

25

Via del Plebiscito 107  
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23rd March 1978

Dear Christopher,

Thank you for your letter sent by David Painter, with whom I spent a pleasant hour, and managed I hope to fix him up with tickets for the Lateran on Maundy Thursday (today), though it looks as if the Pope will not be functioning at all except perhaps on Easter Sunday.

David has promised to pick this up at the Anglican Centre tomorrow, since I am going away for Easter. I'm afraid I can't put much of substance in it, since Torrella has been away since Sunday, but I ought mainly to warn you that Willebrands' reaction to our effort at Versailles was unfortunately rather negative. It will be embodied formally in a letter from Torrella as soon as he returns next week but in substance the trouble is mainly about the paragraph (6) which talks about the 'ground for hope'. Frankly he is a little inclined always to interpret things darkly at first reading. He saw it as suggesting that the CDF declaration was a sort of provisional document, and hence as making the succeeding paragraph ambiguous. I think he perhaps may have calmer later thoughts, but for the moment we had better hold everything close to our chests. I don't think there would be any prospect of the thing being passed for distribution on our side (let alone publication) without at least some kind of dissenting note about paragraph 6. The word 'statement' should be altered in the title: the cardinal seemed to think it implied something much more solemn and definite than it does. We could substitute 'Report' without any loss.

I will write again as soon as I get back. Has Michael sent the Lambeth Conference stuff to bishop Daly? ✓

Every good wish for Easter to you and Hilary.

Bill

W.A.Purdy.