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Concerning the future work of the Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue

On Tuesday 25 November 2003, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, met with the Reverend Canon John L. Peterson, Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council, at the offices of the Pontifical Council. At the meeting the future of Anglican Roman Catholic dialogue was discussed, especially in the light of recent developments within the life of the Anglican Communion.

As a result of the conversation, it was decided that the next plenary session of the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) and its work towards the publication and reception of a Common Statement of Faith would have to be put on hold in the light of ecclesiological concerns raised as a consequence of these events. At the same time, the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church remain committed to continuing their dialogue, and agree that the work of the sub-committees of the Commission would proceed.

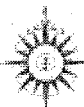
Canon Peterson attended meetings of the Anglican Centre in Rome over the same time period.

In a separate development, Cardinal Kasper has welcomed the request of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, that an appropriate means be found to reflect jointly upon the ecclesiological issues raised by recent developments within the Anglican Communion in the light of the relevant Agreed Statements of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). An ad hoc sub-commission of IARCCUM will soon be established to undertake this task.

The Cardinal and Secretary General agreed that the current work of ARCIC should proceed until the completion of the current phase in 2004, after which attention will be given to planning the future agenda and next phase of the theological dialogue. ARCIC, which began its work in 1970, is the main instrument of theological dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church, whereas IARCCUM, which was established in 2001, is an episcopally led body aimed at fostering practical initiatives that would give expression to the degree of faith shared by Anglicans and Catholics. The two commissions are intended to complement and run alongside each other.

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