



Bose, Italy
Sunday, May 22, 2011

The Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCICIII) has completed the introductory part of the agenda for its first meeting. On Friday and Saturday it discussed background papers on the history of ARCIC I and II (Bishop Christopher Hill, Anglican Diocese of Guildford in England); how ARCIC I and II addressed matters of ecclesiology (Bishop Arthur Kennedy, Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Boston in the USA; Canon Dr Nicholas Sagovsky, England) and ethics (Fr Adelbert Denaux, Dean of Tilburg School of Theology, Utrecht; Dr Charles Sherlock, retired professor from Melbourne, Australia). Sadly, Dr Sherlock's paper was read by another member of the Commission as he had returned home for the funeral of his mother.

Part of the mandate of ARCIC III is to promote the reception of the work of its predecessor body, ARCIC II. To this end it heard from Sr Teresa Okure from Nigeria and Bishop Nkosinathi Ndwandwe on the reception of ARCIC in Africa; from Bishop Linda Nicholls, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Toronto, Canada, on reception in North America; and Dr Paul Murray from Durham University in England on reception in Europe. These snapshots of Anglican-Roman Catholic relationships encouraged the Commission to think about how its work can be done so as to promote relationships on the ground and to bring its insights into the lived experience of our two Communion.

Dr Murray stimulated discussion about *receptive ecumenism*: a way of being with each other that is open and vulnerable. 'This is ecumenism not primarily as a task of convincing the other, but as a task of conversion; a task of asking how in the face of the other we are being called to conversion out of ways that are frustrating our flourishing, and into a greater abundance of life, a deeper quality of catholicity', Dr Murray said. In other words, our two Communion might be able to help each other grow in faith, life and witness if they are open to being transformed by God's grace mediated through each other.

This morning ARCIC members participated in the Sunday Eucharist with the sisters and brothers of the Monastery of Bose, and with pilgrims who have come to this place for refreshment and renewal. The Co-Chairs, Archbishop Bernard Longley (Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham) and Archbishop David Moxon (Anglican Primate of Aotearoa, New Zealand, Polynesia) reflected on the readings. Each chose the text of I Peter, which calls Christians 'living stones', speaking of how, standing on the foundation who is Christ, we can build each other up in his grace. Archbishop Longley presided at the Eucharist in Italian, and at the conclusion Archbishop Moxon sang a blessing in Maori.

Members of the Commission will spend the next two days in smaller groups, developing work plans for the various tasks given to it in its mandate.