cecily Boulding, OP, Lecturer in Systematic Theology,
Ushaw College, Durham, England.
The Most Revd. Peter Butelezi, OMI, Archbishop of Bloemfontein, S. Africa.
The Revd. Fr. Pierre Duprey, Secretary, Secretariat for Promoting
Christian Unity, Vatican City.
The Rt. Revd. Raymond W. Lessard, Bishop of Savannah, Georgia, USA.
The Revd. Brendan Soane, Lecturer in Moral Theology, Allen Hall,
London, England.

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The Revd. Father John Thornhill, SM, Lecturer in Systematic Theology, Aquinas Academy and at Catholic Theological Union, Hunters Hill, Australia.

The Revd. Fr. Jean M.R. Tillard, OP, Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Dominican Faculty of Theology, Ottawa, Canada.

The Revd. Dr. Edward Yarnold, SJ, Tutor in Theology, Campion Hall, Oxford, England.

Secretary

The Very Revd. Mgr. Richard L. Stewart, Staff Member, Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican City.

World Council of Churches Observer

The Revd. Dr. Gunther Gassmann, Associate Director, Department of Studies, Lutheran World Federation, Geneva.

(1) unable to join the Commission until 1984.

(2) unable to attend through illness.