

Rome, Canterbury and Armagh

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Church of Ireland
Evangelical Fellowship

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FOREWORD

All parts of the Anglican Communion have been asked to consider the ARCIC Final Report.

It is important that members of the synods of the Church of Ireland should be well informed about the Report itself and the teaching of our Prayer Book. The ordinary man and woman in the pew will find this booklet helpful in exploring the extent to which the claimed areas of agreement are compatible with Scripture which, as our sixth Article tells us, "contains all things necessary for salvation."

I also commend this booklet to members of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland who may wonder why suggestions of a united Church caused such a stir in the Church of Ireland, and to members of other Protestant Churches who may feel that the Final Report tends to alienate them from the fellowship that we enjoy together at a practical level in this land.

Finally, I hope that this little book will help some to remain with confidence within our Church; to understand better its biblical basis; to enjoy more deeply its worship and to contribute more devotedly to its witness to our Lord and Saviour in Ireland.

Lent 1984

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

From its foundation in the fifth century the Christian Church in Ireland maintained an independent yet orthodox faith for several hundred years.

In more recent times the Church of Ireland, while cherishing its close relationship with the Church of England, has also valued its independence within the Anglican Communion. It was disestablished from the state in 1869 and is governed by its own General Synod, comprising a Lower House of Clerical and Lay representatives and an Upper House of Bishops. The Primate of All Ireland resides in the See of Armagh in the Northern Province of the Church. The Southern Province comes under the pastoral care of the Archbishop of Dublin.

The Church of Ireland was honoured when the present Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd. Henry McAdoo, was invited to become Anglican co-Chairman of the first Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission. In Ireland there has thus been a particular interest in the publication, in 1982, of the Final Report of that Commission.

The tragic mixture of religion and politics in Ireland is well known (though not well understood, even within this island). It is argued by some that union between the Church of Ireland and the Church of Rome would lead to a reduction of violence in our community. Others believe that it would lead to even deeper division. The author of this booklet, however, is persuaded that possible future union is entirely a theological matter and must be considered on spiritual grounds alone.

Some members of the Church of Ireland are concerned that decisions concerning the future of our Church might be taken at an international level beyond our control. They should be reassured that such decisions are entirely in the hands of our own General Synod.

Each member Church of the Anglican Communion worldwide has been asked to respond officially to the Final Report. The response of the Church of Ireland will be made by its General Synod. This

present booklet is not that response, but is an Evangelical view from within the Church of Ireland.

It had its origins in a study group within the Church of Ireland Evangelical Fellowship. Papers by Rev. Clive West, Rector of All Saints' parish, Belfast (Historical Background and Ministry) and Rev. John McCammon, Rector of Lisburn Cathedral (Eucharist), form the basis of the corresponding chapters in the booklet. I wrote the remaining material and edited the whole.

The booklet has two main types of reader in view: the theologian (of any persuasion) and the Church of Ireland lay person. It falls short of its aspirations in both respects but is written in the hope that it will provide a positive contribution to the quest for that unity in truth which will bring glory to God and blessing to his Church on earth.

DERMOT O'CALLAGHAN

1 INTRODUCTION

The Final Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission consists of a number of documents. For the sake of brevity we shall refer to the report as 'ARCIC', identifying quotations by reference to their page number.

The ARCIC report contains the three Agreed Statements (on Eucharist, Ministry and Authority) which were originally published separately over a period of years as the work of the Commission progressed. The report also contains an 'Elucidation' of each Agreed Statement (written in response to comments and criticisms received), together with a second Agreed Statement on Authority which deals at greater length with the problems of papal infallibility and primacy. It is important to note that the Agreed Statements carry the authority of their signatories only. The Final Report is an officially commissioned discussion document which must now be considered by the Roman Catholic Church and the various national Anglican Churches.

The immediate sequence of events leading up to the publication of the Final Report is tabulated below:

- 1966 : Visit of Archbishop Michael Ramsey to the Vatican, resulting in Common Declaration.
Preparatory Commission (which led to ARCIC) held meetings at Gazzada (Italy), Huntercombe (England) and Malta.
Conclusions called "The Malta Report" called for a 'Permanent Commission', later changed to 'International' as in ARCIC.
- 1971 : First Agreed Statement – 'Eucharist' (Windsor)
- 1973 : Second Agreed Statement – 'Ministry and Ordination' (Canterbury)
- 1976 : Third Agreed Statement – 'Authority in the Church' (Venice)
- 1981 : 'Authority in the Church II' (Windsor)
- 1982 : 'The Final Report'.

We believe that it is instructive to view these recent developments against the background of the history of contact between Rome and Canterbury since the Reformation. Accordingly we devote a chapter to this subject before proceeding to consider in turn the three major topics explored by ARCIC—Eucharist, Ministry and Authority. A further chapter briefly addresses the vital issue of Salvation, about which our respective communions are in serious disagreement and which, unfortunately, was not on the agenda for ARCIC. A concluding chapter points the way which we believe future discussions must follow if they are to deal realistically with the causes of our division.

The doctrine of the Church of Ireland is officially stated in the Articles of Religion which are to be found at page 337 of the current Prayer Book. They are accepted as the expression of our Church's doctrine, subordinate to Holy Scripture. Those not familiar with the teaching of our Church may find a reading of the '39 Articles' helpful in understanding our response to the ARCIC Report.

