

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC AGREED STATEMENT ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE
MINISTRY

Permission for the publication on December 13th of "Ministry and Ordination: A Statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry Agreed by the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission" has been given by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Michael Ramsey, and Pope Paul VI. The Statement was completed at the Commission's fifth full meeting held at St. Augustine's College Canterbury from August 28th to September 6th. It is published by S.P.C.K. (Holy Trinity Church, Marylebone Road, London, NW1 4DU) at 12p. per copy. .

Appointed by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Commission held its first full meeting in 1970 and in 1971 issued its "Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine" which has been widely studied and welcomed in the Churches.

The task of the Commission has been to see whether it is possible to "find a way of advancing together beyond the doctrinal disagreements of the past" towards "the unity we seek". It considers that its new Statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry "offers a positive contribution to the reconciliation of our churches and of their ministries."

The Commission's work has been carried out in the context of increasing Anglican/Roman Catholic co-operation in different parts of the world. There are now fourteen National Anglican/Roman Catholic Commissions, Working Groups, or Study Groups, in Australia, Belgium, Canada, East Africa, England, France, Japan, Papua New Guinea, Scotland, South Africa, South Pacific, U.S.A., Wales and Western Europe. Of particular note are the many 'twinned' Anglican and Roman Catholic parishes and dioceses in the United States which have covenanted to work together.

The Agreed Statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry was prepared for internationally by subcommissions in England, North America, and South Africa, as well as by full meetings of the Commission at Windsor and Venice (1970), Gazzada (1972) and Canterbury (1973). In this the Commission took particular note of studies of the subject made by individuals in several countries and by other dialogue groups such as the Anglican/Lutheran, Lutheran/Roman Catholic, and World Council of Churches/Roman Catholic Commissions.

The Statement contains an overall but not exhaustive picture of ministry in the Church and seeks to identify the specific role of the ordained ministry. Its three sections on 'Ministry in the Life of the Church', 'The Ordained Ministry', and 'Vocation and Ordination' give a biblically and historically grounded description of "our basic agreement in the doctrinal areas that have been the source of controversy between us, in the wider context of our common convictions about the ministry." The subjects covered include mission and ministry in the New Testament and the early Church, the ministry of oversight, the ministry of word and sacrament, the priesthood of Christ, of the faithful, and of the ministers, ordination as a sacramental act, and the apostolic succession of bishops and their churches. Its conclusion affirms that the "issues raised by the judgment of the Roman Catholic Church on Anglican Orders" have been "put in a new context." It adds that "agreement on the nature of Ministry is prior to the consideration of the mutual recognition of ministries." It points out that the Commission is now turning its attention to "problems of authority" and "the question of primacy."

The Statement is introduced by a Preface by the Co-Chairmen, and followed by an Appendix (written at the request of the Commission but issued only with the authority of the Co-Chairmen and the writer) which gives a factual account of the Commission's

discussion of the Doctrine of the Ministry. A note follows on the Status of the Document. This emphasises that "it is at present no more than a joint statement of the Commission...it is not a declaration by the Roman Catholic Church or by the Anglican Communion. It does not authorise any change in existing ecclesiastical discipline." It stresses, however, that the document is being published in order that it may be studied and discussed widely, and it invites observations and criticisms to be sent to its Secretaries.

The Statement alone has the authority of the whole Commission, but commentaries on it are being issued on their own authority by three individual members of it: Bishop Alan C. Clark (published by the Catholic Information Office, (Infoform), Avante House, 9, Bridge Street, Pinner, Middlesex, UA5 3HR at 25p.), the Revd Julian Charley (published by Grove Books, Bramcote, Nottingham at 20p.) and Fr. Herbert Ryan, S.J., in the January issue of Worship, published in the U.S.A.

Attached herewith is a joint statement on the significance of the Commission's Agreed Statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry by its Co-Chairmen, Bishop H.R. McAdoo and Bishop Alan C. Clark.

Enclosed also is a list of the names, appointments, addresses and telephone numbers of the members of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, who may be approached for individual comments on the Statement.

