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ANGLICAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

SECRETARY GENERAL:  
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1st March, 1977

Fr. Pierre Duprey,  
Secretarius ad Christianorum  
Unitatem Fovendam,  
Vatican City.

Dear Pierre,

Consultation on Women Priests

I am sorry I did not see you to talk about this when I was in Rome recently. As I expect you know, I had to leave suddenly for London on the news of Archbishop Luvum's death in Uganda.

My main question is how do you think we should proceed now about this Consultation? I understand that the Secretariat for Unity discussed the subject carefully and wish to go ahead. You will know too of the moves on the Anglican side. As this would concern the whole Anglican Communion, it is a matter for the Anglican Consultative Council.

Is this something that could be brought to a point of <sup>decision</sup> discussion when the Archbishop of Canterbury visits the Pope in Rome at the end of April - whether or not there is reference to it in their Joint Statement?

My understanding, based largely on the "Informal Talks" and particularly what was said in November 1976, is:

- (a) The subject should be as the "Note" from the 1975 Informal Talks, that discussion is to be not on the principle of the ordination of women but on how Churches with women priests and Churches without women priests work towards Sacramental Unity.
- (b) It is envisaged as a "consultation" and not as a "commission".
- (c) The purpose would be to advise.
- (d) Membership might be about five from each of the two Churches. Great care would be needed in choosing them (including Geographical considerations) so that the membership ensured confidence.
- (e) To this I would add that the Consultation might be for a specific and limited number of meetings, for example, three: and that there should be a date when the Report was expected.

I would need approval from the Anglican Consultative Council Standing Committee which meets about two weeks after the Archbishop's visit to Rome, in mid May. I do not for<sup>see</sup> see any difficulty from that quarter.

When do you envisage the first meeting of such a consultation might be? Should it aim say, for the end of this year, 1977?

Yours very sincerely,

JH.

✓c.c. The Revd. Christopher Hill

JH/DH