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Where do we begin in a study of ARCIC? A list of key dates is given in Appendix I and many starting places could be chosen. The year 1983 was the fifth centenary of the birth of Martin Luther and it seems appropriate to begin with the Reformation because in a real sense all Anglican - Roman Catholic dialogue is concerned with the division that came about at that time. Luther aimed at a reformed Catholicism but when that failed, division came about within the western Church. The great contribution of Luther to the Church was to restore a New Testament Christology: salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone, together with the principle that Scripture is the final arbiter in determining Christian teaching.

Conflict

The nailing of the 95 Theses to the church door at Wittenberg in 1517 has been regarded as the birth of the Reformation. In a love for the dramatic, however, it is all too easy to forget that there was much good will and heart-searching on both sides of the division. At the important Conference at Ratisbon in 1541, the Roman Catholic side was represented by men like Contrarini and the Protestant side by Melancthon and Bucer. The Roman side moved a long way towards evangelical theology. That Conference discussed what ARCIC was not asked to discuss - the central doctrines of sin, salvation and grace.¹

The Council of Trent (1545 -1563) was the official response to Luther and the Reformation.² The Council ruled out all hope of reconciliation for many centuries and both sides engaged in a long period of trench warfare. The theological ice-age had begun, each side having its cherished verbal formulae.³

Contact

The climate was cold but some individual Anglicans did maintain contact with Rome. Two names in particular deserve mention - Archbishop Wake and Lord Halifax.

William Wake was a leading ecumenical figure in the 18th century; he became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1715. Archbishop Wake's

correspondence with the Roman Catholic Church in France is important in any adequate study of Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue.⁴

Wake believed the Roman Catholic Church to be part of the true Church and longed for union with her, though he was quick to point out the obstacle that Rome taught things that 'Holy Scripture forbids us and the primitive Church never knew'. The great weakness in this dialogue was that Wake acted on his own authority. His correspondence with the French theologians was very secretive.

Anglo Catholicism

The second important contact came about through the rise of the Anglo Catholic Movement in the last century.

The birth of Anglo Catholicism took place 150 years ago. The famous Assize Sermon on National Apostasy preached by John Keble in 1833 was in part a protest at affairs within the Church of Ireland—the Irish Episcopate was about to be undermined by the suppression of ten Irish Sees.⁵

The Anglo Catholic movement has produced leaders in the dialogue between the Anglican and Roman traditions. One who stands out is Lord Halifax. He had an important meeting with Father Ferdinand Portal in Funchal, Madeira in 1889.⁶ Their discussions received a serious setback, however, with the publication of *Apostolicae Curae* in 1897 in which Leo XIII declared Anglican Orders to be "absolutely null and utterly void".

In the 1920's discussions took place at Malines under the chairmanship of the Belgian Primate, Cardinal Mercier. The Malines Conversations from 1921-1926 were the first real efforts at inter-Church dialogue for centuries, although the Anglican group was not representative of the range of Anglican opinion. Even so, Archbishop Davidson of Canterbury in a letter to Cardinal Mercier referred to the papacy as "that great unremoved mountain of difficulty".⁷

Vatican II

The second Vatican Council under Popes John XXIII and Paul VI (1962-1965) led to development of the dialogue between Rome

and Canterbury. The decree on Ecumenism in the documents of Vatican II showed a new spirit towards other traditions.⁸ Christians of other traditions were now separated brethren rather than heretics. One notes both these words, "brethren" and "separated".

Special recognition was given to Anglicans in the Decree on Ecumenism:

"Among those in which some Catholic traditions and institutions continue to exist, the Anglican Communion occupies a special place."

Yet while Vatican II undoubtedly achieved significant progress towards reconciliation with other Christian traditions, it has to be said that in terms of the size of the gulf that must be crossed, the movement has been small and hesitant (see Appendix II).

Recent Events

In March 1966 Archbishop Michael Ramsey visited Pope Paul VI in Rome. The Ramsey visit led to the setting up of a Preparatory Commission which met three times in 1967-1968. Their conclusions, The Malta Report, made provision for the calling together of a Commission with an equal number of theologians from each of the two Churches. The first meeting of ARCIC itself took place in January 1970.

Initial Criticism

Before assessing the work of the Commission, two criticisms are relevant:

- (i) Its composition was biased - *theologically* in favour of Anglo-Catholics (with only one evangelical representative), *nationally* in favour of white Anglo Saxons and *representationally* in favour of the clergy (with no lay theologians present). Many of the Final Report's weaknesses need to be interpreted in this light.
- (ii) Its terms of reference failed to include the basic doctrine of Justification by Grace through Faith which is fundamental in the division between the Church of Rome and all Reformed Churches.

David Evans, Anglican bishop of Peru, has argued that "justification is a vital doctrine, bearing in mind not just the neat text book

formulae, but what is taught and believed in thousands of churches in Latin America where a Roman Catholic folklore syncretism still holds sway, and where the Marian dogmas are wholeheartedly promulgated and firmly rooted in popular devotion. Indulgences and holy relics and innumerable statues to local virgins or 'local deities' still make up the reality of popular Catholicism for many".⁹

This finds an uncomfortable, if less dramatic, echo in Ireland where people climb Croagh Patrick in order to release loved ones from purgatory and gather in Ardboe, hoping to see an appearance of the Blessed Virgin.

