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Ecumenical Movement

DOCUMENTS
ON
ANGLICAN ROMAN
CATHOLIC RELATIONS
II

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Commentary on the Anglican-Roman Catholic Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine

I. Significance, Purpose, Background and Status of the Agreed Statement

At Windsor Castle on September 7, 1971, the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission agreed unanimously to a statement which its members had drafted concerning eucharistic doctrine.¹ Though historians are rarely impressed by contemporary events, yet one of the Church of England's most noted historians, Bishop John H. R. Moorman of Ripon, called the document the most significant statement of the Roman and Anglican Communion since the Reformation.² Why is this document so significant? What does it try to accomplish? What is its background, and what is its status?

The statement produced at Windsor on eucharistic doctrine is significant because it marks the successful completion of the first step of the work laid out for the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission. This group of eighteen bishops and theologians was appointed by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1969 to oversee Anglican/Roman Catholic relations and has taken as its aim the achievement of organic union between the Anglican and Roman Communion.³ At Windsor in January 1970, the Commission concluded that unity in the faith must precede organic union.⁴ Though Roman Catholics and Anglicans share the same faith in many matters, it was not clear to the members of the Commission that Romans and Anglicans were at one in the faith concerning the eucharist, the nature of the ordained ministry, and the place and exercise of authority in the church. These three areas were chosen because, during the

four hundred years of estrangement from one another, both Communion developed an understanding of these points of their faith in contradistinction to each other and formulated their understanding at times in polemical terms aimed against the position which the other espoused. The Commission judged that if Romans and Anglicans today actually profess the same faith, it would be necessary to express a common doctrinal agreement in the three areas in which most of the polemical theology of the past had been written and in which knowledgeable Anglicans and Romans thought their differences lay. This was the strategy that the Commission agreed to adopt during its first meeting in January 1970. That the Commission, which represents a very broad spectrum of theology and churchmanship in both Communion, was able to compose a statement on eucharistic doctrine to which all the members actually subscribed indicates that the strategy of the Commission is practicable. This is highly significant, for it means that the Commission has found a way to cut through the polemical formulations of the past and uncover the present living faith which both Anglicans and Roman Catholics truly share.

The statement on eucharistic doctrine represents an effort to express the contemporary faith of Anglicans and Romans in the eucharistic mystery. There is no polemical intent in the document. The statement does not attempt to refute polemicists of the past, however influential they may have been within our separate traditions. Although it seeks to incorporate the insights and concerns of the sixteenth century, the intention of the document is to remain faithful to the early tradition of the eucharistic faith of the church prior to the estrangement of the Roman and Anglican Communion from one another. On the other hand, the document is not an exercise in archaic theology or a compromise statement arrived at after eighteen months of debate. It is a joint statement made after shared research on the meaning of the eucharistic mystery as celebrated and apprehended in the church from the apostolic age to the present time. The statement is based on the tradition which both the Roman and Anglican Communion share. Paradoxically, it is the openness of the document to the tradition, and particularly to the practice and teaching, of the Eastern Church which makes the statement so contemporary.⁵

The statement is an expression of eucharistic doctrine. Because it is a statement of doctrine, the Commission sought to avoid emphasis on any one theology in expressing the substantial agreement which the statement records. As such it represents the core of eucharistic belief and not the theology of any one school of thought with its own interpretation of that belief. Moreover, the Commission in composing the statement concentrated on the eucharistic celebration itself and consequently the statement does not treat of the reservation of the eucharist, benediction of the blessed sacrament, intinction, viaticum, or other matters. Rather, the statement seeks to provide a context in which the eucharistic mystery can be considered in itself as the church's celebration and memorial of the paschal action of the glorified Christ who through his Spirit offers himself in the eucharistic signs to his church to transform both the church itself and the world into the new creation. In other words, what the statement attempts to accomplish is to express the living faith of the church in such a way as to bypass the polemics of the past and articulate the present faith of the Anglican and Roman Communions in the eucharistic mystery. Yet the statement does not avoid the hard questions which are difficult because so much past controversy surrounds them. As Bishop Alan Clark, the Roman Catholic Co-chairman of the Commission, has written: "The nodal questions were clearly the relation of the Eucharist with the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, and the Real Presence of the risen Lord in the elements of bread and wine. We have tried to answer these questions, and are convinced that we can answer them in substantially the same way."⁶

What is the background of this statement, and what is its status? The document comes out of the work of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission. It is drawn from several papers written for the Commission, from statements drawn up by the Commission itself, and from the criticism received from theologians in many countries in response to previous documents of the Commission.

At the first meeting of the International Commission at Windsor in January 1970, Bishop Arthur Vogel, Coadjutor of the Episcopal diocese of West Missouri, and Fr. Jean Tillard, O.P., of Ottawa, presented papers on the eucharist. On the basis of these papers a group of Commission members drafted a document

which the Commission as a whole helped to amend. This document was composed at Venice during the second meeting of the Commission in September 1970, and was published as a working paper of the International Commission.⁷ During April 1971, a special subcommission under the chairmanship of Bishop Clark met at Poringland in England and revised the Venice working paper after an intensive study of the nature of the eucharistic sacrifice.⁸ In the light of the experience of the Poringland meeting, Fr. Tillard then published a lengthy article in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* which dealt with Roman Catholic and Anglican doctrine on the Eucharist.⁹ At the suggestion of Bishop Christopher Butler, O.S.B., the Commission, which met at Windsor in September 1971, drew on the Venice working paper, the Poringland statement and the Tillard study in drafting the document on eucharistic doctrine.

Though the statement is brief and avoids the excessive use of technical theological language, the document attempts to describe the deep and central consensus which the Commission, after eighteen months of intensive study and research, believes the Roman and Anglican Communions presently share on eucharistic doctrine.

What is the status of the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine? The Statement is a study document. In the introduction to the Statement which the Bishops Co-chairmen of the International Commission appended to the Statement prior to its publication in the press on December 31, 1971 the status of the document is clearly brought out. "The document, agreed upon at our third meeting, at Windsor, on 7 September 1971, has been presented to our official authorities, but obviously it cannot be ratified by them until such time as our respective Churches can evaluate its conclusions." Cardinal Willebrands of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, in an address on the Vatican Radio during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January, 1972 also stressed the status of the document. "Obviously this Statement does not constitute agreement between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. Agreement has been reached, for the moment, at the level of the International Commission. The text is being published, so that further study and discussion may be carried out by theologians. The Commission will examine the suggestions and criticisms, take them into

consideration if necessary, for the improvement of the text. All this will then constitute the basis on which authorities in both Churches can assess opinions expressed on the area of agreement."¹⁰ On October 4, 1972 the Cardinal returned to the same point in an address he gave at the Great Hall of Lambeth Palace while on an official visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury. "On 31st December 1971 the Commission published an Agreed Statement on the Eucharist. I want to express sincere gratitude for the work done by the Commission. This kind of work is exactly what we hoped for. I appreciate the difficulty in taking up this central and essential subject and I respect the efforts and decision shown by the Commission in giving this arduous service to the Church. Those who have mixed feelings and reserves about this Statement, I ask: Had we the right to expect more from the Commission? Can we ask from the Commission what can only be done by the Churches themselves? At present the Statement is submitted to further study and discussion by the theologians. The Commission will examine their suggestions and criticisms. The official authorities of the Church will not take over the task proper to the theologians, but follow their further work with confidence."¹¹ Father Jean Tillard, O.P., one of the chief architects of the Statement, writing in the Summer issue of *One in Christ* touches briefly on the status of the document. . . . "(I)t is the wish of both Churches that the texts of the Commission should be seen as submissions for discussion by theologians, clergy and faithful of each Communion. This is a wise measure. It derives from an accurate view of the conditions upon which unity may be sought. There would in fact be a danger of ecumenical dialogue being restricted to discussions among theologians and specialists without the individual member of the faithful, of average Christian education, ever coming to grips with what is at stake in these discussions and understanding the implications of the desired consensus. What would be the value of a church union born merely of the toil and love of a little group of experts?"¹²

II. The Agreed Statement

Before reading the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine it would be worthwhile thoughtfully to study and compare actual texts used by the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches in the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy. Sections of the canon or

anaphora are given from the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* and from the fourth canon of the current *Roman Missal*:

When the Priest, standing before the Holy Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the People, and take the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth.

All Glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again:

For in the night in which he was betrayed, (a) he took Bread; and when he had given thanks, (b) he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, (c) this is my Body, which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me. Likewise, after supper, (d) he took the Cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for (e) this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

(a) *Here the Priest is to take the Paten into his hands.*

(b) *And here to break the Bread.*

(c) *And here to lay his hand upon all the Bread.*

(d) *Here he is to take the Cup into his hands.*

(e) *And here he is to lay his hand upon every vessel in which there is any Wine to be consecrated.*

The Oblation

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy Divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

The Invocation

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him. And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer No. 4

- V. The Lord be with you.
- R. And also with you.
- V. Lift up your hearts.
- R. We lift them up to the Lord.
- V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- R. It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PREFACE

Father in heaven, it is right that we should give you thanks and glory:

you alone are God, living and true.

Through all eternity you live in unapproachable light.

Source of life and goodness, you have created all things, to fill your creatures with every blessing

and lead all men to the joyful vision of your light.
Countless hosts of angels stand before you to do your will;
they look upon your splendor
and praise you, night and day.
United with them and in the name of every creature under
heaven,
we too praise your glory as we sing (say):

SANCTUS [First Acclamation of the People]

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

[Praise to the Father]

Father, we acknowledge your greatness:
all your actions show your wisdom and love.
You formed man in your own likeness
and set him over the whole world
to serve you, his creator,
and to rule over all creatures.
Even when he disobeyed you and lost your friendship
you did not abandon him to the power of death,
but helped all men to seek and find you.
Again and again you offered a covenant to man,
and through the prophets taught him to hope for salvation.
Father, you so loved the world
that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our
Savior.
He was conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit, and
born of the Virgin Mary,
a man like us in all things but sin.
To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation,
to prisoners, freedom,
and to those in sorrow, joy.
In fulfillment of your will
he gave himself up to death;
but by rising from the dead,
he destroyed death and restored life.
And that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him,
he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father,
as his first gift to those who believe,
to complete his work on earth
and bring us the fullness of grace.

[Invocation of the Holy Spirit]

Father, may this Holy Spirit sanctify these offerings.
Let them become the body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord
as we celebrate the great mystery
which he left us as an everlasting covenant.

[The Lord's Supper]

He always loved those who were his own in the world.
When the time came for him to be glorified by you, his
heavenly Father,
he showed the depth of his love.
While they were at supper,
he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take this, all of you, and eat it:
this is my body which will be given for you.
In the same way, he took the cup, filled with wine.
He gave you thanks, and giving the cup to his disciples, said:
Take this, all of you, and drink from it:
this is the cup of my blood,
the blood of the new and everlasting covenant.
It will be shed for you and for all men
so that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in memory of me.

[Memorial Acclamation]

Priest: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

PEOPLE:

- A Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.
- B Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.
- C When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.
- D Lord, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.
You are the Savior of the world.

[The Memorial Prayer]

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
We recall Christ's death, his descent among the dead,
his resurrection, and his ascension to your right hand;

and, looking forward to his coming in glory, we offer you his
body and blood,
the acceptable sacrifice which brings salvation to the whole
world.
Lord, look upon this sacrifice which you have given to your
Church;
and by your Holy Spirit, gather all who share this bread and
wine
into the one body of Christ, a living sacrifice of praise.

[Intercessions: For the Church]

Lord, remember those for whom we offer this sacrifice,
especially N., our Pope,
N., our bishop, and bishops and clergy everywhere.
Remember those who take part in this offering,
those here present and all your people,
and all who seek you with a sincere heart.

[For the Dead]

Remember those who have died in the peace of Christ
and all the dead whose faith is known to you alone.

[In Communion with the Saints]

Father, in your mercy grant also to us, your children,
to enter into our heavenly inheritance
in the company of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God,
and your apostles and saints.
Then, in your kingdom, freed from the corruption of sin and
death,
we shall sing your glory with every creature through Christ
our Lord,
through whom you give us everything that is good.

[Concluding Doxology]

Through him,
with him,
in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours,
almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All reply: Amen.

In reading the Agreed Statement it would be well to keep
in mind not only the texts that have just been presented but the
wide measure of agreement that Anglicans and Roman Catholics

share on the worth and meaning of liturgical action. Both Anglicans and Roman Catholics see the Eucharistic liturgy as a memorial of Christ's sacrifice. Both firmly believe in the real and effective presence of Christ in the Eucharist building up His Church and nourishing with His Body and Blood those faithful who receive communion. The Agreed Statement is trying to affirm these central truths. It does not give an elaborate theological explanation of how the Eucharistic liturgy is a sacrifice. It does not attempt to explain in philosophical terms how Christ is present through the signs of bread and wine at the conclusion of the anaphora. What then is the Statement trying to say?

When the Church, obedient to her Lord's command to do this in remembrance of Him, celebrates the Eucharistic liturgy, she understands her action to be the sacrament of the sacrificial act of Christ. During the anaphora of the Eucharistic liturgy bread and wine are consecrated by the power of the Holy Spirit to make the paschal sacrifice of Jesus present. The Eucharistic presence of Jesus is a presence in the sacramental order, the order of the new creation. In this order bread and wine become by the power of the Holy Spirit the body and blood of the Risen Christ. The reason why the body and blood of Christ is to be received by the faithful in communion at the Eucharistic liturgy is that the faithful are to be participants in the sacrifice of the Pasch of Jesus who sacramentally communicates his risen life to them.¹³

The Statement on the Eucharist Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission

Third Meeting, Windsor, 7th September, 1971

AGREED STATEMENT ON EUCHARISTIC DOCTRINE

INTRODUCTION

The following Agreed Statement evolved from the thinking and the discussion of the International Commission over the past two years. The result has been a conviction among members of the Commission that we have reached agreement on essential points of Eucharistic doctrine. We are equally convinced ourselves that, though no attempt was made to present a fully comprehensive treatment of the subject, nothing essential has been omitted. The document has been presented to our official authorities, but obviously it cannot be ratified by them until such time as our respective Churches can evaluate its conclusion.

We would want to point out that the members of the Commission who subscribed to this Statement have been officially appointed and come from many countries, representing a wide variety of theological background. Our intention was to reach a consensus at the level of faith, so that all of us might be able to say, within the limits of the Statement: this is the Christian faith of the Eucharist.

