

COMMUNIQUÉ

ANGLICAN–ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

Plenary Meeting in Larnaca, 8–15 May 2023

The Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC III) met in Larnaca, Cyprus from 8 to 15 May 2023. The Commission is grateful to the Most Revd Michael Lewis, outgoing Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf and Primate of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, for the many ways in which he and his colleagues assisted with the arrangements for the meeting.

Following several years of postponed, virtual or partially attended meetings, all the members of the Commission were able to be present in person in Larnaca. Members welcomed two new Co-Secretaries, Dr Christopher Wells (Anglican) and the Revd Martin Browne OSB (Catholic), and two new Consultants, the Revd Anthony Currer and the Revd Dr Stewart Clem.



The Commission is currently working on the second part of the mandate entrusted to ARCIC III by the late Pope Benedict XVI and Archbishop Rowan Williams, examining how the Church local, regional and global discerns right ethical teaching. It is envisaged that this work will result in the publication of an Agreed Statement, to complement the document published by the Commission in 2017, *Walking Together on the Way: Learning to be the Church. Local, Regional and Universal*. A major part of the Commission’s work during its meeting in Larnaca was devoted to work on two case studies, one where Catholics and Anglicans reached broadly the same teaching, and one where they did not. Reflecting more on the respective discernment processes than on the moral issues themselves, and adopting a Receptive Ecumenism approach, the Commission worked on identifying how each communion can learn from the experience of the other.

On Thursday 11 May, the Commission had the opportunity to learn about the history and religious heritage of Larnaca, guided by Archdeacon John Holdsworth. Members visited the *Angeloktitisti* (‘built by angels’) church in Kiti and the church of *Agios Lazaros* in Larnaca. According to tradition, this church is the site of the second tomb of St Lazarus of Bethany, who is believed to have been the first Bishop of Larnaca. The Commission also had the opportunity to visit the *Hala Sultan Tekke* mosque, the fourth holiest site in the world for Muslims, where members were graciously received by Imam Shakir Alemdar.

Throughout the current phase of its work, ARCIC III has been enriched by the multilateral study process on moral discernment undertaken by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches between 2015 and 2022. For this reason, the Commission was very pleased to have an opportunity, on Friday 11 May, to welcome His Eminence Metropolitan Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos, Co-President of the World Council of Churches, and to learn about Orthodox approaches to moral discernment, with their focus on the reign of God and the transformation of the world.

On Sunday 14 May, the Commission was welcomed by Dean Jeremy Crocker and the community of St Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Nicosia. The Commission's Anglican Co-Chair, Archbishop Philip Freier, presided at the Sung Eucharist, after which members had the chance to meet some members of the Cathedral congregation. Later the same morning, the Commission was received in audience at the archbishopric palace by His Beatitude George III, Archbishop of Nova Justiniana and All Cyprus. The Archbishop spoke to the Commission about the continuing partition of Cyprus and the consequences of this for the Christian population in the northern part of the island over the past fifty years. In presenting each Commission member with a book about the ruined churches of northern Cyprus, the Archbishop appealed to them to help make this painful situation more widely known in their respective home countries. Before returning to Larnaca from Nicosia, the Commission was greeted by the Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Cyprus, Father Bruno Varriano OFM.

With gratitude to God for their time together and for the progress made towards an Agreed Statement for this phase of its work, the Commission members concluded their deliberations by deciding on the programme of work to be carried out over the coming year. The Commission will meet in person again in May 2024.

MEMBERS OF ARCIC III

Co-Chairs

The Most Reverend Dr Philip Freier, Archbishop of Melbourne, Australia
The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, England

Anglican Members

Dr Moeawa Callaghan (The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia)
The Reverend Dr Isaias Ezequiel Chachine (The Anglican Church of Southern Africa)
The Right Reverend Garth Minott (The Church of the Province of the West Indies)
The Most Reverend Linda Nicholls (Primate, The Anglican Church of Canada)
The Reverend Dr Alexander Ross (The Anglican Church of Australia)
The Reverend Canon Dr Peter Sedgwick (The Church in Wales)

Consultants

The Reverend Dr Stewart Clem (The Episcopal Church)
The Right Reverend Christopher Hill (The Church of England)

Catholic Members

The Reverend Dr Albino Barrera OP (Providence College, Providence RI, USA)
The Reverend Dr Paul Béré SJ (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome)
Dr Kristin Colberg (St John's University, Collegeville MN, USA)
Professor Sigrid Müller (University of Vienna, Austria)
Dr Emmanuel Nathan (Australian Catholic University)
The Reverend Dr Vimal Tirimanna CSsR (Accademia Alfonsiana, Rome & National Seminary, Kandy, Sri Lanka)

Consultants

The Reverend Anthony Curren (Darlington, England)
Professor Paul Murray (University of Durham, England)

WCC Consultant

Professor Dr Myriam Wijlens (University of Erfurt, Germany)

Staff

The work of the Commission was supported by the two Co-Secretaries:

The Reverend Martin Browne OSB (Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity)

Dr Christopher Wells (Anglican Communion Office);

and

The Reverend Neil Vigers (Anglican Communion Office)

The Venerable Jonathan Gough