

## CRITICAL RESPONSE TO UT UNUN SINT FROM THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS OF THE IGREJA EPISCOPAL ANGLICANA DO BRASIL

This response refers specifically to the paragraphs 94 to 97 of the Ut Unun Sint, and it is based on its Portuguese version.

First question refers to the use of the title of Pope or Universal Primate. It is stated in the minimalist title. This title fits to Anglican taste, but its purpose seems to link the claims for the exercise of the universal primacy to the Petrine texts, to further development of its interpretation and to God's design for the legitimization of its office.

Second question refers to attributions, rights and powers the Bishop of Rome claims. Are they minimalist? What is minimalist in attribution? For instance, the primacy of honor, of love and of counsel among the equals as the focus of communion and unity in diversity would be minimalist in claims. The document seems to show that the maximalist claims are maintained.

In this regard the para. 94 is very explicit in the claims. In order to be vigilant in the matters concerning Word, Sacraments, Ministry, Discipline, Worship, Christian life in every Particular Church (Diocese) the Bishop of Rome has to have ordinary and immediate universal jurisdiction and infallibility. These are essential attributions he cannot give up. Otherwise the vigilance will be illusory.

In this matter it is pertinent to remember the Report of Lambeth 68 on the Episcopacy, Collegiality and Papacy. It was said:

As a result of the emphasis placed on collegiality at the Second Vatican Council, the status of bishop in the Roman Catholic Church was in great measure enhanced, though the teaching of the First Vatican Council on the infallibility and immediate and universal jurisdiction of the Pope was unaffected. We are unable to accept this teaching as it is commonly understood to day. The relationship between the Pope and the episcopal college, of which he is a member, are, however, still being clarified, and are subject to development.

It is the case of asking what kind of development has occurred. Some names as Hans Kueng, Leonardo Boff, and more recently Tina Balasuriya, (Sri Lanka) may say something about this matter. With reference specifically to Fr. Balasuriya *The Tablet* of 11 January 1997 says under the heading of *An alarming excommunication* that the cause of his excommunication is his inability to sign the last clause of Profession of Faith which states that it is the teaching of the Church that the "Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women." This teaching, says *Tablet*, according to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in their document of 28 October 1995, has been "set forth infallibly".

Also, it is pertinent to read *Introduction: The Opening of the Vatican Archives and the ARCIC Process*, an introductory essay on *Apostolicae Curae* by William Franklin<sup>1</sup> where he shows that "the theological issues raised in 1896 have evolved to a point at which there is ecumenical consensus". Yet the problem of *Apostolicae Curae* has returned precisely to the point that had been reached by May 7, 1896: it is once again the problem of the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church. The point is that the Paul John II opted for non-recognition of the Anglican Orders because of the priestly ordination of women by the Churches of the Anglican Communion.

All these mean that the "episkopein" is exercised not in collegiality, but through the bishops and not with the bishops.

It may be said that the personal factor is implied in the exercise of universal primacy. Yet it is worthwhile to be reminded that without deleting immediate and universal jurisdiction together with infallibility such actions above mentioned cannot be effected. That seems to be the reason why he says without the authority and power essential to the exercise of vigilance the service of unity will be illusory.

Also, it is pertinent to ask whether *Ut unun Sint* shows some signals for the replacement of the phrase: the Church of Christ subsists in the Roman Catholic Church by the Church of Christ is the Roman Catholic Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Anglican Theological Review, Vol. LXXVIII, n° 1 (1996) PP.8-29