Ongoing Dialogue

Since publication of The Final Report, the Commission has been replaced by a new Commission, charged with continuing the dialogue.

ARCIC II* has set its face to remedy the above shortcomings and others. Meanwhile we address ourselves to an assessment of the work of the original Commission.

3 EUCHARIST

The Agreed Statement on Eucharist attempts to resolve, in just five pages of text, a disagreement that is as controversial as any between our communions. In order to understand the claimed agreement, we must first describe the theological difference.

The Controversy

The argument has centred around the nature of the sacrament - is it the "Lord's Supper" (see Article 28), at which we are guests, or in some sense a repetition of Christ's sacrifice which is offered to God by the Church through the priest for the sins of the living and the dead? This latter teaching is described in Article 31 as "dangerous". It is incompatible with the doctrine of Justification by Faith and casts serious doubt on the finished work of Christ at Calvary. It gives rise to superstitions about the character of the consecrated bread and wine, the role of the priest and the nature of salvation.

The doctrine of the Mass is characterised by the belief that the elements in some sense become the body and blood of Christ, passing through the *mouth* to every communicant. The Church of Ireland doctrine is that the body and blood of Christ are present in the *hearts* of only those communicants who have faith.

ARCIC deals in turn with these two issues - the relation of the Eucharist (the chosen word which avoids "the Mass" and "the Lord's Supper") to Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, and the nature of the presence of Christ in the sacrament.

The Eucharist and Christ's Sacrifice

The opening sentences are excellent:

"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".[13]

However, the Report goes on to say more dubiously that the Eucharist is a:

"means through which the atoning work of Christ on the Cross is proclaimed and made effective in the life of the Church".[14]

*The members of ARCIC II are listed in Appendix III.

It is thoroughly biblical to see the Eucharist as a proclamation but one must ask, in what sense and by whom is Christ's work "made effective" today? If, somehow, Christ's sacrifice is newly present in the Holy Communion, then it follows that salvation is to that degree contained within, and dependent upon, the sacrament. Yet the letter to the Hebrews is quite clear (e.g. Ch.10: 11-18) that the sacrifice of Christ is unrepeatable; His sacrifice is accepted; its finality is stressed. The practical result of this is that believers are purified from the defilement of their sins and brought into a permanent right relationship with God. This personal appropriation of the benefits of Christ's death can be ours through repentance and faith.

When ARCIC says that at the Lord's Supper the Church "enters into the movement of (Christ's) self-offering"[13] it is hard to escape the conclusion that the sacrament is being defined as something in which we *offer* Christ's *body and blood* to God as a present sacrifice for sins. The historic teaching of the Church of Ireland has been that "we *receive*(ing) these (Thy) creatures of *bread and wine*" (Prayer Book, p.150), which is quite the reverse.

John Stott, in his response to ARCIC on behalf of the Church of England Evangelical Council, comments:

"to respond to his self-offering and to 'enter into its movement' are concepts which move in opposite directions".¹

Another evangelical Anglican reaction, by Roger Beckwith, argues that the Anglican view is based on the biblical concept of time as linear (→), rather than the pagan cyclical view (↻) which could quite easily envisage the same event occurring again and again like the seasons of the year.

"In biblical modes of thought, to say Christ's sacrifice occurred once for all and cannot be repeated but can be *made present again* is to take away with the one hand what is given with the other. If the event is made present again it is repeated and did *not* take place once and for all".²

A semi-official Roman Catholic reaction to ARCIC entitled 'Observations', issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, comments:

"one still asks oneself what is really meant by the words 'the Church enters into the movement of (Christ's) self-offering'".³

Although it must be said that 'Observations' is not typical of considered Roman Catholic reaction to ARCIC, the Final Report

has clearly not found a formula which can command general assent at this point. ARCIC's argument is based on a doubtful interpretation of a single Greek word - "Anamnesis" or "Memorial":

"The Commission believes that the traditional understanding of sacramental reality, in which the once-for-all event of salvation becomes effective in the present ... is well expressed by the word anamnesis".[19]

Prof. John Macquarrie comments that this view of Eucharistic sacrifice:

"was made to rest very largely on a highly dynamic exegesis of the Greek word anamnesis, "memorial". The exegesis *may* be correct but there are scholars who contest it, and *by itself* it provides an insecure basis for what ARCIC wanted to say".⁴

The ARCIC view goes beyond a true biblical position but not quite as far as the traditional Roman Catholic viewpoint. It is a compromise (they use the word "consensus"), which catapults us back four centuries into the old controversy.

Our faith in this matter is well expressed by a quotation from the second book of Homilies, which are commended "to be read in Churches by the Ministers diligently and distinctly" (Article 35):

We must take heede lest of the memorie it be made a sacrifice. (Homily 15)

We do not believe that ARCIC's theology is in harmony with this teaching.

