

CONCLUSION

This Final Report of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) represents a significant stage in relations between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church. The decision by our respective authorities, made as long ago as 1966, to enter into serious dialogue in order to resolve long standing issues which have been at the origin of our separation, resulted in our concentration on three main areas of controversy: the doctrine of the Eucharist, Ministry and Ordination, and the nature and exercise of Authority in the Church.

This dialogue, however, has been directed not merely to the achievement of doctrinal agreement, which is central to our reconciliation, but to the far greater goal of organic unity. The convergence reflected in our Statements would appear to call for the establishing of a new relationship between our churches as a next stage in the journey towards Christian unity.

We understand but do not share the fears of those who think that such Statements constitute a threat to all that is distinctive and true in their own traditions. It is our hope to carry with us in the substance of our agreements not only Roman Catholics and Anglicans but all Christians, and that what we have done may contribute to the visible unity of all the people of God as well as to the reconciliation of our two communions.

We are well aware of how much we owe to others and of how much we have left others still to do. Our agreement still

needs to be tested, but in 1981 it has become abundantly clear that, under the Holy Spirit, our churches have grown closer together in faith and charity. There are high expectations that significant initiatives will be boldly undertaken to deepen our reconciliation and lead us forward in the quest for the full communion to which we have been committed, in obedience to God, from the beginning of our dialogue.