HENRY OSSORY
ALAN ELMHAM
Co-Chairmen

ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC AGREEMENT

THE STATEMENT

1. In the course of the Church's history several traditions have developed in expressing christian understanding of the eucharist. (For example, various names have become customary as descriptions of the eucharist: lord's supper, liturgy, holy mysteries, synaxis, mass, holy communion. The eucharist has become the most universally accepted term.) An important stage in progress towards organic unity is a substantial consensus on the purpose and meaning of the eucharist. Our intention has been to seek a deeper understanding of the reality of the eucharist which is consonant with biblical teaching and with the tradition of our common inheritance, and to express in this document the consensus we have reached.

2. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God has reconciled men to himself, and in Christ he offers unity to all mankind. By his word God calls us into a new relationship with himself as our Father and with one another as his children—a relationship inaugurated by baptism into Christ through the Holy Spirit, nurtured and deepened through the eucharist, and expressed in a confession of one faith and a common life of loving service.

I. THE MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST

3. When his people are gathered at the eucharist to commemorate his saving acts for our redemption, Christ makes effective among us the eternal benefits of his victory and elicits and renews our response of faith, thanksgiving and self-surrender. Christ through the Holy Spirit in the eucharist builds up the life of the church, strengthens its fellowship and furthers its mission. The identity of the church as the body of Christ is both expressed and effectively proclaimed by its being centered in, and partaking of, his body and blood. In the whole action of the eucharist, and in and by his sacramental presence given through bread and wine, the crucified and risen Lord, according to his promise, offers himself to his people.

4. In the eucharist we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Receiving a foretaste of the kingdom to come, we look back with

thanksgiving to what Christ has done for us, we greet him present among us, we look forward to his final appearing in the fullness of his kingdom when "The Son also himself [shall] be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). When we gather around the same table in this communal meal at the invitation of the same Lord and when we "partake of the one loaf," we are one in commitment not only to Christ and to one another, but also to the mission of the church in the world.

II. THE EUCHARIST AND THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

5. Christ's redeeming death and resurrection took place once and for all in history. Christ's death on the cross, the culmination of his whole life of obedience, was the one, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world. There can be no repetition of or addition to what was then accomplished once for all by Christ. Any attempt to express a nexus between the sacrifice of Christ and the eucharist must not obscure this fundamental fact of the christian faith.* Yet God has given the eucharist to his church as a means through which the atoning work of Christ on the cross is proclaimed and made effective in the life of the church. The notion of *memorial* as understood in the passover celebration at the time of Christ—i.e., the making effective in the present of an event in the past—has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the eucharist. The eucharistic memorial is no mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but the church's effectual proclamation of God's mighty acts. Christ instituted the eucharist as a memorial (*anamnesis*) of the totality of God's reconciling action in him. In the eucharistic prayer the church continues to make a perpetual memorial of Christ's death, and his members, united with God and one another, give thanks for all his mercies, entreat the benefits of his passion on behalf of the whole church, participate in these benefits and enter into the movement of his self-offering.

* The early church in expressing the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection often used the language of sacrifice. For the Hebrew *sacrifice* was a traditional means of communication with God. The passover, for example, was a communal meal; the day of Atonement was essentially expiatory; and the covenant established communion between God and man.

III. THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

6. Communion with Christ in the eucharist presupposes his true presence, effectually signified by the bread and wine which, in this mystery, become his body and blood.** The real presence of his body and blood can, however, only be understood within the context of the redemptive activity whereby he gives himself, and in himself reconciliation, peace and life, to his own. On the one hand, the eucharistic gift springs out of the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, in which God's saving purpose has already been definitively realised. On the other hand, its purpose is to transmit the life of the crucified and risen Christ to his body, the church, so that its members may be more fully united with Christ and with one another.

7. Christ is present and active, in various ways, in the entire eucharistic celebration. It is the same Lord who through the proclaimed word invites his people to his table, who through his minister presides at that table, and who gives himself sacramentally in the body and blood of his paschal sacrifice. It is the Lord present at the right hand of the Father, and therefore transcending the sacramental order, who thus offers to his church, in the eucharistic signs the special gift of himself.

8. The sacramental body and blood of the Saviour are present as an offering to the believer awaiting his welcome. When this offering is met by faith, a lifegiving encounter results. Through faith Christ's presence—which does not depend on the individual's faith in order to be the Lord's real gift of himself to his church—becomes no longer just a presence *for* the believer, but also a presence *with* him. Thus, in considering the mystery of the eucharistic presence, we must recognise both the sacramental sign of Christ's presence and the personal relationship between Christ and the faithful which arises from that presence.

9. The Lord's words at the last supper, "Take and eat; this is my body," do not allow us to dissociate the gift of the presence and

** The word *transubstantiation* is commonly used in the Roman Catholic Church to indicate that God acting in the eucharist effects a change in the inner reality of the elements. The term should be seen as affirming the *fact* of Christ's presence and of the mysterious and radical change which takes place. In contemporary Roman Catholic theology it is not understood as explaining *how* the change takes place.

the act of sacramental eating. The elements are not mere signs; Christ's body and blood become really present and are really given. But they are really present and given in order that, receiving them, believers may be united in communion with Christ the Lord.

10. According to the traditional order of the liturgy the consecratory prayer (*anaphora*) leads to the communion of the faithful. Through this prayer of thanksgiving, a word of faith addressed to the Father, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit, so that in communion we eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood.

11. The Lord who thus comes to his people in the power of the Holy Spirit is the Lord of glory. In the eucharistic celebration we anticipate the joys of the age to come. By the transforming action of the Spirit of God, earthly bread and wine become the heavenly manna and the new wine, the eschatological banquet for the new man: elements of the first creation become pledges and first fruits of the new heaven and the new earth.

* * * * *

12. We believe that we have reached substantial agreement on the doctrine of the eucharist. Although we are all conditioned by the traditional ways in which we have expressed and practised our eucharistic faith, we are convinced that if there are any remaining points of disagreement they can be resolved on the principles here established. We acknowledge a variety of theological approaches within both our communions. But we have seen it as our task to find a way of advancing together beyond the doctrinal disagreements of the past. It is our hope that in view of the agreement which we have reached on eucharistic faith, this doctrine will no longer constitute an obstacle to the unity we seek.

Anglican delegates

The Rt. Revd. H. R. McAdoo,
Bishop of Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin
(Co-Chairman)

The Most Revd. F. R. Arnott,
Archbishop of Brisbane

The Rt. Revd. J. R. H. Moorman,
Bishop of Ripon

The Rt. Revd. E. G. Knapp-Fisher,
Bishop of Pretoria

The Very Revd. Henry Chadwick,
Dean of Christ Church, Oxford

The Revd. J. W. Charley;
Vice-Principal, St. John's College,
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The Revd. Professor Eugene
Fairweather,
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The Revd. Professor H. E. Root,
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The Revd. Colin Davey, Assistant
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The Rt. Revd. Alan Clark,
Auxiliary Bishop of Northampton
(Co-Chairman)

The Rt. Revd. Christopher Butler, O.S.B.
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The Revd. Fr. Herbert Ryan, S.J.
Professor of Historical Theology,
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Professor J. J. Scarisbrick,
Professor of History, University of
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III. Commentary

Four members of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission which composed the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine have written about the Statement. In the hope of elucidating each of the twelve numbers of the Statement this commentary has been gathered from the reflections about the Statement which the four ARCIC members have published.

1. From the very beginning of the Christian church it is evident that those who had been baptized into Christ met to share in the breaking of bread. It was their characteristic act. To try to live as a Christian without the Lord's supper would have been unthinkable, even though pressure of circumstances might sometimes have denied the opportunity. At the Lord's supper the significance of their baptism was expressed and lived out. Here was brought into focus the whole compass of God's salvation. Here was sustained the Christian's union with his Lord and with his fellow-members of Christ's body. No wonder this was the characteristic act of the first disciples, and such it has continued to be for subsequent generations. It is all the more tragic, therefore, when Christians so diverge from one another that they can no longer share together in what is, after all, the "Lord's" supper and not man's.

It also follows from this that, where there is any fundamental doctrinal disagreement among Christians, it is very likely to impinge in some way upon this central act of worship. Smaller matters may not affect it, but any important variance most probably will. Therefore, to reach a substantial consensus on the purpose and meaning of the eucharist is rightly described as "an important stage in progress towards organic unity." To attain agreement here has implications for other doctrinal matters in dispute. It may provide some indications of the way forward in resolving other difficulties. But the introductory paragraph is careful not to claim too much. The consensus attained is said to be "substantial," not in the sense of "large-scale" but rather "with regard to the essentials": i.e., it deals with the fundamental purpose and meaning of the eucharist. The Statement is not therefore intended to be exhaustive and this needs to be borne continually in mind. Nevertheless, the degree of agreement reached by the Commission should be recognized as a significant milestone, especially in the light of past controversy.

The quest for a deeper understanding of the eucharist has had the further goal of seeking to bring the two communions closer together. Consequently it was fully recognized that any consensus would have to be "consonant with biblical teaching and with the tradition of our common inheritance." These are also the criteria by which the consensus should be judged. The aim has not been to split hairs but to discover the extent to which we can agree. At the same time there has been no hesitation in tackling the subjects that have been most divisive in the past, such as eucharistic sacrifice and the real presence.

To think freshly with an open mind upon theological issues about which we feel deeply is never an easy task. Our convictions are bound up with traditions in which we have been reared. The Statement recognizes the variety of these traditions that seek to express the meaning of the eucharist. That such variety exists should neither surprise nor alarm us. If so much Christian truth is focused in this act of worship, then our insights and emphases are sure to be numerous. What is needed is that they should be tested by the criteria already mentioned. Unfortunately, different names that have become customary for describing the eucharist have tended to become party labels. While one term is jealously guarded, others are spurned. Yet very often they express different aspects of the truth that complement each other. For instance, Evangelicals have preferred to speak of "the Lord's supper" or "communion," while regarding "eucharist" as characteristically Anglo-Catholic and therefore suspect. Yet all three expressions are biblically legitimate. Instinctive reactions should not be allowed to obscure clear thinking. The Statement makes the factual comment, "The eucharist has become the most universally accepted term." For the theologian "eucharist" also has the practical advantage of providing an adjective, "eucharistic" which the other terms do not.¹⁴

On this number of the Statement Bishop Alan Clark, the Roman Catholic Co-Chairman of ARCIC, writes:

It is obvious that unless we can achieve a substantial consensus on the purpose and meaning of the Eucharist, then our progress towards organic unity is threatened with failure. For, as the first four paragraphs of the Statement say so vividly, the Eucharist is at the centre of the Church's life.

We speak of "the tradition of our common inheritance" as the basis of our effort to express the contemporary faith of Anglicans and Catholics in the Eucharistic mystery.

In all this we are being faithful to the method enjoined on us in the Malta Report of 1968, which read as follows:—

"Each accepts the basic truths set forth in the ecumenical Creeds and the common tradition of the ancient Church, although neither Communion is tied to a positive acceptance of all the beliefs and devotional practices of the other." (para. 7).

2. In paragraph 2, Christ's redemptive activity is described. One of the effects of redemption is to bring about the union of God with men and the union of men with one another. "By his word God calls us into a new relationship with himself as our Father and with one another as his children—a relationship inaugurated by baptism into Christ through the Holy Spirit, nurtured and deepened through the eucharist, and expressed in a confession of one faith and a common life of loving service." This sentence introduces the concept of *koinonia*, i.e., Christian fellowship or communion. The sentence acknowledges several levels of *koinonia*. Baptism creates Christian *koinonia*. But there is also *koinonia* on the level of faith and mission. Eucharistic sharing is an action that involves all three levels of Christian *koinonia*. Thus one cannot argue with the desired effect, that Christians who share baptismal *koinonia* should go to communion together during the eucharistic liturgy. To have that occur there must be a mutual sharing in *koinonia* on the levels of faith and mission as well as that of baptism. This important sentence draws attention to the Commission's task. The Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission must show that a *koinonia* of faith exists between the Anglican and Roman Communions and must win official approval for its findings, as well as move both Communions forward in a mutual fostering of a common mission for the church. How much *koinonia* in mission is required before sacramental eucharistic sharing would be true to the sign of unity, which the eucharist is, remains a difficult and very new theological question. About this new question one thing seems relatively certain: No old answer will properly solve it.¹⁶

3. Section I, entitled The Mystery of the Eucharist, is the pivotal point of the document. In it the Commission seeks to answer

the fundamental question of what the church believes it is doing when it celebrates the eucharistic mystery. The emphasis is on the eucharist as an action, a dynamic, living and personal liturgical event. The eucharist is the action of persons, and it is in the light of this obvious truth that the document lays such emphasis on the part that faith plays in the eucharistic mystery. It was this starkly obvious insight into the nature of individual and corporate personal action that led to the area of most fundamental agreement. Both the Anglican and Roman Communions share a most profound sense of the meaning of liturgical action and the significance of the eucharistic celebration. It was the context provided by this basic agreement that made it possible to proceed further and articulate a doctrinal agreement on the relationship between The Eucharist and the Sacrifice of Christ (Section II) and The Presence of Christ (Section III). In a sense, both of these questions flow from the prior question of what the church believes it is doing in the actual celebration of the eucharistic mystery. Christ is really acting in his church in a sacramental way, offering himself to his people. If there is agreement on this mysterious yet true fact, one possesses the basis for a doctrinal agreement on the fact of a relationship between Christ's unrepeatable sacrifice and his action in the eucharistic mystery, as also the fact of his presence in the whole of the eucharistic mystery and especially by the signs of bread and wine.¹⁷

In the same number Mr. Charley clarifies what the Statement means by entitling the Section "Eucharist as Mystery." Among several meanings the word "mystery" has a long tradition of technical use signifying approximately "God's action in a visible or quasi-sacramental way, whereby the transcendent God communicates with man." It is in this sense that the present section is entitled "The Mystery of the Eucharist," for what it sets out to do is to define the essence and heart of the sacrament. However, by reason of the section's character as a general outline, it inevitably leaves many questions unanswered. In the nature of the case some are not only unanswered but unanswerable.

Perhaps one of the main reasons for theological confusion with regard to the eucharist has been a lack of awareness of this element of mystery. It has been thought possible nicely to dissect the whole subject with coldly confident analysis. It would have been more timely to heed Augustine's dictum: "Doctrine is that

which hedges about a mystery." There is in the Statement a phrase that suggests why such an awareness is essential. It indicates a dimension too often forgotten, for it speaks of what Christ does in the eucharist "through the Holy Spirit." To omit this aspect of the divine activity is to distort the whole picture. Now the New Testament emphasizes the inability of man to fathom the working of the Spirit. "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). The Spirit, like the wind, is completely beyond the control and comprehension of man. What is true for the new birth is also true for the eucharist, since the same Spirit is operative in both.