The Presence of Christ

Some of the Report's statements about the presence of Christ in the bread and wine are very specific:

"The elements are not mere signs; Christ's body and blood become *really* present and are *really* given".[15]

"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".[16] (*Emphasis ours*)

The Report asks us to accept that a change "mysterious and radical" takes place in the inner reality of the elements. The actual term 'transubstantiation' occurs only in a footnote [14] but as Stott says:

"We fear that this dogma continues to be affirmed in alternative terms".⁵

"Observations" comments:

"One notes with satisfaction that several formulations clearly affirm the real presence of the body and blood of Christ ..."⁶

but goes on to note that some other formulations do *not* seem to express adequately what the Roman Catholic Church understands by transubstantiation. The Report thus seems to speak with two voices.

The Cromlyn column in the Church of Ireland Gazette complained about its

“fine use of words, of measured circumlocution which leaves it open to the reader to take from it whatever side of the truth he happens to fancy”.⁷

Once again, ARCIC goes beyond Scripture and Anglican teaching (“the sacramental bread and wine still remain in their natural substances” -Prayer Book, p.155), but not quite as far as full Roman Catholic teaching. Its position might be shown thus:



Adoration of the Elements

One other point needs to be mentioned. ARCIC states that

“Adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament should be regarded as an extension of eucharistic worship”.^[23]

The Report acknowledges that some will find this unacceptable but says that this divergence can exist without destroying a common eucharistic faith. Our Prayer Book contrasts sharply with this view:

“The bread and wine ... may not be adored, for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians.” (p.155)

Biblical Teaching

It is instructive to examine the teaching of Christ on another occasion during His teaching ministry when He used language similar to His words at the Last Supper. He said:

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.” (Jn. 6:51).

This passage is particularly interesting for two reasons - it caused a dispute among his disciples similar to that which divides the Church of Rome from the Reformed Churches today; and because

of this confusion Our Lord Himself explained the meaning of these words. We are told that:

“The Jews then disputed among themselves saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” (v. 52)

Jesus continued to use the most explicit language, saying:

“Truly, truly I say to you unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (v.53 ff.)

Not surprisingly,

“Many of his disciples ... said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?’” (v. 60)

Jesus then explained to them:

“It is the *spirit* that gives life, the *flesh* is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you that do not believe.” (vv.64, 65)

It seems clear from His explanation that He was speaking of a *spiritual feeding* on His body by those who believe in Him. The awesome words, “But there are some of you who do not believe”, imply that unbelievers are incapable of “eating His flesh.”

This spiritual understanding of realistic language underlies Anglican belief concerning the Lord’s Supper:

“The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith” (Article 28)

“...such as be void of a lively faith, although they press with their teeth ... the sacrament ... in no wise are they partakers of Christ” (Article 29).

It appears to us that ARCIC’s agreement has been reached at the expense of biblical and Anglican teaching.

4 MINISTRY AND ORDINATION

The Ministry and Ordination Statement must be viewed in the light of biblical teaching, development within the early centuries of the Church and current discussions on the place of the ordained ministry within the priesthood of all Christian people. Recent years have seen the publication of important books, like 'Christian Priesthood Examined' by Richard Hanson and 'Ministry' by Edward Schillebeeckx. The documents of Vatican II have helped to shape current Roman Catholic views of priesthood.

The Controversy

What is the nature of the controversy between Anglicans and Roman Catholics concerning ministry? Essentially, it centres round the role that God has appointed for ministers in His Church. It is important because, for the Anglican, the role of the clergy is primarily one of service to the Church "to equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Eph. 4:12) whereas Roman Catholic theology makes it all but impossible for a Christian to attain salvation without the mediation of a priest between himself and God. This mediation includes amongst other things, offering the Sacrifice of the Mass, hearing confessions, prescribing penances and performing the 'sacrament' of Extreme Unction, none of which practices is taught in the New Testament.

Biblical Teaching

The essence of biblical teaching about ministry is that Christ has given *gifts* to members of his Church. The primary duties of God's ordained ministers are not presiding over the Eucharist, nor indeed the taking of church services (these activities are not attributed to them *at all* in the New Testament). The purpose of the ordained ministry is for individuals to exercise their God-given gifts in order to equip God's people as a community to carry out His work. These gifts are variously described in the New Testament, but include the "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers" mentioned in Ephesians 4:11.

The Early Church

Initially, the New Testament pattern of ministry was followed in the early Church. A division between priest and people began to take root from the third century onwards, however. The term 'laity' came to refer to the uneducated masses rather than to the whole people of God. One Anglican evangelical, Michael Green, puts it like this:

"There is no suggestion to be found within the New Testament of what subsequently developed into the disastrous two-class system of clergy and laity."¹

The first Christian writer to speak of the Christian minister in terms of priesthood was Tertullian. He applied the word 'sacerdos' to both bishop and presbyter and often used the term 'altar'. It was Cyprian, however, whose influence led to widespread adoption in the Church of sacerdotal views.*

The development of the notion of priesthood in the Church is described further in Appendix IV. By the Middle Ages it had become firmly established and is to this day a fundamental part of Roman Catholic theology.