PRESENTATION OF "MINISTRY AND ORDINATION: A STATEMENT ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE MINISTRY" BY THE CO-CHAIRMEN

The Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, established in 1970, issued its first Agreed Statement (on the Doctrine of the Eucharist) in 1971. Though the existence of the Commission and the nature of its work had been known to specialists in the ecumenical field, very few people, even among those most interested in the cause of Christian Unity, were prepared for the assertion that the members of the Commission had reached a substantial agreement on a doctrine which was felt to divide rather than unite the Churches. In the light of the debate of the last two years, the public are better prepared for this second official document of the Commission concerning the doctrine of Ministry and Ordination as it is preserved and maintained in our respective traditions.

However, rather than risk misunderstanding and even at the cost of some repetition, the Co-Chairmen feel it is important to introduce this new document and thereby help the general reader grasp the kind of document it is and the method that lies behind its composition.

In the first place, it is worthwhile remembering what ARCIC is because one frequently encounters a feeling of disappointment that intercommunion does not follow agreed statements on eucharist and ministry. This is understandable, so we have to point out that such decisions are for the two Churches to make. ARCIC is an officially-appointed body, a servant of the Church, with a brief to seek for reconciliation and doctrinal consensus, and to present its findings to its authorities. Permission has been given to make these findings public, and one may fairly deduce from this a measure of our authorities' overall approval of the Commission's work.

Nevertheless, the document remains at this stage a consensus of the Commission.

It is relevant to recall that the Malta Report of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission saw this process of inter-Church reconciliation in terms of stages. It is a step-by-step process in which the achievement of this kind of consensus is an essential element.

As the Commission produces its agreed statements on eucharist and on ministry it is then for both Communion to decide if a situation is being created which fosters and promotes the reconciliation of our Churches and demands from them appropriate action.

Clearly, in the present instance, agreement on Ministry is an essential pre-requisite and preliminary to mutual recognition of our Churches and their ministries.

From this it should be clear in outline What the Statement is and also What the Statement is not.

To these three clarifying statements, one may add a couple of questions: What significance has the Statement? and What result does it have? The answers to both questions are at some points interlocking and the first thing to be said, and it is very important, is that the Commission asserts that in its consensus the members of both traditions will recognise their own faith. This is the basic significance of the statement. As such, it is offered to the members of the Churches as a point de départ for reconciliation. More than that, it invites them to examine and approve the way in which that consensus was reached in the document.

As with the Windsor Agreement, the method has been to achieve 'a deeper understanding of Ministry which is consonant with biblical teaching and with the traditions of our common inheritance' (para. 1.)

The method therefore is part of the significance, the

ecumenical and practical as well as the theological significance, of the statement. The methodology as well as the content of the agreed statement have therefore a direct bearing on the question as to what the Statement achieves or what result does it produce?

A reading of the document shows that the answer must be two-fold in that the statement

(1) has firmly placed the ordained ministry in the context of its origins within the ministry and apostolicity of the whole Church, the community of reconciliation

and

(2) by the very fact of its consensus it has helped to create a new situation in which to assess the position resulting, on the one hand, from the Roman Catholic Church's judgment on Anglican Orders and, on the other, from the complete absence of doubt about their Orders on the part of Anglicans. ARCIC's consensus is, as the statement points out (para. 17.) part of a general development of thinking in both Churches with regard to Church and Ministry.

The Theological and practical implications of the first point need no stressing. Indeed they are apparent throughout the statement as much in its structure and content as in its method.

As to the second point, para. 17 of the Statement reads, 'The development of the thinking in our two Communion regarding the nature of the Church and of the Ordained ministry, as represented in our Statement, has, we consider, put these issues in a new context. Agreement on the nature of ministry is prior to the consideration of the mutual recognition of ministries.'

What the Commission is saying is that this development has produced a different situation from that of 1896. Not only

have the ecumenical movement and the second Vatican Council intervened; not only have the pastoral and inter-church situations changed, but the understanding of ministry and of priesthood has greatly developed so that a convergence is emerging, consonant with the biblical evidence and teaching and with the common traditions.

This consensus of the Commission, this agreement in faith and understanding, creates a new situation and presses urgently for reconciliation. So the Commission felt enabled to conclude its statement by claiming that 'our consensus, on questions where agreement is indispensable for unity, offers a positive contribution to the reconciliation of our Churches and of their ministries.'

That this may be a well-founded hope is the prayer of the members as they present their work to the public.