Furthermore, this working of the Spirit implies a dynamism which knits together "the whole action of the eucharist." So the sacramental presence of Christ is "given" through bread and wine: the crucified and risen Lord "offers himself to his people." The life of the church is built up, its fellowship strengthened and its mission furthered. This theme is elaborated later in the section on the Presence of Christ, but it is to be noted that it was found necessary to incorporate it in this initial part of the Statement also, where the essential meaning of the eucharist is summarized. A clear grasp of this working of the Spirit will preserve us from too static a view of the eucharist, a tendency only too common in much eucharistic theology. All that having been said, the element of mystery remains; indeed, it is heightened by this awareness of the Spirit's role.¹⁸

4. In the third and fourth paragraphs the context of the eucharist in the life of the Church is summarized. Answering the question: what happens when we attend the eucharist, or in our own terminology, when we celebrate Mass, we recognize an indivisible connection between the Body of Christ distributed to us in communion, and the Church which is itself, in St. Paul's terminology, Christ's body. St. Paul himself never hesitated to express that connection:—

"The loaf which we break, is it not a participation in the Body of Christ? Because the loaf is one, we, who are many, are one body, for we are all partakers of the one loaf." (1 Cor. 10:16f).

Christian tradition, therefore, uses the word communion (*koinonia*) to express both the fellowship of Christians in the

Church and their participation in the Lord's Body given in the eucharist. It is through our receiving the Body of Christ that the Church grows in communion. In the celebration of the eucharist the Church becomes fully actual as a community, a community in the bond of a mutual charity, and corporately enters into the mysterious unity with God, which is Christ's gift. As theologians will remember, St. Thomas says that the unity of the Church is the *res*, or result, or fruit of the eucharist. There is a profound interpenetration of understanding when we name the eucharist and the Church the *Sacrament of Christ*.

It is, then, in the light of faith that we discover the presence of Christ operative in the world through the Church which is his body. This world he redeemed once for all, but each succeeding generation must enter into that redemption.

This is the thought behind these paragraphs. They necessarily lead the Statement into a discussion of the relationship of the celebration of the eucharist to the Sacrifice of Christ. For it is through the eucharist that this Sacrifice embraces the world in its whole history.

In short, here is set out the answer the Commission gives to the fundamental question as to what the Church believes it is doing when it celebrates the eucharistic mystery.¹⁹

5. Section II on The Eucharist and the Sacrifice of Christ covers two points. The eucharistic celebration does not repeat or add to Christ's one, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world. The eucharist is a memorial (*anamnesis*) which is the church's effectual proclamation of the totality of God's reconciling action in Christ. While this section does not propose to elaborate a theory of how the sacrifice of Christ is related to the eucharistic celebration, it nevertheless professes a belief that the connection between Christ's once-for-all sacrifice and the eucharistic action is to be found in the character of the eucharistic mystery as a memorial. This section is a further illustration that the fundamental area of agreement lies in the nature of liturgical action. The Roman and the Anglican Communions are at one in their belief concerning the meaning of the eucharistic celebration. Because there is this basic agreement, both can assert the existence of a necessary relationship between the eucharistic celebration and the unrepeatable, once-for-all sacrifice of Christ,

without fear of contradicting biblical data and without the elaboration of a common theological explanation of this relationship. The agreement is on the level of action, i.e., both Communion have the same belief about what they are doing and what is done to them in the eucharistic celebration.²⁰

On this pivotal section Bishop Clark writes the following.

This section starts off with a firm assertion of the once-and-for-all nature of Christ's redeeming death and resurrection. One can sense the history behind this assertion, i.e., the contention of the Reformers that the Mass was an attempt to repeat Calvary. One acknowledges at once that we are approaching a mystery here and are all too aware that our formulation of the connection between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Eucharist is inadequate. Nevertheless, it is firmly pointed out that in the Eucharist Christ is really acting in his Church in a sacramental way.

Though, as has been noted by several critics, there is no categorical assertion that the Eucharist is a sacrifice (for reasons which will become clear), neither has this been excluded. In fact the whole thrust of the reasoning here is that the Eucharist makes present the once-for-all Sacrifice of Christ here and now. If that is so, then it cannot be anything but a sacrifice in one sense or another. However, the Commission were conscious that the word "sacrifice" has been indiscriminately used, without due attention being given to its meaning. Pages of theological treatises have been written in an endeavour to apply the notion to the Eucharist. There is no definition of the Church as to what constitutes a sacrifice, for the word obviously admits of analogy. It would, therefore, be theologically and doctrinally dangerous to construct one's idea of sacrifice merely from Old Testament ideas, let alone ideas current in primitive religions. What we want to find is the meaning given in the traditional thought of the Church when this idea was applied to the Eucharist. Here we must all admit that we come face to face with the dimension of mystery. The Eucharist is indeed a "magnum mysterium".

In faith we recognise an identity between Christ's personal sacrifice in the mystery of his Death and Resurrection and the celebration of the Eucharist. At the same time we recognise an element of non-identity well expressed in our traditional catechism definition. It is here that the Commission resorted to the notion of *memorial (anamnesis)* as given us in Tradition, and in that notion offered a reconciliation of the polemical difficulties of the past.

The Statement says the atoning work of the Cross—"the totality of God's reconciling action in Christ"—"is made effective in the life of the Church." By the power of the Holy Spirit, what happened once in the Person of Christ is present on our altars because he is present and active in our celebration. We are not just remembering a past event, we are celebrating it in person. It is noteworthy that "memorial" is used in this sense in the *Constitution on the Liturgy* (para. 47); and one remembers St. Thomas' "recolitur memoria passionis eius" and his "O memoriale mortis Domini".

The final sentence of this section describes what the Church does in the Eucharist, for it is an action of the Church with its Head. Many have felt that too little attention is given to the Eucharist as an action of the Church, especially in so far as it is an offering of the members of Christ's body, of Christ himself, to the Father. It could be that the sentence is clumsy, but the Commission wishes to underline that we do not offer ourselves apart from Christ, but "enter into the movement of his self offering"—for he alone is the ever acceptable Victim to the Father.²¹

Mr. Charley has written at length on number 5. Only a portion of his commentary is given here. If there was one subject that epitomized the tearing apart of Catholic and Protestant in the sixteenth century it was the sacrifice of the Mass. Cranmer wrote, "The papistical priests have taken upon them to be Christ's successors, and to make such an oblation and sacrifice as never creature made but Christ alone, neither he made the same any more times than once, and that was by his death upon the cross."²² The Council of Trent pronounced an anathema upon those who would deny the offering of Christ to God in the Mass or that the Mass was propitiatory.²³ To what extent there may have been mutual misunderstanding is debatable, but that the rift was great is undeniable, and it was a rift in which the Church of England was clearly set on the Protestant side over against the Church of Rome. With these harshly defined positions behind us, what hope had our Commission of reaching a consensus on this thorny matter?

There could hardly be a more explicit emphasis on the finality of the atoning work of Christ. His redeeming death and resurrection are firmly placed in history. The emphasis of the writer to the Hebrews upon the "once for all" nature of Christ's sacrifice²⁴ is taken up and spelled out. "There can be no repetition or addition." "Any attempt to express a nexus between the

sacrifice of Christ and the eucharist must not obscure this fundamental fact of the Christian faith." It will be observed that the Statement itself conforms to this principle by declining to call the eucharist a sacrifice, although this term has frequently been used by theologians of both communions; it prefers to employ the term "memorial." In fact, "the notion of *memorial* as understood in the passover celebration at the time of Christ—i.e., the making effective in the present of an event in the past—has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the eucharist. The eucharistic memorial is no mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but the church's effectual proclamation of God's mighty acts." The implication is clear. It is not that sacrificial language is wholly out of place in eucharistic theology, but that an unguarded use of it has tended to suggest a denial of the finality of the atonement. The members of the Commission have set their faces strongly against any such denial. After all, the New Testament writers in employing a rich variety of terms significantly do not call the eucharist a sacrifice (nor indeed do they call the church's ministers priests). Nevertheless, by the second century the application of sacrificial language to the eucharist was taking place. In all probability such language was from a scriptural standpoint entirely unobjectionable.

However, this language of sacrifice, when transferred to the eucharist, has proved in the centuries since then to be a slippery slope. By 1500 the change of terminology had led to a change of theology. Much of what Küng has called "the valid demands of the Reformers" has now been met by the Church of Rome in the new Eucharistic Prayers, though even in these there remain echoes of the Pre-Reformation language of eucharistic sacrifice. However, the present Statement avoids any suggestion of "representing" Christ's death. What is made present is not the historical sacrifice of Christ itself, but the efficacy of it—"the making effective in the present of an event in the past" (5). There is no biblical warrant for any supratemporal interpretation of the cross which circumvents its historical finality. . . .

Protestant theology has sometimes tended to isolate the death of Christ from his life, resurrection and ascension. But the cross cannot be understood in isolation. Without that whole life of obedience preceding it the cross could not have been an

atonement sacrifice. Only the righteous could make an offering for the unrighteous and so bring men back to God (1 Pet. 3:18). In this way is Christ's life of obedience fundamental to the cross. The resurrection and ascension relate no less closely to the cross, for they are God's seal that the cross spelt victory and that the same Christ now reigns. Consequently, while rightly locating the atonement in the death of Christ, the Statement continues: "Christ instituted the eucharist as a memorial of the totality of God's reconciling action in him." The bread and wine are the sacrament of his death, but Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me"—of *me*, that is of the incarnate, crucified, raised and ascended Lord.²⁵

6. Section III of the document treats of the presence of Christ in the eucharistic mystery. The section begins with a clear statement of the real presence of Christ effectually signified by the bread and wine which become his body and blood. The stress in this section is on the reason why Christ is present, body and blood, in the eucharistic mystery. Christ's body and blood are his eucharistic gift. This eucharistic gift transmits the life of the crucified and risen Christ to his church so that its members, being more fully united with Christ, may be more deeply united with one another. The document is at pains to avoid a localization or containment of Christ in the consecrated elements.²⁶ To represent in such crudely unimaginative terms the effect of the *mirabilis conversio* wrought by the Spirit on the bread and wine during the consecratory prayer is quite against the church's traditional understanding of Christ's sacramental presence signified by the bread and wine.²⁷ During the *anaphora* and before the communion, God effects a change in the inner reality of the bread and wine. In what way this change takes place has not been revealed. The church has always held that it is God who effects this change in the inner reality of the elements, not the faith of the believer.²⁸ The section then goes on to enumerate the various ways in which the glorified Christ is present in the entire eucharistic celebration.²⁹ Again, stress is laid on the nature of liturgical action and the eucharistic celebration in particular as the action of persons. Christ's eucharistic presence is not only *for* the believer, but through faith it is a presence *with* the believer. Thus the document emphasizes the importance of the reception of communion, the act of sacramental eating of the

eucharistic gifts. The section ends by indicating the eschatological dimensions of the eucharistic celebration.³⁰ The eucharist is an anticipation of the joys of the age to come. Bread and wine have become the heavenly manna and the new wine. The eucharist is the eschatological banquet for the new man. Bread and wine, fruit of the earth and the work of human hands, which are elements of the first creation, become pledges and first fruits of the new creation.³¹

The first sentence of this section is cardinal.

“Communion with Christ in the Eucharist presupposes his true presence effectually signified by the bread and wine, which, in this mystery, become his Body and Blood.”

It is in this sentence that the central dogma of eucharistic faith is asserted. The word “become” could only be ambiguous if taken out of the context of this purpose for which Our Lord gave us this Sacrament. Later, in paragraph 9, further clarification, if necessary, is given.

“The elements are not mere signs; Christ’s Body and Blood become really present and are really given.”

Then in paragraph 10:

“Through this prayer of thanksgiving . . . the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit, so that in communion we eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood.”

and paragraph 11:

“By the transforming action of the Spirit of God, earthly bread and wine become the heavenly manna and the new wine, eschatological banquet for the new man.”

I do not think the objective presence of Christ could be more clearly asserted. It is, as many have noted, to the first of these sentences that a widely discussed note on transubstantiation is attached. Some praise it, some find it poverty-stricken, a few condemn it. Yet one would assert that it contains the restrained doctrine of Trent, which concentrates on the “*mirabilis conversio*” as the center of eucharistic faith in the Real Presence.

This is not to deny for a moment that the Council found transubstantiation as the most apt way (*aptissime . . . convenienter et proprie*) of making the meaning of the “*mirabilis conversio*”

clear. As the note says, it indicates that God, acting in the eucharist, effects a change in the inner reality of the elements while the sense data remain. It is equally true that the Council had no wish to lock itself to a particular philosophy of substance and accident, but did wish to indicate unequivocally that what I perceive through my senses as ordinary bread and wine are no longer bread and wine, but the Body and Blood of Christ, thus illustrating "the mysterious and radical change which takes place" (so the note).

It was, therefore, the purpose of the Commission to underline the truth that the dogma of the Real Presence is based firmly on the "mirabilis conversio." This is not to set aside the doctrine implicit in the term transubstantiation but to emphasise its real meaning in terms of a "mirabilis conversio." It belongs to theology to reflect on this—hence the developed notion of transubstantiation to be found in our text-books. But the development of this ideas rests on a particular philosophical framework and should not be inserted in what is a credal statement and no more.

It was therefore no attempt to avoid real doctrinal controversies or divergencies that made us relegate an explanation of the term to a footnote, but a conviction that this Catholic doctrine can be misinterpreted even by ourselves. The query among some whether the Catholic doctrine (that a conversion involving a change of nature really takes place) is covered in the Statement is, I think, answered by the explanation.³²

There is no question of a crude material presence here. Our physical bodies are fed in the eucharist by bread and wine, "not mere signs": they are his body and blood. He "gives himself sacramentally in the body and blood of his paschal sacrifice" and this he does as "the Lord present at the right hand of the Father, and therefore transcending the sacramental order." By the gracious initiative of God something profound occurs by which the life of Christ is transmitted to the members of his body.³³

Father Jean Tillard's position paper written expressly for the third ARCIC meeting at Windsor in September, 1971, provided the basis for the text of this section of the Agreed Statement.

