

4th September, 1967

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC JOINT PREPARATORY COMMISSIONSecond Meeting - Huntercombe Manor - 30th August to 4th September, 1967.

At Gazzada in January 1967, we took the first steps towards restoring full unity between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. At Huntercombe Manor, though we have seen the difficulties facing us in clearer light, we have made progress in understanding one another and our work.

The subject for discussion was the authority of the Word of God and its relation to the Church, and the following papers were presented:-

What is the Word? (by the Revd. Father G. Tavad)

How is the Word received by man? (by Revd. Canon James Atkinson)

How the Word of God creates and sustains the Church. (by Revd. Professor Eugene Fairweather)

How does the Church proclaim the Word? (by Revd. Father Michael Richards)

What should be the minimum structure and essential life of the local church? (by Revd. Canon Eric Kemp)

How do local Churches form the unity of the Universal Church? (by Revd. Father Louis Bouyer)

To what extent can or should there be diversity in a United Church - Freedom and Authority. (Two papers by - Most Revd. J. G. M. Willebrands, and by Bishop of Ripon/Revd. Professor H.E. Root)

Discussion on these themes threw into relief certain points of crucial importance, e.g. the authority to interpret Holy Scripture, Episcopacy, Papal primacy and Infallibility, dogmatic definitions about the Blessed Virgin Mary, Anglican Orders, and the problems connected with inter-communion.

On the subject of diversity in unity, questions were also raised about Anglican comprehensiveness and the problems it creates for unity in faith.

In our discussions, we found that theological and practical problems are often approached by us both in the same way; because of this, agreement and divergence often cut across the line of division between the two Churches.

We welcomed the appointment of a Joint Commission on the theology of marriage and its application to mixed marriages which was urgently recommended at Gazzada.

Since the Gazzada meeting, the first part of the Directory on Oecumenism has been issued in Rome by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. This has given great encouragement to us.

The recommendations we now make are concerned particularly with the Anglican-Roman Catholic situation but are made without prejudice to wider oecumenical relations.

A principal concern was the possible common use of churches and other buildings. We believe that the witness and mission of the Church, the responsible use of our resources, and conditions in many urban and rural areas, make such action imperative.

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In keeping with the Directory on Oecumenism which recommends a greater sharing in worship, we stress the urgent need to work for common texts in those prayers and formulae which are in use in both Churches. We also welcome the increasing co-operation in liturgical revision.

We urge a greater measure of collaboration in education for the Sacred Ministry and in faculties and departments of theology in universities.

A further meeting is being planned for the end of this year.
