

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC JOINT PREPARATORY COMMISSION

First Meeting - Gazzada - 9th to 13th January 1967

OUTLINE OF DISCUSSIONS

The members of the Joint Preparatory Commission [see Appendix I] assembled at the Conference Centre at the Villa Cagnola, Gazzada, near Milan, on Monday, 9th January 1967.

After arrangements had been made for the time-table of the Conference, relations with the Press were discussed and it was decided to issue a joint communiqué to the Press on the evening of Thursday, 12th January.

Papers were read on "Why is Anglican/Roman Catholic Dialogue possible today?" by the Bishop of Ripon and Bishop Willebrands. Discussion followed on whether the various Union Schemes in which Anglican Provinces were involved would make eventual reunion with the Roman Catholic Church any more difficult. The point was raised that moral questions should also be considered by the Commission as decisions on morals might prove to be even greater obstacles to unity than dogmatic issues. It was agreed too that place must be given to important practical issues, and that sociological issues should be considered.

"Comprehensiveness" was also noted for special study in later discussions.

After papers had been read by the Revd. Professor E.R. Fairweather and the Revd. Michael Richards on "Where should Dialogue begin?", discussion followed on The Church and The Gospel (as to whether the Church was under the Gospel or part of it) and it was agreed that this whole subject should receive full consideration. The place of the Blessed Virgin Mary in doctrine and devotion was then discussed.

It was agreed that the theme of the second meeting of the Joint Preparatory Commission should be "The Word of God and The Church", and that the meeting should be held from Wednesday, 30th August to Monday, 4th September 1967, and it was accepted that the meeting should be held somewhere in England. It was also suggested that at the beginning of the second meeting two small drafting committees be appointed to work during the meeting on drafting a final report.

Problems connected with Intercommunion were discussed, and reference was made to the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council on Ecumenism and on the Eastern Catholic Churches in this respect. A period was then devoted to studying various practical ways which might be advocated in an attempt to bring the two Churches closer together.

Two groups were appointed to draw up lists of (a) theological issues and (b) practical issues. The membership of these was:

- (a) Bishop Fox, Father Richards, Professor Fairweather, Father Bouyer, Canon Atkinson.
- (b) The Bishop of Llandaff, Bishop Gomes, Father Keating, Canon Kemp.

After each group had reported its findings and these had been fully discussed by the Joint Preparatory Commission, recommendations were agreed as set out in Appendices II and III.

Arrangements for the duplication and distribution of papers for the second meeting were agreed as set out in the Notes to Appendix II.

/over

In the final session a draft of a joint communiqué for the Press (which had been prepared by Bishop Willebrands, Bishop Helmsing, Bishop Moorman, Canon Purdy and Canon Satterthwaite) was considered, and after discussion a text was agreed upon as set out in Appendix IV.

The subject of mixed marriages was discussed, and it was agreed to recommend that, as an urgent measure, a Special Joint Commission of Anglicans and Roman Catholics be set up for the study of the theology of marriage and its application to mixed marriages.

The question of Observers at meetings of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission was debated as objections had been raised by some members to the presence earlier in this first meeting of an Observer from the World Council of Churches. It was decided that the appropriate authorities in both Churches should be consulted further on this matter before arrangements were made for the next meeting.

A suggestion was made that two scholars should be appointed (one from each Church) and freed from other commitments for one or two years in order to study the special problems dividing the two Churches, and a request was made that this suggestion be considered seriously at the next meeting.

The size of the Commission was discussed, and it was agreed that each Church should have the right to enlarge its delegation by one or two members if desired. This would enable the Anglican delegation to include a representative of the Liberal Evangelical school of thought, and the Roman Catholic delegation to include a representative of one of the Uniat Eastern rites, if this was considered desirable.

The Chairmen expressed the warm thanks of all present to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity for its hospitality, and to Don Colombo and all the staff of the Conference Centre at the Villa Cagnola for their constant help and service at all times.