The *Kurios* exercises his Lordship over men essentially through the dynamism which reconciles them and brings them together, making them into one body, his Body. The gift of the

Eucharistic Body and Blood represents in the economy of the new time the act *par excellence* of the full Salvation which is the effect of the paschal Sacrifice. Thus the sacramental presence is the efficacious encounter of the Lord with the community celebrating the *memorial* and his encounter, within that community, with each of the faithful. Thus we have here a presence which, since it is that of the Lord in the exercise of his Lordship over his Church, is at the centre of a dynamic process leading towards a welcoming in which, on the believer's side, faith plays the key part. [Trent is careful to state that this presence is for us (*nobis*). And this moreover is the reason why the Eucharistic Canons or Anaphoras require the transformation of the bread and wine but do so in such a way as to stop never at the presence as such but rather at a further transformation—the one which the Body and Blood of Christ are to perform in the lives of the believers.] The real presence of the Lord's Body and Blood is thus—and not by accident—unintelligible without this insertion into the movement, the salvific action, whereby the Lord gives himself to those who are his own. To put it in another way: the presence represents what the movement contains, what it brings, the reality which it communicates. Its reality, its truth are therefore determined in their purpose by the experience of grace enjoyed by those who in and through it will receive *communion* with the mystery of reconciliation and peace which is the Lord's humanity. (Scholasticism said in a technical way that here we were at a level of *res et sacramentum* completely directed towards the ultimate level of the *res*.)³⁴

7. This dynamism flowing from the Lord to the assembly, which has its source in the sacramental Body and Blood, also brings about a presence of the Lord which overflows the limits of the signs used. For although the Lord only becomes present in the way hitherto described in the bread and the cup, which pass on the fullness of the gift of himself, it is the same Lord who in the word that is proclaimed fires the hearts of his own so that they may receive him in truth; it is the same Lord too who through the person of the minister presides at the Supper to which he invites them. What Catholic tradition calls the *substantialis* presence springs from this widely-spread presence of the Lord in the midst of his People, this presence being wonderfully expounded by the Constitution of Vatican II on the Liturgy and above all by the Encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* and the Instruction on Eucharistic Worship. There we find its nature made plain. One cannot truly understand it unless one grasps it in the action of the *Kurios* inviting (through his minister and his Word) his own to his Table,

presiding at that Table through his minister, giving himself sacramentally but really in the Body and Blood of his Pasch, so that all may be enrolled in the salvific power of his Lordship, thus becoming his Body. Let us make it clear at once that it is the Lord present at the right hand of the Father, and therefore outside the sacramental world, who thus offers to his Church in the eucharistic signs the special gift of himself.³⁵

8. Catholics have always feared that the Protestant emphasis upon faith at the point of reception delivered the whole rite over to subjectivity. By apparently making the gift of God dependent upon man's faith and not God's grace, Protestants have seemed to make the presence of Christ to be almost at man's beck and call. Hence the Statement asserts that Christ's presence "does not depend on the individual's faith in order to be the Lord's real gift of himself to his church." So long as the eucharistic action is seen as a whole, this logical order of Christ's "offering to the believer awaiting his welcome" presents no difficulties. It only becomes suspect when a severance is made between a consecration and reception. Christ offers himself to the believer and awaits his welcome. He does not offer bare signs of bread and wine. "The Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ" (Article XXVIII. cf. Cor. 10:16, 17). The sacramental bread and wine effect what they signify.

Paragraph 8 says that when the offering to men of the sacramental body and blood of the Saviour is "met by faith, a life-giving encounter results." Jesus told the Jews, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you" (John 6:53). Believing in Jesus, coming to him and feeding upon him are closely interrelated in this sixth chapter of John's Gospel. So to feed in faith is a life-giving encounter. From his presence in the eucharist arises a "personal relationship between Christ and the faithful." But to eat and drink unworthily cannot result in any such relationship. If to the unbelieving the sacrament brings judgment, not life (1 Cor. 11:27-30), there must be a distinction within this mystery of the eucharist at the point of reception. One welcomes, another rejects the offer of Christ. Granted this distinction, the same offer has still been made in both instances.

The words of Jesus, "This is my body," "This is my blood," set a pattern of realist language in eucharistic theology. To suppose

this was the prerogative of Catholic tradition only is to fly in the face of history. In Protestant and Reformed theology also there has always been a tradition of this nature. Zwinglianism was very much a minority opinion and generally repudiated. Calvin is a striking example of one who gives objective content to the sacrament. He speaks of "the sacred Supper, where Christ offers himself to us with all his blessings, and we receive him in faith."

I am not satisfied with the view of those who, while acknowledging that we have some kind of communion with Christ, only make us partakers of the Spirit, omitting all mention of flesh and blood.

We infer from the exhibition of the symbol that the thing itself is exhibited. For unless we would charge God with deceit, we will never presume to say that he holds forth an empty symbol.³⁶

"Exhibited" means that it is presented and offered to the communicant. If Calvin's eucharistic teaching is occasionally obscure, perhaps because he constantly acknowledges it to be a mystery, yet the realist language is unequivocally there.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, whilst categorically denying any material presence of Christ in the elements, nevertheless fully justifies this realist language.

There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass, that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.³⁷

Richard Baxter's *Reformed Liturgy* included this prayer:

Sanctify these thy creatures of bread and wine, which, according to thy institution and command, we set apart to this holy use, that they may be sacramentally the body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ.

Gregory Dix regarded Baxter's liturgy as "a whole stage nearer to the catholic tradition" than Cranmer's, because of the essentially Calvinist theology that lies behind it.³⁸

Because others have seemed to read into biblical language concerning the sacraments a false sacramentalism, Protestants have sometimes been loath to use even biblical phraseology lest they thereby appeared to be endorsing a questionable eucharistic theology. A reaction, however understandable, against a

false position is not the happiest starting-point for obtaining a clear grasp of the comprehensive teaching of scripture. Our aim should be to ensure that both eucharistic doctrine and eucharistic language are “consonant with biblical teaching” and do exact justice to the balance of scriptural truth.³⁹

Again it was Jean Tillard’s position paper that provided the basis from which the text was drawn.

One can say—but clearly in a special sense—that the sacramental Body and Blood with their salvific reality are present as an offering, awaiting the welcome of the believer; this welcome can only become real through lively faith, itself a gift of the Spirit. Faith causes the presence to blossom as a life-giving encounter. Roman Catholic tradition has never ceased to make its own the Augustinian view that different people partake of the Body of Christ with different effects. Without the faith of the Christian, the Eucharist could not, in spite of what it contains, produce its *res*. But is the Eucharist not ordered to this effect of grace, as is every sacrament? This indicates the capital importance of the part played by faith. Through faith, and only through faith, the presence—which does not need faith in order to be the objective gift of himself that the Lord makes to his Church—becomes no longer just a presence *for* the believer but a presence *with* him in the sense that personalist philosophy gives to the word presence, which it links to the interpersonal and mutual relationship. G. Marcel’s remark is well-known: “Presence is more than the object; it exceeds it in all senses.” From this point of view, to be present is not simply to be placed in front of someone but to be linked with him by a bond of relationship. One thus finds oneself, with regard to the Eucharistic mystery, faced with two levels of presence which are not of the same order but which nevertheless are closely linked to each other. For on the one hand the objective presence in the sense of classical theology requires that ultimate *res* that contemporary thought regards before all else as an interpersonal presence; on the other hand, this latter cannot have existence and consistency unless the sacramental signs convey the objective truth of the offering of the Lord.⁴⁰

9. At this point we can see more clearly the significance of Cranmer’s emphasis upon the association of the presence of Christ with the eating and drinking. This has become a mainstream Anglican tradition, expressed not only in the leading divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but also in the language of the Prayer Book Communion service: “Grant that we receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, in accordance with thy

Son's holy institution . . . may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood." In modern Anglican liturgies the point is made slightly differently. Whilst there is more preparedness to use the terms "body" and "blood" for the elements, there is less emphasis upon a "moment" of consecration than there has been for the last four centuries. Granted that Anglicans from Jewel onwards did not believe in transubstantiation, yet they did believe there was a moment of consecration, and in this the Puritans at the Savoy Conference were at one with them. The consecration was regarded as an action whereby God set apart bread and wine for their holy use, which might be called trans-signification. But it had reception wholly in view, and was the overture to it. In the rites of the last decade, it is more usual to see the setting apart as effected by the Eucharistic Prayer as a whole, and the idea of a "moment" has passed.

Nevertheless, even if a precise "moment" of consecration cannot be isolated, yet in logic there are still what we may call two "moments" in the eucharist. There must be created a theological context within which we can safely affirm that we are celebrating the Lord's supper, carrying out his command, and not simply having a secular meal of bread and wine. The contextualizing is done by the Thanksgiving, or Eucharistic, Prayer. This, in quite objective terms, enables the elements to be treated as the sacramental means of conveying the body and blood of Christ to the worshippers, and does so independently of the state of heart of the particular individuals gathered. The bread and wine thus "become" the appointed means, i.e., his body and blood. And within the liturgical context, and with a view to reception, it is proper to call them by these terms, as our Lord did.⁴¹

It is without doubt at this stage of our description of the Roman Catholic view that several of our Anglican brethren will feel uneasy—less at the stating of the presence as we have presented it than at our insistence on the need of what we have termed (in order to avoid any misunderstanding) the objective presence. With us they accept a true and real presence of the Lord, one essentially linked with the bread and wine. But, taking very seriously as they do the part played by faith—which we have just emphasized—they do not wish to make a dichotomy between the offering made by Christ the Lord of his Body and Blood in the sacramental signs and the welcome given by the

believer. To them it seems preferable to link the presence of the *Kurios* with the global movement of the eucharist which culminates in the act of sacramental communion, without seeking to detect with precision a moment at which the bread and wine already bear the gift which the Lord wishes to make of his paschal humanity. The Lord's words at the Last Supper: "Take and eat, this is my body" impels them not to dissociate in a way which to them seems artificial the coming of the presence and the act of sacramental eating. This they do without necessarily falling into receptionism pure and simple. The Body and Blood become really present and are really given. The elements are not mere symbolic signs lacking objective content. But there is a refusal to remove them from the integral dynamism of the *memorial*.

Roman Catholic theology considers that this position pays insufficient regard to certain points that it finds stressed in the revealed texts, notably in the tradition of Paul and Luke, which carefully dwells upon the broken bread identified with the body. Roman Catholic theology therefore replies by putting a further question: does not the above-mentioned Anglican attitude tend to obscure the fundamental fact, which governs the whole mystery of Jesus, that God makes the first step, that his gift not only comes before the human response but awaits and encourages this response—and in waiting can be disappointed? Here we are of course in the sacramental universe, in which temporal successions express values which have their place alongside the profound reality of the mystery. On the other hand, the most serious theology has broken with the excessively shortsighted view which sought to detect the precise word after which the presence is accomplished; it rather sees the efficacy of the Spirit of God and of the Word which brings the presence as pervading the whole *anaphora*, which is a word of faith uttered by the Church. At the same time it recognizes that this efficacy has its source in the narrative of the Last Supper. But surely the very fact that we are in a sacramental universe and that the presence itself does not escape the laws of that universe leads one to admit, when dealing with the progression of the rites, two sacramental moments linked in a single and indivisible dynamism of Salvation: the moment of the Lord offering himself freely and in which the initiative of God's *hesed we 'emeth* is put in clear relief, and the moment at which the Church approaches this gift,

which is welcomed with faith in communion. It seems to us that the distinction of these two moments, provided it carefully respects the global dynamism of the Celebration and provided it does not understand the first of these moments in a crudely physical way, more fully safeguards the great affirmation so happily defended by the Anglican tradition, namely that here everything is based on the movement that goes from God to man and which governs faith itself.⁴²

10. It is at this point (para. 10) that the Statement reasserts that the eucharist is a liturgical celebration through which the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Reference is to the prayer of consecration (*anaphora*), which is the Church's prayer, and, as many have noted, no assertion is made regarding a particular point in this prayer wherein we may say in faith that Christ is uniquely present among us in the Sacrament of Bread and Wine. This is no denial of the importance of "the Words of Institution" in *all* liturgies (though there is one strange exception in antiquity). The question of "a moment of consecration" is not irrelevant, but the Commission considered it secondary to its declaration that the elements become the Body and Blood of Christ, independently of the faith of the communicant, in the Eucharistic Prayer.⁴³

11. We were saying that the content of the eucharistic signs only found their explanation by reference to the power of the Spirit who, since the first Easter day, actualizes in the realities of Creation, of which he is the originator, the dominion of the *Kurios*. For the eucharist is essentially an epiclesis. The eucharist thus belongs to the order of the new Creation which can only be the work of the Spirit bringing to their *teleiosis* the different undertakings of God on behalf of man (the first being the Creation), by linking them with the Lordship of Jesus. It is never a question of an artificial addition coming from outside to put, as it were, a finishing touch to the universe of Creation. On the contrary, the Spirit of God exercises his power by "accomplishing," fulfilling, that is to say by drawing out the capacities and impulses of his original work, so that these are surpassed without being destroyed. The order of grace, despite its radical transcendence, respects the order of nature and, far from adding itself to the latter artificially, it carries the order of nature along with it. The same principle holds, in an analogical way, at all the levels of the

economy of Salvation. If the highest expression of the principle is in the mystery of Jesus, whose humanity remains inviolate and totally intact although it is that of the Person of the Son, it is found again in the justification and sanctification of the faithful believer who becomes through faith and baptism a real adopted son of the Father, without however ceasing to be fully man. Sanctifying grace, however we may understand it dogmatically, represents an habitual case of a profound transformation of being through the power of the Spirit of the *Kurios*, while the structures and imperatives of Creation are fully respected. We should add that this transformation is not reduced to the simple gift of a passing efficacy. It brings to the person a new quality, destined to develop fully in the life of the eternal Kingdom.

Without doubt it is within this economy of the Spirit, governing the whole Christian vision of ecclesial realities, that the eucharistic mystery must be situated and that the mysterious transformation of the sacramental elements must be understood. At the same time we must take account of the laws of analogy.

The question of transubstantiation then assumes its true dimensions. The discretion of Eastern thought, and at the same time its lively insistence on the fact that in the depth of the bread and wine something happens in such a way that the bread and wine become in all truth the very reality of the Lord present to his own in order to give himself to them—these things, it seems to us, can serve as guiding principles. It is no longer a matter of the bread and the cup for the life which passes, but of the bread and the cup for the new Life,—that Life which (and here we meet once more the law governing the sacramental organism), without rendering the first vain, takes possession of it in order to lead it towards the unending joy of eternal communion. Now the nourishment of the new Life can only be that which in truth is Life. Thus there is carried out in and through the Spirit an act of the Lordship of Christ in this present creation, in which he manifests pledges of the eschatological world. Unless we situate the eucharist wholly in the always transforming economy of the Holy Spirit we run the risk either of confining ourselves within a too radical rejection of any profound modification of the elements, or of becoming involved in explanations of the eucharist which are too much bound to the philosophical laws of our universe. We are dealing with a coming of the Spirit of the new times,

accomplished in a taking possession of this present creation by the Lord of the new Creation.⁴⁴

12. What does ARCIC mean by a “substantial agreement”? The best commentary on the term is provided by Father Jean Tillard, O.P.⁴⁵

Now it seems to us that the Anglican Communion within the context of the Christian world fulfills by virtue of its comprehensiveness, and despite evident deficiencies, a particular function.