H.R. McAdoo

Alan C. Clark

CO-CHAIRMEN

ADDRESS LIST

Anglican Delegates

The Rt. Revd. H.R. McAdoe,
Bishop of Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin.
The Palace, Kilkenny, Ireland. (Co-Chairman)
Telephone: Kilkenny 21560

The Most Revd. F.R. Arnott,
Archbishop of Brisbane.
Bishopsbourne, 39, Eldernell Avenue, Hamilton, Brisbane, 4007,
Australia.
Telephone: (Office) Brisbane: 294766

The Rt. Revd. J.R.H. Moorman,
Bishop of Ripon.
Bishop Mount, Ripon, Yorkshire, HG4 5DP.
Telephone: 0765-2045

The Rt. Revd. E.G. Knapp-Fisher,
Bishop of Pretoria.
P.O. Box 1032, Pretoria, Transvaal, South Africa.
Telephone: 2-6956

The Rt. Revd. A.A. Vogel,
Bishop of West Missouri.
415, W. 13th Street, Kansas City, Missouri, 64105, U.S.A.
Telephone: 0101-816-471-6161

The Very Revd. H. Chadwick,
Dean of Christ Church, Oxford.
The Deanery, Christ Church, Oxford, OX1 1DP.
Telephone: 0865-47122

The Revd. J.W. Charley,
Vice-Principal, St. John's College, Nottingham.
St. John's College, Chilwell Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham, NG9 3DS.
Telephone: 0602-251114

The Revd. Professor Eugene Fairweather,
Keble Professor of Divinity, Trinity College, Univ. of Toronto.
Trinity College, Toronto, 181, Ontario, Canada, M5S 1H8.
Telephone: 0101-416-928-2522

The Revd. Professor H.E. Root,
Professor of Theology, University of Southampton.
Department of Theology and the Study of Religion,
The University, Southampton, SO9 5NH.
Telephone: 0703-59122

Consultant

The Revd. Dr. R.J. Halliburton,
Vice-Principal, St. Stephen's House, Oxford.
St. Stephen's House, Oxford, OX2 6PZ.
Telephone: 0865-55093

Secretary

The Revd. Colin Davey,
Assistant Chaplain, The Archbishop of Canterbury's
Counsellors on Foreign Relations.
222, Lambeth Road, London, SE1 7LB.
Telephone: 01-928 4880

Roman Catholic Delegates

The Rt. Revd. Alan C. Clark,
Auxiliary Bishop of Northampton.
The White House, Poringland, Norwich, NOR 42W.

(Co-Chairman)

Telephone: 050-86-2202

The Rt. Revd. B.C. Butler, O.S.B.,
Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster.
St. Edmund's College, Ware, Herts.

Telephone: 0920-821723

The Revd. Fr. Barnabas Ahern, C.P.,
Professor of Sacred Scripture, Rome.
Curia Generale Passionisti,
Piazza SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Rome, Italy, 00184.

Telephone: 010-39-6-731 0351

The Revd. Fr. P. Duprey, W.F.,
Under Secretary, Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian
Unity.
Vatican City, 00193, Rome, Italy.

Telephone: 010-39-6-698 4384

The Revd. Fr. Herbert Ryan, S.J.,
Professor of Historical Theology, Pontifical Faculty of
Theology, Woodstock College, New York.
475, Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027, U.S.A.

Telephone: 0101-212-866 8500

Professor J.J. Scarisbrick,
Professor of History, University of Warwick.
School of History, University of Warwick, Coventry, Warwicks.

Telephone: 0203-24011

The Revd. Fr. George Tavard, A.A.,
Professor of Theology, Methodist Theological School, Delaware.
Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio, 43015, U.S.A.

The Revd. Fr. Jean M.R. Tillard, O.P.,
Professor of Dogmatic Theology in Dominican Faculty of
Theology (Ottawa) and in Brussels.
Couvent des Dominicains, 96, avenue Empress, Ottawa, 4,
Canada, K1R 762.

Telephone: 0101-613-233-5721

The Revd. Fr. E.J. Yarnold, S.J.,
Senior Tutor, Campion Hall, Oxford.
Campion Hall, Oxford.

Telephone: 0865-40861

Secretary

The Rt. Revd. Mgr. W.A. Purdy,
Staff Member, Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian
Unity.
Vatican City, 00193, Rome, Italy.

Telephone: 010-39-6-698 4533

World Council of Churches Observer

The Revd. Dr. Günther Gassmann,
Research Professor, Centre d'Etudes Oecuméniques, Strasbourg.
8, rue Gustave Klotz, F-67, Strasbourg, France.

Telephone: 010-33-88-36 29 26