



# NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**EUCHARIST NOT AN ISSUE DIVIDING CHURCHES, SAYS DIALOGUE GROUP**

WASHINGTON--The Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue in the United States has released a statement saying "the Eucharist as sacrifice is not an issue that divides our two churches."

The Statement on the Eucharist as Sacrifice and on the Real Presence was released by Bishop Frank T. Griswold, Bishop of Chicago, Episcopal Co-Chair of ARC/USA, Bishop John J. Snyder of St. Augustine, Florida, Roman Catholic Co-Chair of ARC/USA, and Roman Catholic Bishop F. Joseph Gossman of Raleigh, North Carolina.

The statement was subscribed unanimously by all ARC/USA members present at the dialogue's 41st meeting, held in Delray Beach, Florida, January 6-7.

The first statement of agreement on the Eucharist was produced by ARC/USA in 1967. The present statement affirms the agreement reached in this earlier statement and in the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission Final Report (1982) by providing clarifications requested by the Vatican Response to the Final Report (1991) and issues raised in the process leading up to the Lambeth Conference Response (1988).

The text includes five concise affirmations on 1) the presence of Christ and of his unique sacrifice, with all of its benefits in the Eucharist, 2) the application of the propitiatory effect of Christ's one sacrifice to the whole Church, living and dead, 3) the reality of the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, 4) the reservation of the body and blood for the

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communion of the sick and the appropriateness of its adoration as an extension of the Eucharistic celebration, and 5) the necessity of a validly ordained priest as minister of the sacrament. Following the Final Report and the Responses to it, the formulations are brief, taking account of similar clarifications provided by the Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue in Canada (1993).

The text was crystalized after discussion of the contemporary research among theological and liturgical scholars on Eucharist and sacrifice, of the popular piety and practices of the two churches, of the responses of the churches to other ecumenical texts on Eucharist, and of the Eucharistic prayers of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the 1970 Missal of Pope Paul VI. Particular attention was given to passages in the Eucharistic prayers that, while grounded in the same theological understanding, differ slightly in their wording. It was noted that, while the liturgical texts of both churches are quite similar in their English versions and they are grounded in the common scholarship of the modern liturgical movement, many people are still unfamiliar with this common basis in faith, liturgical practice and ecumenical dialogue.

Papers by Dr. William Franklin, General Theological Seminary; Dr. Joanne Pierce, Holy Cross College; Father Frederick Jelly, OP, Mt. St. Mary's Seminary; and Father Charles Price, Virginia Theological Seminary, provided the background for the discussion and the agreement. They will be published together, giving the background research on which the statement is based. The text will be a resource for ecumenical progress among Roman Catholics and other ecumenical partners.

In addition to the Eucharist, the dialogue also reviewed the developments between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in England as the Church of England moves toward the ordination of women, introduced the new Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms of Ecumenism of the Roman Catholic Church, reviewed the work

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Page 3 / Eucharist

of this dialogue on authority, noted for future discussion the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue results in the US, formulated how developments on the ordination of women will be treated, and planned an exploration of the ecumenical implications of Veritatis Splendor, the recent encyclical of Pope John Paul II.

A text from the Anglican Roman Catholic Ecumenical Commission on the same theme is expected in the near future.

The full text of the ARCUSA statement is attached.

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FIVE ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AFFIRMATIONS ON THE EUCHARIST AS SACRIFICE

At the forty-first meeting of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Dialogue of the United States of America (ARC/USA), on January 6, 1994, having in mind the significant agreement on the Eucharist represented by The Final Report of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission and responding to the request in the Vatican Response to the Arcic-I Final Report for clarification, we wish as the official representatives of our two Churches in the United States to make together the following affirmations:

1. We Affirm that in the Eucharist the Church, doing what Christ commanded his apostles to do at the Last Supper, makes present the sacrifice of Calvary. We understand this to mean that when the Church is gathered in worship, it is empowered by the Holy Spirit to make Christ present and to receive all the benefits of his sacrifice.
2. We Affirm that God has given the Eucharist to the Church as a means through which all the atoning work of Christ on the Cross is proclaimed and made present with all its effects in the life of the Church. His work includes "that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world" (Cf. Art. 31 BCP, p. 874). Thus the propitiatory effect of Christ's one sacrifice applies in the Eucharistic celebration to both the living and the dead, including a particular dead person.
3. We Affirm that Christ in the Eucharist makes himself present sacramentally and truly when under the species of bread and wine these earthly realities are changed into the reality of his body and blood. In English the terms substance, substantial and substantially have such physical and material overtones that we, adhering to The Final Report, have substituted the word truly for the word substantially in the clarification requested by the Vatican Response. However, we affirm the reality of the change by consecration as being independent of the subjective disposition of the worshippers.
4. Both our Churches affirm that after the Eucharistic celebration the body and blood of Christ may be reserved for the communion of the sick, "or of others who for weighty cause could not be present at the celebration" (BCP, p. 408-409). Although the American Book of Common Prayer directs that any consecrated bread and wine not reserved for this purpose should be consumed at the end of the service, American Episcopalians recognize that many of their own Church members practice the adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament. We acknowledge this practice as an extension of the worship of Jesus Christ present at the Eucharistic celebration.
5. We Affirm that only a validly ordained priest can be the minister who, in the person of Christ, brings into being the sacrament of the Eucharist and offers sacramentally the redemptive sacrifice of Christ which God offers us.

As the Vatican Response has already recorded the notable progress toward consensus represented by The Final Report in respect of Eucharistic doctrine, in the light of these five affirmations ARC/USA records its conclusions that the Eucharist as sacrifice is not an issue that divides our two Churches.

+ Frank T. Griswold  
+ John J. Snyder  
+ Joseph Gossman

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Episcopal Co-Chair of ARC/USA

+John J. Snyder, Bishop of Saint  
Augustine, Roman Catholic Co-Chair of  
ARC/USA

+Joseph Gossman, Bishop of Raleigh

January 6-7, 1994  
Delray Beach, Florida

Subscribed unanimously by all ARC/USA  
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