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ARCIC 245

INTRODUCTION

1. [Christ's will and prayer are that his followers should be one. Christians who have received in Christ the same truth, cannot without disobedience to him acquiesce in a state of separation. Unity is therefore of the essence of the Church, and that unity should be visible.] Our two communions, ~~however,~~ have been separated for 400 years, and our separation has been aggravated by mutual intolerance and theological polemics. Nevertheless, although our unity has been impaired through separation, it has not been destroyed. Many bonds still unite us: in particular<sup>2</sup> we have received the same Spirit, <sup>1</sup>shared the same faith in the same Lord, and <sup>3</sup>undergone the same baptism. *of the same Christ.*
2. Controversy between our two communions has centred on doctrine relating to the Eucharist, <sup>the nature & essence of</sup> ~~the ordained ministry~~ and ~~the nature~~ of authority in the Church. <sup>What the Communion has done has convinced us</sup> ~~The Agreed Statements represent our conviction~~ that substantial agreement in these <sup>diverse issues</sup> ~~three matters~~ is now possible. Nevertheless For various reasons we remain unable as yet to receive Holy Communion together. Since the Reformation Rome has not recognised the validity of Anglican ordinations and celebrations of the Eucharist and has denied full ecclesial status to the Anglican Communion; Anglicans for their part have not acknowledged the universal primacy, authority and jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, nor any obligation to be in communion with him. [Full organic unity] which is our goal cannot be restored without mutual acceptance of ordained ministers and sacraments, together with the common recognition of a universal primacy within a complementary pattern of conciliarity. (Authority Statement para.23).
3. In producing the three Statements we have ~~tried first to take~~ <sup>re-examine</sup> serious account of the issues that have divided us and then to seek a solution by re-examining our common inheritance, <sup>particularly</sup> ~~above all~~ the Scriptures. We have been concerned not to evade the difficulties but rather to avoid the controversial language in which they have sometimes been expressed. We have sought to uncover the basic themes which hold together apparently contradictory doctrines. The subjects which we were charged to consider all relate to the true nature of the Church.
4. The basis of our three Agreed Statements is the concept of Koinonia (communion). In the early Christian tradition, <sup>the comprehension & acceptance of</sup> Koinonia <sup>opened the way</sup> ~~provided the~~ ~~key~~ to the understanding of the mystery of the Church. Although Koinonia is never equated with "Church" in the New Testament, nor do we ever find the two words directly related to each other, it is the concept that most aptly expresses

the mystery underlying the various New Testament images of the Church. When, for example, the Church is called the people of the New Covenant or the Bride of Christ, the context <sup>is primarily</sup> remains one of communion. Although such images as the Temple, the New Jerusalem, or the holy priesthood may contain institutional overtones, their primary purpose is to depict the Church's experience as a partaking in the salvation of Christ. When the Church is described as the Body of Christ, the household of God or the holy nation, emphasis is placed upon the mutual relationships between its members as well as with Christ, its head.

5. Union with God in Christ Jesus is the heart of Christian Koinonia. Because God in Christ shared our human nature, we are able to receive the Spirit of God's Son, who makes us so truly members of the Body of Christ that we too are able to call God "Abba, Father" (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). Moreover, sharing in the same Holy Spirit whereby we are members of the same Body of Christ and sons of the same Father, we are also bound to one another in a completely new relationship. Koinonia with each other necessarily follows from our Koinonia with God in Christ. This is the mystery of the Church.

6. This theme of Koinonia runs through our three Statements.

In the Windsor Statement the Eucharist was seen as the sacrament of Christ by which he <sup>builds up and nurtures</sup> brings his people into <sup>Koinonia</sup> the <sup>this body</sup> communion of his Body. In ~~it~~, through ~~the~~ Eucharist all the baptized are in communion with the source of communion. For he is the one who destroyed the walls dividing humanity (Eph 2:14); he is the one who died to gather in unity all the children of God his Father (cf. Jn <sup>K1 52</sup> 17: 20ff). <sup>As the reconciled community</sup> Being reconciled with God, the Church <sup>has been given the ministry</sup> receives the mission to be the <sup>of reconciliation</sup> community which reconciles all mankind with God and with one another.

In the <sup>Constitution</sup> ~~Agreed~~ Statement (on ~~Ministry~~) it was made clear that episcopate exists only to serve Koinonia. The ordained minister to ~~whom~~ episcopate is entrusted, ~~when he presiding~~ at the Eucharist is the sign of Christ gathering his people and giving them his body and blood. The Gospel he preaches is the Gospel of unity. It is ~~his~~ responsibility to ~~lead~~ <sup>through the sacraments the Holy Spirit is given</sup> all the people to direct the ~~charisms~~ <sup>enable all the people to use the gifts of the Spirit which they have</sup> they have received to the building up <sup>of the community</sup> together of the Christian community. <sup>It is his responsibility</sup> Finally he must <sup>keep</sup> preserve the community under the ~~one~~ law of Christ in ~~charity and mutual love~~ <sup>and no concern for others</sup>.

When in the Venice Statement the Commission discussed primacy, it saw primacy as the necessary link within the Koinonia of all those exercising episcopate. All ministers of the Gospel need to be in communion with one another, for the One Church is built up out of ~~the~~ local communities. They also need to be in <sup>as the focus of unity koinonia</sup> communion with the apostolic faith; primacy <sup>is</sup> helps to provide the assurance that what they teach and do is in <sup>accord</sup> communion with the faith of the apostles.

7. (If) <sup>as</sup> the Church is to be a Koinonia, <sup>requires</sup> this has to be visible. <sup>expression</sup> The Church is the sign that God's <sup>purpose in Christ</sup> design is being realised in the world (cf. Jn. 17:21) and that grace is already at work. <sup>also</sup> Further, it is the instrument <sup>of accomplishment</sup> for the realisation <sup>of this design</sup>. The preaching of the Good News to all men cannot be separated from the life of the community. The community preaches something that it already is. Koinonia, local and universal, is thus a fundamental part of the preaching of the word of God. Accordingly, as sign and instrument the Church in its Koinonia is the 'sacrament' of God's saving work.

8. There is a clear link between the faith that is preached and the life lived in Koinonia. This common life of the Church is the sign of the truth of the faith that is preached. But at the same time Koinonia is the fruit of faith. It comes from the word of faith and is to serve the word of faith.

9. Concluding remarks?