

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC MEETING

MALTA

Mount St. Joseph - Mosta - Malta - December 31, 1967 - January 4, 1968

PRESS RELEASE

2nd January 1968

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC JOINT PREPARATORY COMMISSION

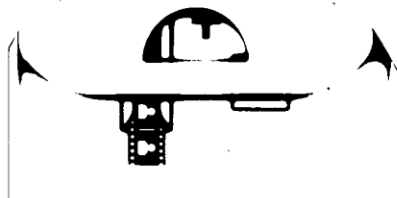
THIRD MEETING

The Commission came into being in fulfilment of the Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and the Archbishop of Canterbury in March 1966. In a new spirit of penance and hopefulness it called for serious dialogue founded on the Gospels and the ancient traditions (which) may lead to the unity for which Christ prayed."

The task at Gazzada was to survey the field and identify the themes on which dialogue might best centre. As a result, at Huntercombe we concentrated our attention on the theme of revelation and its embodiment in the life of the Church. Concurrently at both meetings a sense of the pressure of the time forced us to attend to practical matters and make certain recommendations.

It was exciting to find at the end of this that we felt the need and saw the possibility of plotting some course towards unity. The scheme adopted for our third meeting was an attempt to respond to this vision. Bishops McAadoo and Butler were asked to furnish papers with such a course in mind, and their common summary was made the basis of our discussion and recommendations.

These are set out in a report to be submitted immediately to Pope Paul VI and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Obviously before they have seen it we cannot give details of it, but we believe that in the perspective of post-Reformation history this report stands out, as containing the first formal joint statement ever made of the faith we rejoice to share. A just estimate of



the value and extent of this gives us confidence in moving forward on to more difficult ground, that of confronting seriously the differences that keep us apart.

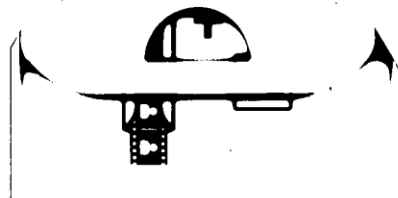
We have made recommendations in this regard both for dialogue and for practical measures for growing together, but we feel that this moving forward by tackling difficulties will not prosper unless we widely share our experience and learn from each other at every level of life in our Communion.

We make these recommendations, aimed at deepening and enriching our common life in Christ, because we know that only the shared experience of renewal can show what further steps we must take. But it is clear now that, whatever these further steps may turn out to be, scholars on both sides should already be engaged in serious joint study of such difficulties as those arising out of the constitution and teaching office of the Church, the place of Mary in the faith and devotion of the Church, and ministry.

To meet in the island of Malta, overlooking on one side the traditional place of St. Paul's shipwreck and on the other the beautiful walled town of Mdina, was a memorable experience. It was heightened by the warm welcome of the Maltese people in general, and especially of His Grace, the Archbishop, Sir Michael Gonzi, the other bishops and clergy and the Jesuits at the retreat house of Mount St. Joseph.

We were greatly moved to know that on New Year's Eve the community of St. Paul's Collegiate Church, Rabat, undertook an all-night vigil of prayer and penance offered on behalf of our work, and most of our members joined in for a part of it.

As the preparatory task assigned to us is completed, we thank God for having guided and strengthened our efforts and blessed us with many personal insights, the fruit of much warm, human sympathy and friendship. In three meetings we have had only a single absentee, and that unavoidable. Nothing could have



been stronger than our own experience in the discussions to convince us of the value of dialogue and of growing together and of the vital need to extend these to every place where our Communions are in contact.

LIST OF MEMBERS

Roman Catholic Church

The Most Revd. Charles Helmsing, Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph (Joint Chm.)
The Most Revd. J. G. M. Willebrands, titular Bishop of Mauriana
The Most Revd. William Z. Gomes, Bishop of Poona
The Right Revd. Langton D. Fox, titular Bishop of Maura
The Right Revd. Christopher Butler, O.S.B., titular Bishop of Nova Barbara
The Revd. Louis Bouyer of the Oratory
The Revd. Father George Tavard, A. A.
The Rev. Michael Richards
The Revd. Father John Keating, C. S. P.
The Revd. Adrian Hastings
The Revd. Camillus Hay, O. F. M.
The Very Revd. Canon W. A. Purdy

Anglican Communion

The Right Revd. J. R. H. Moorman, Bishop of Ripon (Joint Chm.)
*The Right Revd. W. G. H. Simon, Bishop of Llandaff
The Right Revd. C. H. W. de Soyza, Bishop of Colombo
The Right Revd. E. G. Knapp-Fisher, Bishop of Pretoria
The Right Revd. H. R. McAdoo, Bishop of Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin
The Revd. Canon James Atkinson
The Revd. Canon Eric Kemp
The Revd. Professor Howard E. Root
The Revd. Dr. Massey H. Shepherd, Jnr.
The Revd. Professor Eugene R. Fairweather
The Revd. Professor Albert T. Mollegen
The Revd. Canon John Findlow
The Revd. Canon John R. Satterthwaite

* Unfortunately unable to attend this meeting

