

Reconciliation of Ministries

1.A           ARCIC I registered substantial agreement concerning the doctrine of ordained ministry. Moreover, each Church recognises the authenticity (i.e. fruitfulness) of one another's ministry. The Agreed Statement lists the elements of ordination which the two Churches in common regard as necessary. Ordination must be conferred by a bishop within the apostolic succession by the laying on of hands with prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit within the context of the Eucharist; by an unrepeatable act it confers a ministry of service and oversight within the local community (ARCIC I, Min. esp. 14-16). In addition, the Final Report notes agreement on the essential elements of eucharistic faith with regard to the sacramental presence of Christ and the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist (Min., El.6).

1.B           The Anglican Communion has never doubted that the ordinations of the Roman Catholic Church satisfy the criteria listed above. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church, for somewhat different reasons, in 1896, judged Anglican Orders to be absolutely null and utterly void, without casting doubt on the fruitfulness of Anglican ministry.

1.C           Consequently for the restoration of full communion between our two Churches the problem is this: if a fruitful, authentic ministry is exercised by ministers

who are not validly ordained in the apostolic succession according to the criteria of another church, how can this ministry be reintegrated in the apostolic succession?

This act of reintegration is not to be seen as an end in itself, but is necessary for the credibility and fruitfulness of the Church's mission.

[Reconciliating Ministries (78 (88) paras 2ff. continues from this point.

In para. 3, L.2, for "authentic" read "validly"]