Modern Catholicism

Both Roman and Anglo Catholics tend to assume that the priestly work of Christ is the model for our ordained priesthood. The notion of a human sacerdotal priesthood has led to the view that the clergyman's highest function is to offer Christ in the Eucharist and that he was given power to do so at his ordination. To borrow a metaphor from Hanson, the bread and wine are almost "radio-active" and nobody dare approach them except the clergy. The clergy become controllers of the cultic mystery.

"Observations" adopts such a theological view:

"But this formulation only means that he is a priest, in the sense of the Catholic doctrine, if one understands that through him the Church offers sacramentally the sacrifice of Christ".³

The basic weakness here is that such a view fails to follow the New Testament emphasis, especially in the letter to the Hebrews, on the

* This historical development has been documented in an essay by Maurice Wiles.² It is supported by Hanson in 'Christian Priesthood Examined'.

uniqueness of Christ's priesthood—a parallel with the unique figure of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:11-28).

At the time of Christ's crucifixion God tore asunder the curtain in the temple which prevented people from entering the Holy of Holies. The High Priest's function under the Old Covenant had come to an end. It had pointed towards the more glorious priesthood which could be fulfilled by Christ alone. Jesus is now the great High Priest and every Christian believer is a priest who, in the name of Christ, can come directly into God's presence.

Reformation Principles

This truth of the priesthood of the believer was recovered at the Reformation and brought spiritual light and comfort to multitudes of people.

In the Anglican Communion the liturgy (including Ordination and Holy Communion) was revised to remove sacerdotal connotations. Although the word 'priest' was retained in some places, it was equated in the meaning with 'presbyter' (or minister) as the declaration in the Church of Ireland Prayer Book (p.346) makes clear in its reference to "priests or presbyters"; this principle is also maintained in the new Alternative Service Book of the Church of England which entitles its Ordination service "The Ordination of Priests (also called Presbyters)".

Leo XIII

Some Anglicans are very concerned about the bull of Leo XIII – *Apostolicae Curiae* in 1897—when he declared that Anglican orders were "null and void". But since an Anglican priest is in fact a minister rather than a sacrificing priest, Anglicans should fully endorse Leo's ruling that Anglicans cannot qualify as priests in the Roman sense, but should also firmly assert that their ministry is fully to be recognised as approved by God.

Hanson commends Leo on his insight into the difference between an Anglican priest or presbyter and a Roman Catholic priest:

"Leo XIII was perfectly correct when in his Bull *Apostolicae Curiae* (in 1897) he declared that what was lacking in Anglican orders was the intention to ordain priests who offer sacrifices on behalf of the living and the dead. His mistake was in imagining that this is and always has been the essential thing that makes a presbyter a presbyter or a priest a priest".⁴

Ministry Statement Paragraph 13

How does ARCIC deal with the conflicting teaching of our respective communions? It is always dangerous to over-simplify a complex issue but the crucial part of this ARCIC statement is paragraph 13. It says of Christian ministers that

"their ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the spirit".[36]

What does this mean? Is it Cyprian with a new look? Is this a *development* or a *corruption* of New Testament ministry?

John Stott puts it forcefully:

"Here Scripture has been abandoned, and tradition has taken control of the Commission's thinking".⁵

Paragraph 13 shows evidence of an uphill struggle as the Commission begins by acknowledging that there are no sacrificing priests in the New Testament but argues that "Despite (this) Christians came to see the priestly role of Christ reflected in these ministers and used priestly terms in describing them".[35] This is historically correct, but history also shows, as we have seen, that the reformers rejected this view as not being consonant with Scripture. As G.W.H. Lampe has written, referring to Whitgift's exposition of Anglican usage,

"the significance of the word 'priest' is now altered from that of one who sacrifices to a minister of the Gospel".⁶

Not only does ARCIC's historical argument stop before the Reformation, but after acknowledging that the word 'priest' in English is (confusingly) used to translate two quite different Greek words, the Commission plays on this confusion by saying:

"Our two traditions commonly use priestly terms in speaking about the ordained ministry".[35]

It is misleading to suggest that in official Anglican doctrine sacerdotal terminology is used or intended.

This unhappy play on words, combined with a view of history which stops short of the Reformation and a theology which fails to do justice to God's revelation in the New Testament, provides an inadequate foundation on which to build a supposedly united Church.

5 AUTHORITY

Nothing can be more fundamental to our search for unity than the question of Authority. What is the definitive source of God's revelation to us and what is the relation of the Church to that revelation?

Where can we find Spiritual Truth?

The Church of Ireland and the Church of Rome answer that question in two different and mutually exclusive ways. The Church of Ireland says:

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation" (Article 6).

The Church of Rome says (in a modern restatement):

"Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honoured with equal feelings of devotion and reverence ... But the task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone".¹

Although in principle it is claimed that this teaching office

"is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant"²

it is clear that in practice the Church controls the way in which Scripture and Tradition are expounded.

The Church of Ireland can wholeheartedly agree with ARCIC's statement[70] that tradition can help us discover riches and truths in Scripture. It is important, however, to understand the relationship of the Church to Scripture and tradition in our teaching. This is readily done by considering what the Articles of our faith say about the *Church* and about such an ancient *Tradition* as the Apostles' Creed:

"The Church hath ... authority in controversies of Faith: and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to *God's Word written* ... wherefore ... besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of Salvation".