This reminder enables us to divine what the expression *substantial agreement* used by the International Commission in its Statement involves from the point of view of ecclesiological option. Up to now, in fact, in their efforts to attain unity, the Roman Catholic and the Anglican Churches have tended to count almost exclusively on the deep affinity that exists between the *Anglo-Catholic* movement in Anglicanism and Roman thinking. This was true of the Malines Conversations which were badly received not only by the Roman Catholics of England and their allies in Rome⁴⁶ but also by a well-informed section of the Anglican Church.⁴⁷ It had been true already of the efforts made in the 17th century by the Franciscan *Sancta Clara* in his *Paraphrastica Expositio* (1633) which should be read alongside William Laud’s account, and throughout the dialogue (1717-1720) between the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, and the Gallican Church represented especially by Louis du Pin.⁴⁸ The important little book of Gerard Francis Cobb, *A Few Words on Reunion and the Coming Council at Rome*, published in London in 1869 on the eve of the 1st Vatican Council clearly takes the same line. The Anglican Communion appears to be summed up from the Catholic point of view.

It is becoming increasingly clear to us that the search for unity with the Anglican Church would be ambiguous, founded on a set of compromises, and that it would even run the risk of leading to new divisions if it were to neglect—most of all at the present time—to take the other movements seriously. That would amount to an explicit rejection from the long sought-after unity of what is without any doubt the most characteristic prize-possession of Anglicanism, and its most specific contribution to the Catholic world, its *comprehensiveness*. That sort of union which would swell the number of Catholics bound to one another in

an organic body would in the end have contributed rather little to the *aggiornamento* of the kind being experienced in the Catholic world today. It would in fact leave aside the contribution of a healthy pluralism and, which is more serious, would transform into division pure and simple the balance of forces which till now the Anglican Church has made it a point of honor to preserve and even to promote. It would then be a union involving an impoverishment.

The objection will perhaps be made that all we have here is a Roman Catholic judgment of an idealized situation, and that a union that would take the various tendencies into account appears utopian. By way of reply we would refer to the efforts made inside the Anglican Communion itself by the authors of the report *Growing into Union, Proposals for Forming a United Church in England*.⁴⁹ Written in the aftermath of the difficulties raised by the *Scheme* of union proposed between the Methodists and Anglicans, this work by two Anglo-Catholics and two Evangelicals, highly representative of the most outspoken views of their respective tendencies, is an important witness to the serious and positive nature of the search among Anglicans, not for vague compromises but for unity attained at the very axis of the faith. This is the type of searching to which the Anglican Church sees itself of necessity led by the present-day ecumenical situation, if it intends to dialogue as a body with the other Christian confessions. Of course, this leads the other Christian confessions to count in their turn on this kind of consensus, if they wish to enter into talks not with such and such a group of Anglicans who are most akin to them, but with the Anglican Church as such.

And let us be quite clear about this. The experience of dialogue, inspired by a desire to be honest and to search for the truth, compels Roman Catholics to realize very quickly that there are to be found within their own fold as well the same lines of division which in the Anglican tradition constitute officially-accepted movements. The Roman Catholic block has no longer—if it ever had⁵⁰—the monolithic character which spontaneously comes to mind. Hence the debating of questions leads often to a confrontation *not* of the two Churches so much as of two ways of reading the data of the faith or of two ecclesial mentalities present in *both* groups. The Roman Catholic may on a particular point feel more at home with an Evangelical position, for ex-

ample, than with another, and vice versa.⁵¹ The polyvalence of comprehensiveness thus obliges the Roman Catholic side on the one hand to become more open to a healthy pluralism, admitting that such does not necessarily destroy the unity of the faith and life, and, on the other hand, obliges it to recognize that the time has undoubtedly come to state in the clearest terms that diversity does exist in its own camp—a fact that calls for a clarification of the doctrinal position in regard to its own tradition. All this can only serve to make the Roman Catholic Church more fit to arrive at a deeper understanding and equitable judgments (beyond the case of Anglicanism) of the different options present in the Christian world today.

Such is, from the point of view of the wider context of the Roman Church's universal ecumenical activity, what is at stake in this dialogue towards unity with the Anglican Church. It is forced, under pain of rendering impossible communion with the nearest ecclesial group of the Western Church, to admit the facts and to justify theologically the validity of an explicit pluralism of doctrine and practice within the fold of the *Una Sancta*. In these conditions, it is evident that the sole quality of *consensus*, not only possible—as a “make-shift”—but positively desirable with the Anglican Communion, should be what we have described as a *substantial agreement*.

When the Statement begins its last paragraph by expressing its hope that the agreement reached be sufficient for unity, it is not asking itself in the words of the second sentence whether a *substantial agreement* is sufficient. It must be owned that the way in which these few words have been drawn up leads to a lack of precision. It asks itself whether what has been established is a valid substantial agreement.⁵² This is how we understand it. This difference is not a piece of scholastic gymnastics. To refuse that a substantial agreement suffices would be equivalent, it seems to us, to closing the file once again on the unity of the two Churches, and in such circumstances that a decision of this sort would be irreparable and more serious in its consequences than *Apostolicae Curae* in 1896. Why? On account of the special position of the Anglican Communion within the Christian communities. To acknowledge as unsuccessful efforts for uniting with the Anglican Church, as it defines itself in all its complexity, would mean a radical incapability of forming deep ecclesial ties with a

vast proportion of the Christian world. It would in fact be clear that progress would have been checked by the presence within Anglicanism of "Protestant" elements.

The point we have developed shows why and precisely how its nature of *simul catholica et reformata* enables the Anglican Church to serve as a bridge in reconciling the *Catholic* tradition with the *Reformed* tradition. Joseph de Maistre explained this function when he said that with one hand the Anglican Church touched Roman Catholicism and with the other the confessions that the latter could not meet. The dialogue with Anglicanism thus serves as a test which could lead to real ecumenical possibilities. How could the "Protestant" world come to appreciate the validity of "Catholic" traditions, and the "Catholic" world come to discern the value of "Protestant" aspirations, if both one and the other appeared incapable of entering into communion with a Church which seeks in its own life a harmony between *Catholicity* and *Reformation*? In fact, especially since the famous Lambeth Conference appeal of 1920, the Anglican Communion has never ceased working for a unity which, having nothing to do with cheap compromise, would allow each main tradition to live with its own spiritual wealth according to its own past, while consenting to the sacrifices, no matter how demanding they may be, required by the Lord. The report read by Cardinal Mercier at the fourth session of the Malines Conversations, and which was drawn up by Dom Lambert Beauduin,⁵³ simply echoed the noble suggestion of this prophetic *Appeal to Christendom*.

NOTES

¹ The Anglican members of the Commission are Bishop H. R. McAdoo of Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin (Co-chairman); Archbishop Felix Arnott of Brisbane; Bishop Edward Knapp-Fisher of Pretoria; Bishop John H. R. Moorman of Ripon; Bishop Arthur Vogel, Coadjutor of West Missouri; Dean Henry Chadwick of Christ Church, Oxford; the Rev. J. W. Charley of St. John's College, Nottingham; the Rev. Eugene Fairweather of Trinity College, Toronto; Canon Howard Root of the University of Southampton; the Rev. Colin Davey of the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations (secretary). The Roman Catholic members are Bishop Alan Clark, Auxiliary of Northampton (Co-chairman); Bishop Christopher Butler, O.S.B., Auxiliary of Westminster; Barnabas Ahern, C.P.; Georges Tavard, A.A.; Jean Tillard, O.P.; Pierre Duprey, W.F.; Edward Yarnold, S.J.; Dr. J. J. Scarisbrick; Herbert J. Ryan, S.J.; and Canon William A. Purdy of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (secretary).

² *The London Times*, September 8, 1971. There was an editorial in *The London Times*, September 12, 1971, in which the Bishop's remark figured prominently.

³ "No doubt exists in the minds of any of the members that the final aim of our work is the attainment of full organic union between our two communions." Documentary Service of United States Catholic Conference [=USCC], January 30, 1970.

⁴ Roman authorities share this same sentiment. "None can deny that this unity of faith is indispensable. . . ." Jan Cardinal Willebrands in an address after the Windsor meeting of the Commission and referring to its work at Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, January 18, 1970. Documentary Service of USCC, January 29, 1970:3, with full text in *Catholic Mind*, April 1970:35-42. On October 25, 1970, in St. Peter's at Rome, Pope Paul VI in his sermon at the canonization of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales said: "There will be no seeking to lessen the legitimate prestige and the worthy patrimony of piety and usage proper to the Anglican Church, when the Roman Catholic Church—this servant of the servants of God—is able to embrace her ever-beloved sister in the one authentic communion of the family of Christ: a communion of origin and of faith [emphasis added], a communion of priesthood and of rule, a communion of the saints in the freedom and love of the spirit of Jesus" (*Catholic Herald*, October 30, 1970:3).

⁵ Among the studies which contributed most to the work of the Commission were J. M. R. Tillard, O.P., *The Eucharist: Pasch of God's People* (New York 1967); M. Thurian, *The Eucharistic Memorial*, Part I: The Old Testament; Part II: The New Testament (Richmond 1960 and 1961); L. Bouyer, *Eucharist. Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Notre Dame 1968); M. Thurian, "L'anamnèse du Christ" in *L'Évangile hier et aujourd'hui: Melanges offerts au Professeur F. J. Leenhardt* (Geneva 1968) 263-276; J. de Watteville, *Le Sacrifice dans les Textes eucharistiques des premiers siècles* (Neuchâtel-Paris 1966); W. Schottroff, *Gedenken im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament die Wurzel ZKR im semitischen Sprachkreis* (Neukirchen 1964); B. S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel* (London 1962); E. P. Echlin, S.J., *The Anglican Eucharist in Ecumenical Perspective: Doctrine and Rite from Cranmer to Seabury* (New York 1968); A. Hardelin, *The Tractarian Understanding of the Eucharist* (Upsala 1965); G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster, 1946); C. W. Dugmore, *The Mass*

and the English Reformers (London 1958); A. Kavanagh, O.S.B., *The Concept of Eucharistic Memorial in the Canon Revisions of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury* (St. Meinrad, Ind. 1964); E. L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi* (London 1965); E. Masure, *Le Sacrifice du Chef* (Paris 1957); A. Vogel, *Is the Last Supper Finished? Secular Light on a Sacred Meal* (New York 1968); E. Lanne, O.S.B., "Les différences compatibles avec l'Unité dans la tradition de l'Eglise ancienne," *Istina* 8 (1961-1962 227-253) and "Pluralisme et Unité: possibilité d'une diversité de typologies dans une même adhésion ecclésiale," *Istina* 14 (1969) 171-190.

⁹ *Catholic Herald*, September 24, 1971:5.

⁷ *Catholic Mind*, April 1971:45-50. For the Venice working papers on "Church and Authority" and "Church and Ministry," cf. *ibid.*, 35-45.

⁸ The subcommission met at Bishop Clark's residence in Poringland, Norwich, April 12-16, 1971. The members were Bishop Clark (Chairman); Edward R. Hardy; Barnabas Ahern, C.P.; Julian Charley; Jean Tillard, O.P.; Pierre Duprey, W.F.

⁹ J. M. R. Tillard, "Catholiques romains et Anglicans: l'Eucharistie," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 93 (1971) 602-656.

¹⁰ Quoted in A. C. Clark, *Agreement on the Eucharist*, Roman Catholic Ecumenical Commission, London, 1972, 1.

¹¹ Press release from Archbishop of Canterbury's Counsellors on Foreign Relations, Wednesday, October 4, 1972, 6.

¹² J. M. R. Tillard, O.P., "The Deeper Implication of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue," *One in Christ* VIII-3 (Summer, 1972), 261.

¹³ Roman Catholics may well wish to compare the statement with the Antiphon at the Magnificat of Second Vespers for the feast of Corpus Christi: *A sacrum convivium! in quo Christus sumitur: recolitur memoria passionis ejus: mens impletur gratia: et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur, alleluia!* Oh sacred banquet in which Christ is received: the memory of his passion is recalled: the soul filled with grace: and a pledge of future glory is given to us, Alleluia!

¹⁴ Julian W. Charley, *The Anglican-Roman Catholic Agreement on the Eucharist*. Second Edition, Gravoe Books, Bramcote, Notts., 1972, 14-15. This work is hereinafter abbreviated JWC. Mr. Charley is a Conservative English Evangelical.

¹⁵ Right Rev. Alan C. Clark, D.D., *Agreement on the Eucharist*. Roman Catholic Ecumenical Commission, London, 1972, 11. This work is hereinafter abbreviated ACC. Bishop Clark is Chairman of the Roman Catholic Ecumenical Commission of England and Wales and the Roman Catholic Protector of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

¹⁶ Herbert J. Ryan, S.J., "Anglican-Roman Catholic Doctrinal Agreement on the Eucharist" *Worship* XLVI-1 (January, 1972), 10-11. Hereinafter abbreviated as HJR. Father Ryan is Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Woodstock College, New York City.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

¹⁸ JWC, 15-16.

¹⁹ ACC, 12.

²⁰ HJR, 12. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 47. *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter M. Abbott (New York 1966) 154. The development of the concept of "memorial" in Roman Catholic thought after Vatican II and especially the textual changes in the *Institutio generalis Missalis Romani*, as well as how this development applies to Anglican theological thought on the nature of the eucharistic sacrifice, is well brought out by J. Tillard, *art. cit.*, 612-622.

²¹ ACC, 12-13.

²² *The True and Catholic Doctrine and Use of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, p. 232 (Thynne 1907).

²³ Denzinger 1751, 1753.

²⁴ Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26, 28; 10:10.

²⁵ JWC, 16-17.

²⁶ Cf. Marie-Joseph Nicolas, O.P., *What is the Eucharist?* (New York 1964) 45-56, and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 3.76.5.

²⁷ James F. McCue, "The Doctrine of Transubstantiation from Berengar through the Council of Trent," *The Eucharist as Sacrifice: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue III* (Washington, D.C. and New York 1968) 89-124.

²⁸ Session XIII of the Council of Trent (Oct. 11, 1551). Decree on the Eucharist, chapter 3 and canon 4. Denzinger-Schönmetzer 1639, 1654. A clear and brief treatment of the decree is Joseph M. Powers, S.J., *Eucharistic Theology* (New York 1967) 34-41.

