

Greeting to Pope John Paul II - 21st June 2002
by Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Carey

Your Holiness, Beloved Brother in Christ, it gives me great pleasure to greet you once again in the name of our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is my sixth and last visit to you as Archbishop of Canterbury, and I am glad to have the opportunity to meet you again before I lay down my office. During the last eleven years I have been aware of the growing closeness, mutual affection and respect between our churches, and this has found expression in a number of deep friendships. I have been grateful, Your Holiness, for your prayers and the warmth of your welcome on the several occasions that my wife and I have visited you.

I am thankful for this opportunity to pay tribute to your ministry as Father in God for the vast family of Catholics in Communion with the See of Peter. Your great courage, wisdom and holiness of life have touched and inspired Christians throughout the world. You have strengthened your brethren, as our Lord commanded Saint Peter, and you have carried this ministry to many places and to countless people. Your invitation to Church leaders and theologians to engage with you in a patient and fraternal dialogue about the Petrine ministry has made it possible for us to reflect on ways in which a Primacy of love and service could be a gift to share. While we are not yet in the full communion to which the Lord calls us, I rejoice in our shared baptismal faith and the growth in fellowship between our two churches.

Yesterday I met some of my other friends here, in the Pontifical Councils for the Promotion of Christian Unity and for Inter-Religious Dialogue. We have continued conversations about matters of shared concern, not just relationships between our churches but areas in which we are already working closer together.

As a sign of the progress in relationships in my own country, earlier this month I signed a covenant with other church leaders in England, including my dear friend Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor. We committed ourselves to work towards the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the one faith, expressed in common discipleship, worship, witness and service. On a wider level, I am encouraged by the continuing work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, and the degree of fundamental agreement between our churches on so many aspects of our faith that the Commission has identified and articulated. I am glad that you and I have been able to inaugurate the International

Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission, and I look forward to the fruits of the work in bringing our degree of theological convergence into practical outcomes which will enrich the lives of our churches. The work of these bodies is bringing us closer to the full visible unity which we seek in Christ's name.

As a sign of the hospitality which we are able to offer each other, I am especially grateful for the welcome given to the exhibition *Anglicanism and the Western Christian Tradition*, organised by Her Majesty's Ambassador and the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, and now being displayed in the Sala Sistina. This illustrates the tradition we share, and some of the historical events which have coloured our past relationships. Since the historic visit of my predecessor Archbishop Michael Ramsey in 1966, the Anglican Centre has been established as a sign and a means of our commitment to each other, and to growth in mutual understanding and fellowship.

One of the major figures in that shared tradition is my predecessor St Anselm, thirty-sixth Archbishop of Canterbury. As monk, abbot and archbishop; statesman, theologian and philosopher he made a profound and enduring contribution to the life of the Church. It gives me great pleasure to present you with this study of his life and work.