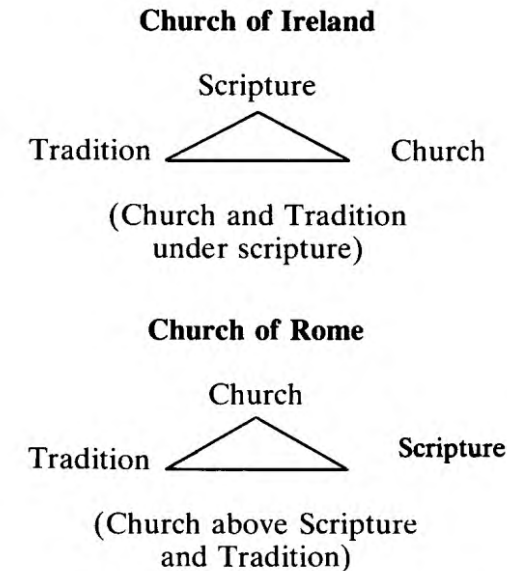
(Article 20)

"... the *Apostles' Creed* ought thoroughly to be received and believed; for (it) may be proved by most certain warrants of *Holy Scripture*".

(Article 8)

Article 8 gives an important insight into the guiding principle followed by those who formulated Anglican theology at the time of

the Reformation. Even in an area of doctrine which was not in dispute with the Church of Rome, the ground of acceptance of the Creed was not its undisputed nature or its traditional acceptance but its conformity to Scripture. The divergence between our two Churches may be illustrated thus:



Unless this disagreement is resolved, agreement on *any* doctrine will surely be fortuitous rather than an expression of the unity that Christ wills for his Church.

Reconciling the Views

How does ARCIC grapple with this problem?

"One approach is primarily concerned never to go beyond Scripture ... another approach, however, while different, does not not necessarily contradict the first".[70]

This is of course a theoretical possibility, but the report continues more realistically:

"When conflict does arise, the seal upon the truthfulness of the conclusions that result is the reception of those conclusions by the whole Church".[71]

Although the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would empower the *bishops* rather than the "whole Church" to

settle this “conflict”,³ ARCIC’s formula is rather similar to the *Roman* “triangle” described above and appears to conflict directly with the teaching of the Church of Ireland.

A Further Analogy

ARCIC, in taking the step of going beyond Scripture, proposes a concept which may encourage Anglicans to be receptive to new doctrines. This “other approach” we are told,

“springs from the conviction that the Holy Spirit is guiding the Church and that there is growth of seed of God’s Word from age to age”.

This analogy of seeds/plants/growth has been used in the past to promote those Roman Catholic doctrines which are not found in Scripture but were supposedly “planted” by God in the Church. It has been used in reverse by those who wished to preserve pure biblical teaching (i.e. by “rooting out” unbiblical doctrines). Examples of “planting” include:

Newman’s analogy of acorns growing into oak trees.

The Vatican II Documents, which describe the development of the doctrine of Indulgences as follows:

“From the roots of Revelation, something had grown up”.⁴

Those who have used the reverse analogy include:

Salmon, a Church of Ireland opponent of Newman’s theory, who said that it became so popular with those who held Roman Catholic views that they were:

“content to exchange tradition, which their predecessors have made the basis for their system, for this new foundation of development”.⁵

Cranmer, who said:

“I, not knowing otherwise how to excuse myself at the last day, have ... set my hand ... to pluck up the weeds and plants by the roots, which our heavenly Father never planted”.⁶

Cranmer was faithfully following the teaching of our Lord who, in His controversy with those who would add their traditions to Scripture said:

“Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up”.
(Matt. 15:13)

The problem with seeds is that unless one is really sure who planted them, it is difficult to tell what they will grow into.

A Doubtful Method

We are unhappy about the method which appears to have been adopted by ARCIC to reconcile the Anglican and Roman positions:

first to transfer ultimate authority from Scripture to the Church, then to introduce the concept of doctrinal seeds, which might be used to justify teachings which could not be justified on grounds of biblical revelation.

It is qualifications of this kind which add ambiguity to such apparently clear statements as

“... since the Scriptures are the uniquely inspired witness to divine revelation, the Church’s expression of that revelation must be tested by its consonance with Scripture”.^[70]

If words mean anything, all the unbiblical doctrines of Rome fail this test and the teaching of the new Church would be essentially Anglican. We feel that this is not what Roman Catholics would expect and seriously doubt whether it is what ARCIC envisages.

A New View of Scripture

The Final Report appears to reflect a view of Scripture which reduces it from the ‘Word of God’ as it is called in our Prayer Book to the status of a history book. It is ‘a normative record’.^[52] In response to criticism of the weakness of this statement, the Elucidation^[69] strengthens this to ‘the primary norm’. One is further encouraged to read that:

“No endeavour of the Church to express the truth can add to the revelation already given.”^[70]

When we look, however, for the reasonable outworking of these firm statements in dealing with disputed doctrines, we find that time and again, consistency is abandoned in favour of expediency:

“The New Testament contains no explicit record of a transmission of Peter’s leadership ... yet ... ^[83]

If the leadership of the bishop of Rome has been rejected by those who thought it was not faithful to the truth of the Gospel ... nevertheless ... ^[84]

Despite the fact that in the New Testament ministers are never called ‘priests’, Christians came to see ... ^[35]

Scripture appears to be an embarrassment rather than the norm. We cannot see how the Marian dogmas and doctrines such as purgatory and penance can be anything other than attempts to 'add to the revelation already given'. To say that the Marian dogmas are not considered by some Anglicans to be 'sufficiently supported by Scripture'[96] is quite inadequate. To fail to comment at all on many other unscriptural doctrines of the Church of Rome suggests that lip service only is being paid to the authority of Scripture.