²⁹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 6 and 7. Cf. *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter M. Abbott (New York 1966) 140-141.

³⁰ J. M. R. Tillard, "L'Eucharistie et le Saint Esprit," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 90 (1968) 363-387.

³¹ HJR, 13.

³² ACC, 14-15.

³³ JWC, 19. Also cf. P. Benoit, O.P., "Accounts of the Institution and What They Imply" in J. Delorme et al. *The Eucharist in the New Testament*, Helicon Press, Baltimore and Dublin, 1965, 88-98.

³⁴ J. M. R. Tillard, O.P. "The Presence of the Body and Blood of the Lord," unpublished manuscript written in July, 1971 #18. Hereinafter abbreviated as JT.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, #19. The text of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) of Vatican Council II is the following:

47. At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, as paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

³⁶ *Institutes* IV 17.5, 7, 10. Cf. *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, II, where this theme is fully elaborated.

³⁷ XXVII.2.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, 677.

³⁹ JWC, 21-22.

⁴⁰ JT, #20.

⁴¹ JWC, 20.

⁴² JT, #20-21.

⁴³ In adopting this attitude, the Commission was reflecting a development in Catholic theology (exemplified by Pope Pius XII's determination of the matter and form of the Sacrament of Order in 1947) which sees as the form of a sacrament the whole consecratory prayer, within which certain words are essential. In the Eucharist such words, in Catholic and other traditions, are "the words of institution," even though, in the Eastern tradition, for example, the emphasis is on the epiclesis rather than on the Consecration.

Nevertheless, the underlying question concerns the very precise meaning given in Catholic tradition to gestures of adoration once these words have been recited. For some comment on this question cf. ACC, 17-19. This com-

mentary on #10 is taken from *ibid.* 15-16. It is interesting to note in connection with hesitancy about pinpointing a moment of consecration the more recent emphasis of the role of the Holy Spirit in the priestly office of the risen and glorified Christ. Consider this text from Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*) of Vatican II. Cf. Appendix I.

⁴⁴ JT, # 35-37.

⁴⁵ J. M. R. Tillard, O.P., "The Deeper Implications of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue," *One In Christ* VIII-3 (Summer, 1972), 253-257.

⁴⁶ Cf. J. R. Aubert, *Cardinal Mercier, Cardinal Bourne and the Mâlines Conversations*, in *One In Christ*, 1968, pp. 372-9.

⁴⁷ Cf. JWC, 5.

⁴⁸ On this point, cf. Norman Sykes, *William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1657-1737*, London 1957, 1st vol., pp. 308-10. Not all scholars would agree with Tillard on this. Does Sykes exaggerate the importance of Santa Clara? cf. Georges Tavard, *La Tradition au xvii^e siècle*, Cerf, Paris, 1969, 371-396.

⁴⁹ C. O. Buchanan, E. L. Mascall, J. I. Packer and the Bishop of Willesden, *Growing into Union*, London 1970.

⁵⁰ In fact, even on a point as central as the theology of grace (and its consequences in the field of personal behavior the Catholic Church has itself had the experience of pluralism. One may think as well of the situation created by the "uniate" movement which joined to the Roman Church eastern blocks which maintained their own particular vision of the Christian mystery.

⁵¹ JWC, 7.

⁵² We admit that the Commission as such did not discuss this point, but there is no doubt that this was the thinking of the sub-committee on eucharistic questions, during its meeting at Poringland (Norwich).

⁵³ Cf. S. A. Quitslund, "United not Absorbed," in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 1971, pp. 255-85.

APPENDIX

From the *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, Vatican II

5. God, who alone is holy and bestows holiness, willed to raise up for Himself as companions and helpers men who would humbly dedicate themselves to the work of sanctification. Hence, through the ministry of the bishop, God consecrates priests so that they can share by a special title in the priesthood of Christ. Thus, in performing sacred functions they can act as the ministers of Him who in the liturgy continually exercises his priestly office on our behalf by the action of His Spirit.^a

By baptism men are brought into the People of God. By the sacrament of penance sinners are reconciled to God and the Church. By the oil of the sick the ailing find relief. And, especially by the celebration of Mass, men offer sacramentally the sacrifice of Christ. In administering all the sacraments, as St. Ignatius Martyr already bore witness in the days of the primitive Church,^b priests by various titles are bound together hierarchically with the bishop.^c Thus in a certain way they make him present in every gathering of the faithful.^d

The other sacraments, as well as every ministry of the Church and every work of the apostolate,^e are linked with the holy Eucha-

^a Cf. *ibid.*, Art. 7 (pp. 100-101); Pius XII, encyclical letter "Mystici Corporis," June 29, 1943: AAS 35 (1943), p. 230.

^b St. Ignatius Martyr, "Smyrn.," 8, 1-2 (ed. F. X. Funk, p. 282, 6-15); "Constitutions of the Apostles," VIII, 12, 3 (ed. F. X. Funk, p. 496); VIII, 29, 2 (p. 532).

^c This whole section should be read with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy on hand. The priest is, above all, Christ's minister, presiding over the worshiping and sanctifying action of Christ in the liturgy. Because he is derived from and, in all his priestly activity, dependent on the bishop, the priest, in administering the sacraments and celebrating the Eucharist, makes the bishop present to his congregation.

^d Cf. Second Vatican Council, dogmatic constitution "Lumen Gentium," Nov. 21, 1964, Art. 28: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 33-36.

^e All the priest's functions and the work and life of the community which he serves have their source in the celebration of the Eucharist—the hub on which everything centers and in which multiplicity is reduced to unity.

rist and are directed toward it.^f For the most blessed Eucharist contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth,^g that is, Christ Himself, our Passover and living bread. Through His very flesh, made vital and vitalizing by the Holy Spirit, He offers life to men. They are thereby invited and led to offer themselves, their labors, and all created things together with Him.

Hence the Eucharist shows itself to be the source and the apex of the whole work of preaching the gospel. Those under instruction are introduced by stages to a sharing in the Eucharist. The faithful, already marked with the sacred seal of baptism and confirmation, are through the reception of the Eucharist fully^h joined to the Body of Christ.

Thus the Eucharistic Action is the very heartbeat of the congregation of the faithful over which the priest presides. So priests must instruct them to offer to God the Father the divine Victim in the sacrifice of the Mass, and to join to it the offering of their own lives.ⁱ In the spirit of Christ the Shepherd, priests should train them to submit their sins with a contrite heart to the Church in the sacrament of penance. Thus, mindful of the Lord's words: "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mt. 4:17), the people will be drawn ever closer to Him each day.

^f The Eucharist indeed is a quasi consummation of the spiritual life, and the goal of all the sacraments" (St. Thomas, "Summa Theol.," III, q. 73, a. 3 c); cf. "Summa Theol.," III, q. 65, a. 3.

^g Cf. St. Thomas, "Summa Theol.," III, q. 65, a. 3, ad 1; q. 79, a. 1, c, and ad 1.

^h A small but very significant adverb was inserted here in the revised definitive text—"plene" (fully) in place of "plenius" (More fully)—to point up the truth that it is participation in the Eucharist that fully incorporates us into Christ. Cf. the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Art. 38, for a vision of the vast sweep of the Eucharistic action. In it (the Eucharist) the elements of nature, transformed by the work of man, are changed into the glorified Body and Blood of Christ and a love feast of men made brothers is celebrated in anticipation of the heavenly banquet to which men are destined.

ⁱ In the Sacrifice of the Mass the faithful offer not only their own lives; they really offer to the Father the divine Victim. This is one of many examples in the Council's teaching of the influence of the magisterial work of Pope Pius XII. The bishops who had this written into the Decree invoked Pius XII's encyclical "Mediator Dei."

Priests should likewise teach them to participate in the celebrations of the sacred liturgy in such a way that they can rise to sincere prayer during them. They must lead the faithful along to an ever-improved spirit of prayer offered throughout the whole of life according to the graces and needs of each.^j They must persuade everyone to the discharge of the duties of his proper state in life, and bring the saintlier ones to an appropriate exercise of the evangelical counsels. They must show the faithful how to sing to the Lord hymns and spiritual songs in their hearts, always giving thanks to God the Father for all things in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.^k

^j The Decree deliberately does not make a distinction between "mental" prayer on the one hand and "vocal" or "liturgical" prayer on the other, because genuine liturgical prayer is at the same time both mental and vocal.

^k Cf. Eph. 5:19-20.

Doctrinal Agreement And Christian Unity:

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS¹

“We are all to come to unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God, until we become the perfect Man, mature with the fullness of Christ himself” (Eph 4:13 BJ).

With its call to unity in truth and to living the truth in love, the Epistle to the Ephesians depicts the Christian life as the growth of a body to maturity or, in another passage, as the erection of a building whose cornerstone is Christ. The goal is a completeness, a perfection, a fullness that lies ahead and toward which each Christian and the Christian fellowship as a whole must grow.

Ecumenical dialogue among separated Christians is a part of this process of growth. Its aim is not to produce a statement of minimum essentials by which one Church can measure the orthodoxy of another, but to deepen, strengthen, and enrich the life of both. As Vatican II declares in the Constitution on Divine Revelation: “There is growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. . . . As the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her” (*Dei Verbum* 8).

¹ As part of the work of its eleventh biannual meeting held in New York City, the Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation in the United States (ARC) unanimously approved this statement on January 23, 1972. The statement is made public in the hope of advancing one of the aims of the *Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission* written at Malta, January 3, 1968. The pertinent section of the “Malta Report” is 5: “We agree that revealed Truth is given in holy Scripture and formulated in dogmatic definitions through thought-forms and language which are historically conditioned. We are encouraged by the growing agreement of theologians in our two Communion on methods of interpreting this historical transmission of revelation. We should examine further and together both the way in which we assent to and apprehend dogmatic truths and the legitimate means of understanding and interpreting them theologically. Although we agree that doctrinal comprehensiveness must have its limits, we believe that diversity has an intrinsic value when used creatively rather than destructively.”

Churches coming out of the isolation imposed by the divisions of the past find that they are able to contribute to each other's growth in the fullness of divine truth. But unless the origins and purposes of theological discourse are rightly understood differences in terminology and in modes of conceptualization, due in part to past isolation, can lead to failure of communication and even impasses in doctrinal discussion. Theological discourse must always be interpreted within the horizon of man's experience of the divine mystery because it grows out of that experience. From this it follows that no formal or conceptual statement can ever be fully adequate to the religious data. Because of man's nature, however, his religious experience must come to expression by every means available to him.

Whenever man speaks about the engulfing mystery of God he speaks from within a particular situation—geographical, temporal, cultural, sociological, psychological, linguistic. . . . Because of the transcendence of God's mystery, one must always speak about him symbolically, but these symbols, taken from man's experience of the world, always have the stamp of human particularity. Even statements made by groups of men in representative councils bear this stamp of particularity. For example, when the early councils apply to God and Christ terms such as substance, person, and nature, they are using the terminology and conceptual tools available in a given culture. When these terms in another time and culture take on different connotations their effectiveness for expressing the truths of faith may be impaired. Human discourse even under the working of grace is perspectival and hence also pluralistic.

To acknowledge the relativity of theological statements is not to fall into relativism but to escape it. Because encounter with God always calls man beyond himself it must be recognized that all religious expression may itself be transcended. The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit moves communities of believers to express their life in Christ in ways that may not be abstractly deducible from their previous statements.

The result of the preceding analysis is to recognize that Christians who are orthodox in their faith may express it in varying formulations, as the Bible and the creeds of the early Church so well exemplify. This does not mean that all formulations are

equally appropriate. Some may in fact express, and conduce to, a misapprehension of God and his relationship to man, and thus be impediments to the Christian life.

The participants in this dialogue, fortunately, rejoice in the possession of the same Sacred Scriptures, the same creedal formulations of the ancient Church, and a substantial body of shared intellectual and spiritual tradition. They also acknowledge the need for critical scholarship if the meaning of the ancient texts is to be accessible to modern man. There are, however, some other doctrinal formulations which, in the course of a sadly separated history, have been adopted by one communion or the other and are generally seen as obstacles to full communion between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

In order to promote the cause of full mutual recognition and full ecclesiastical communion, the participants commend the following operative principles in the assessment of whether such divergent formulations do indeed constitute an essential obstacle to full communion:

1. *Paradoxical Tension*

As previously pointed out, theological language never adequately corresponds to the reality to which it refers. In revelation itself there is always an inherent tension between God's self-disclosure and man's capacity for understanding: human thought and language can never encompass the divine mystery. For this reason there is a peculiar ambiguity in theological statements. The grammatical opposite of a true statement of faith, therefore, may in some sense be also true. E.g., man is—or is not—saved by faith alone; the Bible is—or is not—the word of God.

2. *Contextual Transfer*

It should be recognized that past doctrinal utterances were made in definite cultural situations that are not our own, and hence that they reflect the presuppositions, terminology, and concerns of their times. This means that a Christian today, in order to be orthodox and to maintain continuity with the tradition expressed in the language of another day, may need to find new language and even new concepts to express the same truth; e.g., the descent into hell.

3. *Relative Emphasis*

It should be acknowledged that some statements made in the past as "definitions" and imposed under anathema, are no longer insisted upon because, at least today, they do not seem to be of crucial importance in relationship to salvation. E.g., the teaching of the Council of Vienne on the soul as the substantial form of the human body (*DS* 902).

4. *Doctrinal Pluralism*

(a) Within a single Church one and the same formula often receives different theological interpretations—e.g., the Banesian and Molinist interpretations of the Tridentine canons on grace; the use of the Thirty-Nine Articles in the Church of England. We see these as instances of the principle of comprehensiveness which, rightly understood, involves living in tension and does not admit of easy compromise or superficial syncretism.

(b) Because the same mystery can sometimes be conveyed more effectively by different formulas in different cultural contexts, one may support a variety of theological expressions among different groups of Christians. In Churches entering into full ecclesiastical communion, different creedal formulas are sometimes mutually acknowledged—e.g., the use or omission of the "Filioque" in the agreement between Churches of the East and West at the time of the Council of Florence.

Both these forms of doctrinal diversity should be taken into consideration in assessing the possibilities of overcoming obstacles to union among separated Churches.

5. *Empathetic Evaluation*

Any Church, in deciding whether it can enter into communion with another, should seek to appraise the role played by the formulations of the other community in the life of that community. One should not condemn all that one would not personally wish to say.

