

Communique

ARCIC Plenary, 2022



The Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) met in Rome 7-14 May 2022 to continue working on the second part of its mandate to examine how the Church local, regional and universal discerns right ethical teaching. The Commission, whose membership had been renewed after the publication of *Walking Together on the Way: Learning to be the Church-Local, Regional and Universal* (2018), had met previously in Jerusalem May 2019. In this document the Commission examined how the *sensus fidei fidelium* (the faithful’s sense of the faith) comes to expression through decision-making processes in the Church local, trans-local and global. Employing the method of Receptive Ecumenism the document examined how the woundedness of each Communion could receive healing from what the Holy Spirit has given to its dialogue partner.

The COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible to meet in person in either 2020 or 2021. Despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic, the Commission had held two online plenaries and a series of webinars. The Commission produced drafts of three chapters and worked on two case studies. In this plenary the Commission worked carefully through these draft texts.

On Sunday the Commission was welcomed by the Caravita Community at the Oratorio of San Francesco Saverio, where Archbishop Bernard Longley presided at the Eucharist and Archbishop Linda Nicholls addressed the congregation. ARCIC members were then invited to a reception at the Anglican Centre in Rome and are grateful to its staff and director Archbishop Ian Ernest and Mrs Kamla Ernest for their welcome.

A number of Catholic members of and consultants to ARCIC also serve on the Theological Commission of the Synod (of Bishops) which oversees the current synodal process in the Catholic Church. Seeing significant intersections between its work and the current synodal process, the Commission invited Cardinal Mario Grech and Sr Nathalie Becquart XMCJ, General Secretary and Under-Secretary respectively of the Synod, to meet for dialogue and discussion.

On Friday 13 May the Commission was delighted to have the opportunity to share its work with Pope Francis. Archbishop Bernard Longley, the Catholic Co-Chair, and Archbishop Linda Nicholls, the Acting Anglican Co-Chair, addressed the Pope explaining the Commission’s work and how its method of Receptive Ecumenism drew inspiration from his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*. That text is of particular

relevance in the context of the current synodal process in illustrating how Catholics and Anglicans can walk together and learn from one another in order to address their own difficulties.

In light of the recent centenary of the beginning of the Malines Conversations and the publication of *Sorores in Spe*, a document of the unofficial dialogue, the Malines Conversations Group, Archbishop Nicholls raised the question of Anglican orders. She noted that the non-recognition of Anglican orders by the Catholic Church continued to be a wound for many Anglicans and concluded, “We have always considered that our liturgical and sacramental life and traditions demonstrate our place within the Church catholic, and it is our earnest hope that this would be recognised by you, our brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Responding to the joint address of the two co-chairs Pope Francis noted both the subject of ARCIC’s current work (ecclesiological and ethical questions) and its method. This, he said, “requires, as its basic conditions, humility and truth” and he continued, “We must begin, then, by admitting and sharing the struggles we experience. This is the first step: not to be concerned with appearing attractive and secure to our brothers and sisters, presenting ourselves the way we would like to be, but with showing them with an open heart how we are in reality, including our limitations.”

The Commission will next meet in May 2023.

MEMBERS OF ARCIC III

Co-Chairs

The Most Reverend Dr Philip Freier, Archbishop of Melbourne, Australia; *not present*

The Most Reverend Linda Nicholls, Primate, Anglican Church of Canada; *Acting Co-Chair*

The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, England.

Anglican Members

Dr Moeawa Callaghan (The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia); *participated online*

The Reverend Dr Isaias Ezequiel Chachine (The Anglican Church of Southern Africa); *participated online*

The Reverend Canon Garth Minott (The Church of the Province of the West Indies);

The Reverend Dr Alexander Ross (The Anglican Church of Australia); *not present*

The Reverend Canon Dr Peter Sedgwick (The Church in Wales).

Consultant

The Right Reverend Christopher Hill (The Church of England).

Catholic Members

The Reverend Albino Barrera OP (Providence College, RI, USA); *participated online*

The Reverend Paul Béré SJ (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome);

Dr Kristin Colberg (St John’s University, Collegeville, MN, USA);

Professor Sigrid Müller (University of Vienna, Austria);

Dr Emmanuel Nathan (Australian Catholic University);

The Reverend Vimal Tirimanna CSSR (Pontifical Academia Alfonsiana and Pontifical University Urbaniano, Rome).

Consultant

Professor Paul Murray (University of Durham, England).

WCC Consultant

Professor Dr Myriam Wijlens (University of Erfurt, Germany).

Staff

The work of the Commission was supported by the two Co-Secretaries:

The Reverend Anthony Curren (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity);

The Reverend Dr William Adam (Anglican Communion Office);

and

The Reverend Neil Vigers (Anglican Communion Office); The Venerable Jonathan Gough.