We fear that the tendency to regard the Bible as an inspired record of historical events may lead to a tendency to ignore its *doctrinal authority* over the Church. It is unfortunate, and perhaps significant, that the Epistles, which form a substantial part of the core of Christian teaching, were not included when Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey asked that the ARCIC dialogue should be based on 'the Gospels and the ancient common traditions',[118] (an expression which is itself, unfortunately, open to more than one interpretation).

Barnabas Lindars in his important post-ARCIC essay on "Bible and Church" says that doctrine must continually be tested by the Bible as the "record of that event"⁷ and appears to confirm our fears by developing this idea to the conclusion that the Reformation approach which rejected those traditions which were not scriptural was a "mistake"⁸.

We are concerned that this new view of Scripture may lead to confusion in the search for unity in truth.

The Authority of Scripture

What then should our attitude to Scripture be? Surely none other than that of our Lord Himself. During His life on earth He taught that Scripture was the rule against which all doctrine must be measured. In His controversies with the religious leaders of His day, our Lord consistently appealed to Scripture as the final arbiter (and it is interesting to note that the very same three potential sources of authority, Scripture, tradition and reason were the rival contenders, then as now). Christ taught clearly that tradition must submit to Scripture (Mk.7: 8, 13); reason likewise (Matt.22: 23, 29). Indeed the Son of God Himself must submit to the Scriptures (Luke 22:37 et al). Even

after His resurrection (when any supposed human limitations must have been removed) He continued to teach the authority of Scripture (Luke 24:44).

We have already noted the Church of Ireland's teaching that 'it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written' (Article 20). We believe that this is the clear teaching of Christ and must be agreed and logically applied by any Commission seeking Christian unity.

Papal Primacy

It is impossible to read ARCIC's discussion of papal primacy without feeling that, once again, expediency rather than truth is to the fore:

"yet it is possible to think that a primacy of the Bishop of Rome is not contrary to the New Testament . . . while admitting that the New Testament texts offer no sufficient basis for this[84]

". . . it might be possible for the Churches of the Anglican Communion to recognise the development of the Roman primacy as a gift of divine providence . . .[87]

"In fact, there have been times when . . . universal primates have protected legitimate positions which have been under attack"[94]

The Report quite correctly cites the example of Leo I whose influence helped to maintain a balanced view of the two natures of Christ. The argument in favour of a universal primacy would indeed be weak if there were no such examples in history! But this must be balanced by consideration of examples of Popes who were far from championing the orthodox faith. One such was Liberius who, after initially supporting the orthodox Athanasius, later sided with the Arian heretics and supported his excommunication. History catalogues numerous examples of Popes who opposed the orthodox faith at one point or another. Even since the Reformation it would be difficult to argue that the Church which has universal primacy has been more orthodox than those which do not.

If the Anglicans on the Commission appear to be embarrassed by the commitment of their Articles to Scripture, their Roman Catholic counterparts show similar embarrassment with their Church's commitment to the papacy. A formula is proposed which would restrain the Pope's primacy by requiring collegiality with his fellow bishops, but it is difficult to envisage this

working acceptably in practice unless the papacy were to renounce its claims to infallibility.

Papal Infallibility

The Commission deals cautiously with this issue. It is hardly sufficient to answer the ‘grave difficulty’ that this doctrine presents to Anglicans by reassuring us that ‘the doctrine of infallibility is hedged round by very rigorous conditions’.[65] Quite apart from the unacceptability of the doctrines which have already come through this ‘hedge’ the *principle* of the infallibility of the Pope is not compatible with Anglican teaching. If General Councils ‘sometimes have erred’,[71] it is hard to envisage how the teaching expressed in infallible definitions of the Pope ‘can no longer be questioned’.[95] For Anglicans to reserve the right to subject such definitions to ‘study and discussion’,[95] with the logical possible outcome that they would be *rejected*, would be deliberately to build into the Church of Christ a mechanism of division. In our view, vital principles such as this must be agreed *before* contemplating steps towards union.

The Importance of Real Agreement

We are anxious to ensure that any agreement reached between our two Churches is real and based on truth rather than on wishful thinking or ambiguity. The question of Authority is fundamental to everything that the Church of Christ teaches. Every teaching must be scrutinised, asking “Is it from God or not?”. To do this it is necessary to have a clear standard against which to test truth from error. The Church of Ireland, following the example of Christ, has such a standard:

“Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to Salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite necessary to Salvation.” (Article 6).