In this connection one may apply the principle of St. Ignatius Loyola, prefixed to the *Spiritual Exercises*: ". . . It is necessary to suppose that every good Christian is more ready to put a good interpretation on another's statement than to condemn it as

false. If an orthodox construction cannot be put on a proposition, the one who made it should be asked how he understands it. . . .”

6. *Responsive Listening*

Since no Church exists by itself in this world, every Church should listen respectfully to what the others find unacceptable in its own formulations, and consider whether its own official doctrinal commitments can be re-expressed in contemporary statements that remove the occasion for offense. In this way the Churches will be of mutual help to one another in their ongoing expression of the faith.

Mindful of the fact that the revelation once for all given to man is the person of Christ present in the Spirit, Christians are called to be faithful to that presence at all times in their living tradition. The foregoing principles should be applied in conformity to that abiding presence, and thus in a way that leads to an ever richer appropriation of the gospel. “So the body grows until it has built itself up in love” (Eph 4:16 BJ).

Comment on the “Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine” of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission

The United States Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation (ARC) rejoices that the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) at its third meeting (Windsor, Sept. 7, 1971) issued an “Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine.” In accordance with the suggestion of the International Commission, the United States Consultation discussed this statement at some length at its eleventh meeting (Jan. 20-24, 1972) and again at its twelfth meeting (June 11-15, 1972) and offers its evaluation.

We recognize that according to the intention of its authors, the Agreed Statement is not a celebration of a reconciliation already achieved between our two Communion but rather a group consensus which, it is hoped, will serve as an instrument or catalyst for such reconciliation. Consequently, the statement should not be viewed as a complete and definitive body of eucharistic doctrine. It is a marker along the way to a fuller and more embracing consensus.

In its broad outlines, the statement meets with our warm approval. We accept it as a helpful study document to promote full communion between our Churches. We especially commend the expressed intention of the Commission “to seek a deeper understanding of the reality of the eucharist which is consonant with biblical teaching and with our common inheritance” (no. 1). In addition, we welcome the real progress shown in this statement which, in our judgment, expresses positions that may be accepted by both Anglicans and Roman Catholics in loyalty to their respective Churches.

In its closing paragraph, we note, the statement claims that the participants believe that they “have reached substantial agreement on the doctrine of the eucharist.” We agree that if all

Anglicans and Roman Catholics were to see this statement as an adequate expression of the essentials of their eucharistic faith, as the signers evidently did, divergences on eucharistic doctrine would no longer constitute an obstacle to full unity between our two Communion. Most of the members of our Consultation, both Anglican and Roman Catholic, find the Agreed Statement adequate.

However, as the authors of the statement well know, there are in both our Communion important constituencies who would not be satisfied with the Agreed Statement. Even in our own Consultation there are a few who find the statement, on one point or another, either too vague or too restrictive for them to accept it as an adequate expression of the essentials of their eucharistic faith.

The hesitations voiced in our Consultation have focused on two main issues—sacrifice and real presence. Regarding sacrifice some feel that a statement of this kind should clearly affirm that the eucharist is a sacrifice. While the Agreed Statement can be read as implicitly affirming this, some Anglicans and Roman Catholics, even in our own Consultation, feel that this point needs to be made explicit before sufficient agreement can be said to have been reached. In this connection some would like to see greater clarity as to the notion of sacrifice as the word is used in the statement.

With regard to the real presence, some members of our Consultation found that the first sentence of paragraph 6, affirming that “the bread and wine . . . in this mystery, become his body and blood,” could, taken in itself, suggest a restrictive understanding of the real presence. In some future modification, they suggested, this sentence could be phrased in a more inclusive way, so as to emphasize those traditions that insist as well on a more dynamic or spiritual interpretation of the real presence. In this way the statement might be made acceptable to a wider constituency who might not be satisfied with its present form.

Recognizing the great progress represented by this important statement of the International Commission, and the desirability of extending and deepening the consensus that the members of the Commission have already found among themselves, we invite the people of our respective Communion in the United States

to join together in studying the statement thoughtfully and prayerfully. We commit ourselves to facilitating this process in whatever way we can and will prepare a study guide for this purpose. In this connection we should like to call attention to the statement of principles regarding methodology which our Consultation adopted on January 24, 1972.¹ These principles, we believe, are pertinent to the present discussion of eucharistic doctrine. In view of the ultimately ineffable nature of the eucharistic mystery, theological reflection will always fall short of the reality we experience in eucharistic worship.

Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation U.S.A.

¹ "Doctrinal Agreement and Christian Unity: Methodological Considerations"

Response to the “Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine” Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

The full membership of the Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (BCEIA) of the NCCB of the U.S.A., wishes to respond to the “Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine” adopted by ARCIC at Windsor, September 7, 1971, and authorized for publication by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by the Cardinal-President of S.P.C.U., December 31, 1971, for “further study and discussion.”

This Committee is aware of the Commentaries of the Roman Catholic Chairman of ARCIC, Bishop Alan C. Clark; and of the Roman Catholic member, Reverend Herbert Ryan, S.J., in *Worship*—Vol. 46; and, likewise, those by the Anglican member of ARCIC, Dr. Julian Charley, and the Anglican theologian, A. M. Allchin in *One in Christ*, 1971-2.

This Committee is also aware of the comments of the Theological Commission of NCCB, USA, and of the statement of the Roman Catholic National Theology Commission of England.

This Committee (BCEIA) accepts with gratitude the comments of its own sub-committee, ARC—USA, in joint discussion with the Episcopal members, and especially the reservations of some of the members of the Joint Committee re: Presence and Sacrifice.

As a Committee of the whole, the members of BCEIA are happy to observe:

1. That serious dialogue on the Eucharist as recommended by the II Vatican Council’s Decree *On Ecumenism* No. 22, has been so successfully employed at the highest level by representatives of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Communion. And, above all, that this dialogue has issued in the “Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine.”

2. As Roman Catholics believing as stated in the Proemium of the new Roman Missal (1970) that "the Church's rule of prayer corresponds to the Church's unchanging rule of faith," we are happy to see in the agreed statement a reflection of "the faith of the Church" as found, for example, in the antiphon "O Sacrum Convivium"; for the "agreed statement" paraphrases this celebrated summary of Catholic Eucharistic doctrine in its number 4. But the statement is more than a summary; we find its four salient points of Catholic faith:

(a) "In quo Christus sumitur." (Cf. Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the agreed statement).

(b) "Recolitur memoria passionis ejus." (Cf. No. 5 of the agreed statement).

(c) "Mens impletur gratia" (Cf. Nos. 9 and 10 of the agreed statement).

(d) "Futurae gloriae pignus datur" (Cf. No. 11 of the agreed statement).

3. We wish to commend ARCIC for bypassing polemics of the 16th and subsequent centuries and adopting more contemporary—and more ancient and traditional expressions as found in recent Roman Catholic documents:

(a) *Mystici Corporis* of Pius XII, June 29, 1943 (Cf. Sec. 81, 82 and 83).

(b) *Mediator Dei* of Pius XII of November 20, 1947 (Cf. Sec. 68, 69, 70 and 115).

(c) II Vatican Council Decree "On Priestly Life and Ministry" (Cf. No. 2).

4. We express the Christian hope that on the principles of the agreed statement, whatever differences appear to divide the Anglican and Roman Catholic Communion on this subject of the Eucharist can be solved.

September 28, 1972

Response to the “Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine” House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church

RESOLVED, That the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church meeting at Pocono Manor, Pa., October 29, 1971

(1) Receives with gratitude the Statement on the doctrine of the Eucharist issued by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission and welcomes the substantial agreement and common eucharistic faith it expresses,

(2) believes that the Statement, if agreed upon by the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, would remove eucharistic faith as an obstacle to the unity sought by the churches in God's name; and

(3) commends the Statement, when released for publication, to the Episcopal Church for study and action at the next General Convention.

Prospects for Anglican— Roman Catholic Relations

A LECTURE DELIVERED BY CARDINAL WILLEBRANDS
AT THE GREAT HALL, LAMBETH PALACE,
ON 4 OCTOBER, 1972

Your Grace, Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

The invitation of His Grace, the Archbishop, to speak on the occasion of this visit about the prospects for Anglican-Roman Catholic relations provides me with the opportunity to assess, in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the present state of our relations, the stages passed through since the renewal of our relations, the hope which inspires our holy purpose and guides us towards the final goal. This assessment should at the same time be an examination of conscience before God and before the Church.

I will of course avoid every attempt at or even appearance of foretelling the future, since we speak here about a subject to which I would like to apply the saying: "one sows and another reaps".

In speaking about recent and present sowing, we may easily repeat platitudes. Nevertheless it seems to me necessary, if we will consider the prospects for the harvest, to study first what has been sown.

When Pope John announced the first time, on the memorable 25 January 1959, that the Church was to have a new ecumenical Council, he expressed the hope that this Council would serve the holy cause of Christian Unity, the restoration of which, he said, all Christians desire so ardently. His words stirred immediately the emotions and expectation of the whole Christian world, because they announced a new attitude of the Roman Catholic Church not in a platonic phrase, but in connection with such an important event as was to be the second Vatican Council.

Moreover they revealed the personal feeling of the Pope, who was himself so deeply possessed by this desire. Some months later, on 5 June 1960, he created the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, under the leadership of Cardinal Bea. The reactions of the Christian world to the initiatives of the Pope were generally positive and warm. The then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, decided even to conclude his pilgrimage to Jerusalem with a courtesy visit to the Pope of Rome, thus ending his service as Archbishop of Canterbury under the sign of the cross and the resurrection of the Lord, by opening a new period in the relations between the two Churches. He was the first Archbishop of Canterbury to cross the threshold of the Vatican since the Reformation. This fact was in the event more important than the cautious restrictions expressed, qualifying the visit as a courtesy visit and recalling the serious doctrinal differences and prejudices separating the two Churches. The same year Bernard Pawley, Canon of Ely, was appointed as the liaison officer of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in Rome, nearly two years before observers were invited to attend the Vatican Council. In this way a link, real and official, between Canterbury and Rome was created for the first time since the Reformation.

The relationships thus established were multiplied and intensified during the Council, when representatives of different provinces of the Anglican Communion guided by a bishop were present at all the sessions. If we compare this regular conversation at the Vatican Council with the Malines Conversations, we can measure the difference. In a certain way the conversation at the Council was a silent one, because the observers had no right to speak at the sessions, but their presence was highly eloquent and fruitful in the conversations with the Secretariat. It was also quite official and the observers were acknowledged and received as brothers in the faith. It seemed normal and appropriate that Bishop Moorman, one of the observers who attended all the sessions of the Council, spoke in the name of all the observers at the farewell audience with the Pope, and if we study the writings of several Anglican observers after the Council and on the Council, we can notice with gratitude the impact of the Council on our relations, and the increase of mutual knowledge and love, which was expressed, too modestly even, in the phrase about the "special place" which the Anglican Communion occu-

pies in relation to the Roman See (*De Oecum.* 13). The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the Malines Conversations took place in an atmosphere very different from that of the period of those Conversations themselves.

Even during the Council the present Archbishop of Canterbury expressed his desire to pay an official visit to the Church of Rome, but he intended to make it only after the Council, in order to have a clear and solid base for a meeting between the two Churches and for an exchange of views on their common desire to find a way, with the grace of God, towards the restoration of full communion between them. This visit laid the foundation for the present state of relations between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church and for their further development. Of course it is not my intention to tell again the story of the visit. But I would like to pay attention to some aspects of the visit which seem to me significant in themselves and in their consequences.

1. The visit had the consent of the metropolitans of the Anglican Communion, who therefore in some way were all involved in this event. So two Christian traditions, which have a common origin but had grown asunder in conflict, came together resolved to overcome the conflict and to restore communion. From the time of Gregory the Great a legitimate variety within the one Church had developed; in fact the letter of Pope Gregory to Augustine of Canterbury had laid the foundation for this. Can the break be healed and "the unity in truth" of which the Common Declaration of the Pope and the Archbishop speaks, be restored, "founded" as the same Declaration says, "on the Gospels and on the ancient common traditions"?

After the visit a preparatory joint Commission was established, which had to survey the whole field and make concrete proposals not only in theological matters but also in matters of practical difficulty. This Commission was deeply convinced of its responsibility and declared with decision in its first communication: "After four hundred years of separation between the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches, official representatives from both sides have taken the first steps towards restoring full unity". Was it superficial, irresponsible or reckless to use this language? It expressed doubtless the firm conviction of the Commission

which after three meetings in one year drew up a programme of theological matters and practical recommendations and proposed different stages through which, with the grace of God, the goal of full unity could be reached. Rome answered to this work in a personal letter of the Holy Father expressing his gratitude, and in a detailed answer from the Secretariat for Unity explaining how the continuation, on the basis already laid down, should be planned. This programme is so multiple and varied, that if it were to be executed in all its details, every concrete and decisive step would be postponed to an unforeseeable future. But the strength and the weakness of the programme do not lie in this. Its real significance is in the readiness to consider every possible problem, theoretical or practical, with the earnest desire to overcome it on the basis of the Gospel and the ancient common traditions. Moreover it is obvious that progress and a positive result in some central and essential points would carry with it progress in the whole texture. I would like, however, to remind you of the first point approved for further study, which was: "A common declaration of faith between Catholics and Anglicans." There are some who claim that common declarations have to be avoided as being necessarily ambiguous and creating confusion. However a result only becomes clear if it is expressed and ambiguity is only seen as necessary if the desire for real and honest agreement is absent. A common declaration of faith on points which have separated us or have been controversial during four centuries supposes a creative work concerning language and expression. There is no sense in repeating the old controversial and polemical formulas. Already the Council declared: "The manner and order in which Catholic belief is expressed should in no way become an obstacle to dialogue with our brethren. It is, of course, essential that doctrine be clearly presented in its entirety. Nothing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false conciliatory approach which harms the purity of Catholic doctrine and obscures its assured genuine meaning. At the same time, Catholic belief needs to be explained more profoundly and precisely, in ways and in terminology which our separated brethren too can really understand." (*De Oecum.* 11). And in the document on dialogue issued by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity it is said: "Approaching together the mystery of Christ, men discover the difficulty of speaking the same Christian language. By language is meant not just the vocabulary, but above

all mentality, the genius of a culture, philosophical tools, traditions and style of life." (*Reflections and suggestions concerning ecumenical dialogue IV, 4, c*).

This text may remind us of the profundity and complexity of the difficulties which surround a dialogue between Christians of different traditions at the initial stage. Once they have come to understand each other, and perhaps even to agree, the question arises: how to convey this shared enrichment to those who did not share the dialogue and its evolution or are even outsiders to the whole ecumenical movement but nevertheless belong to the people of God.

