

Communiqué (June 2023)

Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue discusses the Doctrine of Discovery

The Canadian Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue has taken up the theme of ‘theologies of apology’ for its current mandate. This theme is an opportunity for our two churches to explore further our common understanding of apology, repentance, and forgiveness in the context of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The first meeting of the dialogue in May 2022 at Chateauguay included a visit to the shrine of St. Kateri Tekakwitha as well as a review of the apologies provided by Canadian churches for the harms committed in Indian Residential Schools and for participation in colonialism. At our online meetings in November 2022 and May 2023, we have continued to review and frame the work of the current mandate.

At our May 23 meeting, the members discussed the recent Vatican statement on the ‘doctrine of discovery’ and its implications for healing the wounds inflicted by colonization. It was noted that the statement was a response to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action number 49. The dialogue will continue to review responses to the Vatican statement from various quarters to see how the statement is being received. This may be relevant to the current study of ‘church apologies.’

The dialogue will gather again in October 2023 in Halifax. It is hoped that this will be an opportunity to continue this discussion with Indigenous leaders from each church. The meeting will include a day together with the members of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Bishops’ Dialogue. There are also plans for a public event in Halifax with the local Anglican and Roman Catholic communities.

The ARC-Canada dialogue has met regularly since 1971. It works in concert with the Bishops’ dialogue, which was established in 1975. In recent years, an observer from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada has been an observer. As a growth in the full-communion between the Anglican Church and the ELCIC, the Anglican delegation to the dialogue now includes two Lutherans as full members in addition to three Anglicans. The Roman Catholic delegation consists of five members. Each church also provides a co-secretary as staff support.

The current members of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Canada are:

Anglicans:

Bishop Bruce Myers, co-chair, Diocese of Québec

Bishop Cindy Halmarson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Cobourg, Ontario

Rev. Dr. Iain Luke, Principal, College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Rev. Paul Sartison, Pastor, Epiphany Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Rev. Marie-Louise Ternier, Humboldt, Saskatchewan

Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman, co-secretary, Animator for Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations,
Anglican Church of Canada

Roman Catholics:

Archbishop Brian Dunn, co-chair, Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

Dr. Adèle Brodeur, Montréal, Québec

Sr. Dr. Donna Geernaert, SC, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Nicholas Jesson, Ecumenical Officer, Archdiocese of Regina, Saskatchewan

Dr. Nicholas Olkovich, St. Mark's College, Vancouver, British Columbia

Dr. Brian Butcher, co-secretary, Advisor for Ecumenism & Interfaith Relations, Canadian
Conference of Catholic Bishops