The document on dialogue goes on: "With each one using the language of his own Communion, the same words may signify quite different realities in one Church and in another, while different words may express the same reality. Since it is a question of establishing real and complete communication, of eliminating the risk of misunderstandings and of not travelling unaware along parallel ways, it is absolutely necessary that those taking part in dialogue, even though they be formed by the spirit of the Scriptures and express themselves in a language inspired by the Scriptures should submit the language they use to a hermeneutic, a critical study." (*loc. cit.*)

The Joint Commission which succeeded the Preparatory Commission chose three main topics for further study: Eucharist—Ministry—Authority.

On 31 December 1971 the Commission published an Agreed Statement on the Eucharist. I want to express sincere gratitude for the work done by the Commission. This kind of work is exactly what we hoped for. I appreciate the difficulty in taking up this central and essential subject and I respect the efforts and decision shown by the Commission in giving this arduous service to the Church. Those who have mixed feelings and reserves about this Statement, I ask: Had we the right to expect more from the Commission? Can we ask from the Commission what can only be done by the Churches themselves? At present the statement is submitted to further study and discussion by the theologians. The Commission will examine their suggestions and criticisms. The official authorities of the Church will not take over the task proper to the theologians, but follow their further work with

confidence. Moreover the work will be completed by the study on ministry, closely related to the theme of the Eucharist, and we hope and pray that it will be possible to express also a common faith on the ministry in the Church. A final judgment on the result, its implications and consequences can only be given at a later stage. But we may say that the intention, expressed in the Common Declaration of the Pope and the Archbishop has been seriously pursued, that the work achieved so far has given new hope and inspires our prayers.

Though doctrinal matters are of great importance on the way towards unity in truth, "matters of practical difficulty" (to use the expression of the Common Declaration) are often felt more directly, are part of the daily life of the Churches, touch from close by and intimately the people of the Church. The Malta report listed a certain number of them. With the development of the ecumenical movement several of them have been solved and suggestions have been fulfilled almost unnoticed, such as common prayer, development of relationships between religious orders of similar inspiration, consultation on pastoral problems. But one of the most sensitive points was doubtless the question of mixed marriages. As in many other cases, the practical and pastoral problems are here intimately linked with a theological question: the doctrine of marriage, its sacramental character, its indissolubility, its relation to Church and State, etc. On the doctrinal questions, a special joint Commission has been very helpful in clarifying the positions on both sides; concerning the practical difficulties one can measure the difference between the provisional instruction published on the eve of the Archbishop's visit and the later, final norms, given in the *Motu Proprio* of 1970. The latter gives general instructions and norms, founded on Catholic principles, which in practice allow different applications according to the local situation and concrete circumstances, on which the local authority has to judge and to decide.

Practicalities

As practical difficulties I would consider also questions of psychological and historical heritage in relationships, lack of knowledge, of understanding, attitudes of mistrust, fear of the unknown future. It is often said that the desire of the people to go ahead, to overcome all obstacles on the way towards unity is

greater than the readiness of the leaders to go. This may be true with regard to some aspects, but there are also examples where authorities or leading theologians are ahead of the situation among the people. Clarification and honest, responsible agreement on principles and doctrine are basic and necessary also in this field. Then follows communication in order to establish general and deep conviction. In this context also the work of competent, engaged men, in steady contact with the authorities of the Church, is very important.

What I have said about "a serious dialogue" between the RC Church and the Anglican Communion concerns one aspect of the Archbishop's visit and its consequences.

2. The other aspect which I would like to submit to your consideration is the spiritual nature of our relationships. The second Vatican Council declared: "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. . . . We should therefore pray to the divine Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them. . . . Let all Christ's faithful remember that the more purely they strive to live according to the gospel, the more they are fostering and even practising Christian Unity." (*De Oecum.* 7).

When the Pope welcomed the Archbishop at the Vatican, he stressed the ecumenical importance of the visit without dissimulating "the serious and difficult problems" which "remain as difficult as ever". But he opened a perspective of hope, indicating the new spirit in which we approach them: "we can study and meditate upon them together, without any dissimulation or human pride, without any shadow of earthly interests, and in accordance with the word of Christ and with the help of the Holy Spirit". And concluding his address of welcome, the Holy Father developed a motive which underlines his whole talk: "the truly spiritual and religious value of our meeting. . . . Its importance lies in our seeking together, seeking to profess our common fidelity to Christ together, to discover prayers, both new and old, which can bring our hearts and our voices together in celebrating the greatness of God and of his plan of salvation for the whole of mankind, which he brought about through Christ."

I hope you will forgive me the length of these quotations, but personally I attach a great importance to the spiritual nature of ecumenical relationships and of the search for unity. I think it is characteristic of the way in which the Archbishop of Canterbury speaks about Christian Unity, that he puts together the notions of unity and holiness, or the idea of unity in Christ and unity among ourselves, being all members of the one body of which Christ is the Head. So did he express himself in Rome, speaking to Cardinal Bea: "The work of Christian Unity is inseparable from the work of Christian holiness. As God calls us all to unity so he calls us to a closer union with Our Lord Jesus Christ in the way of holiness." In a sermon on "the recovery of unity", preached at Geneva on 24 March 1966, immediately after his visit to Pope Paul VI, he said: "Such is Christian Unity, the only Christian Unity. It is the binding together of men and women to one another in the common life of the body of Christ. It is the binding of lives to God himself through the forgiveness of sins. It is the binding up of each life so that its name can truly be not legion but one. These aspects of Christian Unity are properly inseparable. So in the high-priestly prayer at the supper Our Lord says: 'Father, I pray that as thou art in me and I in thee, so they may be one in us'. The unity of disciples with one another goes with their union with the Father and the Son, in truth and holiness." (*One in Christ*, 1967, p. 3). I find it highly significant that the Archbishop, who has emphasised on several occasions the necessity of having unity in truth, here amplified and completed this idea, putting together "truth and holiness". This reminds us of the word of our Lord in his high-priestly prayer: "Sanctify them in the truth" (Jo. 17, 17). Recently in a similar way the Archbishop spoke in the episcopal Cathedral of New York on the text: "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit."

These principles are beautifully expressed in the prayer for unity which we find in the accession service of the Book of Common Prayer and which was said by the Archbishop at the Service of Prayer in the Basilica of St. Paul Without-the-Walls.

A Spiritual Relation

A spiritual sense has so deeply permeated Catholic-Anglican relations that an occasion which in earlier days would have stirred

up feelings of bitterness and opened old wounds now led to the warmest expression of respect and affection. I mean the canonisation of the forty martyrs in England and Wales of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The words spoken on that occasion by the Holy Father calling for unity were full of implications, as we will see, and found fraternal response from the Archbishop of Canterbury in his Christmas letter to the Pope and in a sermon in Canterbury Cathedral, during the week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 1971.

If ever we deserve the blessed day of grace on which we will embrace each other "in the one authentic Communion of the family of Christ", we will need all the spiritual strength which is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

My reflections are doubtless based on a choice of facts and events, which is very incomplete and perhaps arbitrary. I make no apology for being incomplete, because I had no intention of giving a survey and moreover facts and events have been so numerous and significant in all parts of the world, where Catholics and Anglicans meet, that it would be impossible to take them all into consideration. It is a reason for hope and consolation that whenever we receive in the Secretariat for unity reports on the ecumenical movement from local Churches, the relations between Catholics and Anglicans are generally said to be marked by fraternal co-operation, mutual trust and love. This means that new and positive developments are not limited to a few persons and places.

Already in 1968 the Lambeth Conference, in its sectional report on relations with the Roman Catholic Church, was able to point to a number of fields in which progress was being made "to varying degrees in various places". That progress has since undoubtedly been furthered and its front broadened, in some places quite remarkably; this has sometimes been stimulated by such official guidance as that given in the second part of the *Directorium Ecumenicum* on "Ecumenism in Institutions of Advanced Learning". But local energy is in the end decisive. One can point in this country, for instance, to developments at Durham, at Oxford and in the relationships between Heythrop and London University—developments which are bound to broaden and strengthen the solid learned foundations on which official dialogue necessarily rests.

Speaking of the work of the Permanent Joint Commission then about to be set up, the 1968 report hoped that it would "be representative of the Anglican Communion as a whole" and that it would give early attention to "the theology of ministry which forms part of the theology of the Church". As we know, the Permanent Joint Commission has now begun the study of this problem. It is my personal hope that the members of the Commission will not look back to the past for its own sake, but try to ascertain whether *at present* Catholics and Anglicans are able to profess in conscience the same faith about the Sacrament of Orders.

What has been said by the Lambeth Conference of 1968 about episcopacy justifies the phrase of the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council: "Among those in which some Catholic traditions and institutions continue to exist, the Anglican Communion occupies a special place" (n. 13). This however does not affect the necessity of the joint theological research now undertaken by the Catholic-Anglican international Commission about the nature of the ministry, including episcopacy, and about apostolic succession. For both Churches, episcopacy is not only an historical form of organisation of the Church, but a structure which we have received from the Lord through the Apostles and which is accepted in faith for our salvation. The documents of the Second Vatican Council, especially the Constitution on the Church and the Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church will help us to discern whether we share really a common faith about episcopacy. The Lambeth Conference set great value on the notion of collegiality. In this context it may be interesting to notice that the Secretary of the Synod of Bishops of the R.C. Church is a member of this present delegation. The sense of collegiality at the same time enhances the sense of the primacy in the Church, since no college exists without a president or as the Lambeth Conference said: "Within the college of bishops it is evident that there must be a president." As we believe that episcopacy is a structure within the people of God, given by its divine Founder, so we Roman Catholics believe, that the primacy of Peter and his successors within the college of the bishops was given by the Lord. We therefore see in the Papacy something essentially more than "a historic reality" and we welcome the words of the Lambeth Conference when it speaks of a Papacy

“whose developing role requires deep reflection and joint study by all concerned for the unity of the whole Body of Christ”. As the theology of the ministry forms part of the theology of the Church, so also the theology of the primacy.

I have chosen some significant events in the past, such as the Second Vatican Council, the meeting of the Archbishop of Canterbury with the Pope, the Lambeth Conference, as a basis and starting point for my reflections. Other facts and events, other documents could have been chosen. But if my premises have been solid and true, then my choice has not been arbitrary.

The Future

Looking to the future I would like to develop a consideration which seems to me important. If ever unity or full communion is bestowed upon us as a divine grace, to use the words of the Pope: “one authentic communion of the family of Christ: a communion of origin and of faith, a communion of priesthood and of rule, a communion of the saints in the freedom of love of the spirit of Jesus”, if ever this full communion is given to us, it has to be organic but it has not to be a unity of organisation.

There has always been a widespread fear, tacit or expressed, that union with Rome would mean unity of organisation, the loss of one’s own characteristic traditions, the yoke of uniform, foreign rule. The consequence of this was quite naturally an aversion from reunion. I think that it has become abundantly clear that this kind of unity does not constitute a Church. We know the phrase of the Malines Conversations: “united not absorbed”. In several places the Second Vatican Council has been much clearer and more explicit on this point, in the dogmatic Constitution on the Church, in the pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern world, in the Decree on Ecumenism, in the Decree on the Church’s missionary activity, in the Declaration on religious freedom and we can generally find in these documents the conviction that the unity of the Church is a reality which transcends all human power of organisation and is, with its sanctity, its Catholicity, its apostolicity, a divine gift which belongs to its mystery rather than being a product of human skill. The Decree on Ecumenism paraphrases the well known aphorism: “in essentialibus unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas”, in this way: “While preserving unity in essentials, let all members of the

Church, according to the office entrusted to each, preserve a proper freedom in the various forms of spiritual life and discipline, in the variety of liturgical rites, and even in the theological elaborations of revealed truth. In all things let charity be exercised" (N. 4). In an address given during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 1970 in Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, I developed the notion of a *typos* of a Church and the possibility of a plurality of *typoi* within the communion of the one and only Church of Christ. In this context I quoted the Second Vatican Council, which provides us authoritatively with a basis for this idea when it says: "By divine Providence it has come about that various Churches, established in various places by the apostles and their successors, have in the course of time coalesced into several groups, organically united, which, preserving the unity of faith and the unique divine constitution of the universal Church, enjoy their own liturgical usage, and their own theological and spiritual heritage" (*Lumen Gentium*, N. 23). The idea expressed in this text, like its more general idea of a *typos* of a Church, goes surely beyond the mere notion of organisation, since the idea of a *typos* includes not only the external elements of organisation, but also elements touching the life of a particular Church. I went on to say: "The life of the Church needs a variety of *typoi* which would manifest the full Catholic and Apostolic character of the one and holy Church. . . . None of us, I fancy, underestimates what is needed of wisdom and discernment, of strength and patience, of loyalty and flexibility, of forbearance, of willingness to teach and to learn, if we are to make progress towards this goal." The fear of uniformity stretches out beyond mere organisation and touches all the elements which make up the life and traditions of a particular Church. I hope that what I have said will go some way towards dispelling these fears, where they persist. To go further in the same direction, I can quote the words of Pope Paul VI, spoken at the canonisation of the forty martyrs: "on the day when—God willing—the unity of faith and of Christian life is restored, no offense will be inflicted on the honour or the sovereignty of a great country such as England. There will be no seeking to lessen the legitimate prestige and the worthy patrimony of piety and usage proper to the Anglican Church." But if uniformity is not sought and even not desirable, there must be true unity. Vatican II speaks of "various Churches . . . organically united" (*L. Gentium*, 23) and the Pope, as we have just seen,

speaks of "the one authentic Communion of the family of Christ". We have our difficulties regarding organisation, uniformity, typology. I would not say that they are not real, but they are surely not the greatest or the most serious. Organic unity means the unity of the body of Christ. "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body . . . and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12, 12-13) wrote St. Paul to the Corinthians, and to the Ephesians: "There is one body and one Spirit" (Eph. 4, 4). Organic unity is based upon faith, as the same Apostle explained to the Romans: "since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1). The root of our division lies there, where organic unity, the unity of the body or of the family of Christ should have its origin: in faith. We are still divided in matters of faith, there is our greatest difficulty and since faith rests "in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2, 5) there must be our most ardent prayer that we may be restored to the unity of faith. One baptism should lead into one faith. Since it is a task of theology to explain to us the content of our faith, so that we may "always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3, 15), we are grateful for every effort made by theologians for the cause of unity. Since faith is before and above all a gracious and merciful gift of the Father in heaven, we will be "with one accord devoted to prayer" like "the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brethren" (Acts 1, 14) expecting the descent of the Holy Spirit, and our prayer will join the sacerdotal prayer of Christ. We are all called to one hope (cfr. Eph. 4, 4) and "hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom. 5, 5).

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