We cannot agree with ARCIC’s argument that “the early Church found it necessary . . . to employ terminology in ways in which it was not used in the New Testament”[41] as if that were a laudable practice. Such an approach directly contradicts ARCIC’s own contention that “All such restatement [i.e. of apostolic teaching, to make it comprehensible to different generations and cultures]

must be consonant with the apostolic witness recorded in the Scriptures”.[59] Lewis Carroll parodied such illegitimate ‘employment of terminology’ in the passage where Humpty Dumpty told Alice ‘When I make a word do a lot of work like that I always pay it extra.’⁹

When the Church of Christ finds, as it sometimes does, that it has departed from what Scripture will allow, we believe that it is quite wrong to change the meanings of the words of God’s revelation in Scripture in order to reduce or remove the discrepancy. It was precisely this practice that led, cumulatively over the centuries, to the distortions of truth which made the Reformation a sad necessity.

It calls for great humility, but we urge the leaders of both our communions to subject their teaching to the measuring rod of Scripture. Only in this way can we, with integrity, ask God to ‘correct what is amiss and supply what is lacking’ in His Church today.

6 SALVATION

It is a matter of great regret to us that the Final Report did not address itself to the doctrine of Salvation – the issue which lay at the heart of the Reformation controversy with the Church of Rome.

We would very much like to have been able to commend ARCIC for its preparedness “(to take) seriously the issues that have divided us”.^[5] The Commission can validly say, as Dr. McAdoo did at General Synod in 1983, that the doctrine of Salvation “wasn’t on our Job Description”. It is disappointing that this omission was not rectified during more than a decade of discussions. It is also premature for the Commission to urge that there are “high expectations” of “significant initiatives” towards full communion^[99] when one of the major stumbling blocks has not even been discussed.

One sympathises with Dr. Conor Cruise O’Brien’s caustic reaction to the Report (Observer 4.4.82) “I’m all for ecumenism but not for the false ecumenism that dresses up disagreement to look like agreement”.

We are thankful that the new ARCIC II will discuss justification; we set out below a simple example of the problems that face the Commission.

Conflicting Teaching

The Anglican Communion, as one of the family of Reformed churches, teaches that:

“We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings: Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine and very full of comfort . . .” (Article 11).

The Council of Trent affirmed that:

“If anyone saith that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the Divine mercy which remits sin for Christ’s sake alone, or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified, let him be anathema. [Sess. VI Can. 12]

When this Tridentine doctrine is tested against the teaching of Scripture, it is found to be opposed to God’s revelation. The Reformation was centred, not only on empty disputes about words, but on how a man might find peace with God in this life and eternal security in the life to come.

It is not popular today to draw attention to this serious issue. Nevertheless, the doctrine of Justification, together with related matters such as Indulgences and Purgatory must be tested against Holy Scripture. This is a prospect which, we believe, should be met not with fear but with faith.

7 CONCLUSION

The issues of Eucharist, Ministry and Authority are not matters on which our respective communions, despite their solid agreement on so many things, just happen to disagree, as it were by misfortune. There is nothing haphazard about the fact that these particular doctrines are in dispute between us. They are bound together inextricably in such a way that “you can’t have one without the other”.

We need to recognise that Christianity contains two key elements:

the *facts* of God’s revelation in history as recorded in the Bible, and

the *application of those facts to man’s relationship with God* in this life and in eternity.

If we are to make any progress towards real unity we must realise that our communions agree on all the essentials of the former – the facts (Creation, Ten Commandments, Virgin Birth of the Son of God Incarnate, His Sinless Life, His Death, Resurrection, Ascension and Coming Again). On these things there is no dispute between us.

When it comes to the *application* of these truths to mankind, however, we delude ourselves if we ignore the fact that at the heart of our disagreement there are two conflicting theological systems. Each of these is self-consistent and logical. If it is changed at one fundamental point, the whole system falls down like a pack of cards.

The two theological systems may be compared as follows:

Theological Systems Compared		
	CHURCH OF IRELAND	CHURCH OF ROME
Authority:	Scripture is final Authority	Church is final Authority
Ministry:	Believer belongs to the Christian priesthood—the clergy are ministers only.	Believer needs separate order of priests—the clergy are sacrificing priests.
Eucharist:	Eucharist is God’s offering to man: Christ is present in hearts of believers by faith.	Eucharist is man’s offering to God: Christ is present in elements by power of priests.
Justification:	Justification is by faith in God by virtue of the undeserved grace of God and the merits of Christ.	Justification is by the ministrations of the Church by virtue of the merits of the believer as well as the merits of Christ.

The ARCIC report (back cover) asks us to address ourselves to two questions:

whether its agreements are generally consonant with the faith of Anglicans and Roman Catholics, and

whether they provide a sufficient basis for the next step towards unity.

It is possible that a conservative Anglican and a conservative Roman Catholic might, with care, pick their respective ways through the Report and persuade themselves that it was consonant with their personal faith. Since nothing is said about justification (other than that it is “through God’s grace”),[8] they might, if they chose, imagine that the Report would ensure that a new united Church would continue to proclaim the faith as they themselves believed it. Integrity, however, compels a more thorough assessment of the Report. It does indeed contain ‘something for everyone,’ but incompatibilities between some of its statements do not appear generally to have been recognised.

There is, nevertheless, a discernible attempt to set out a coherent theology. This theology may be expressed, using some of the key statements of the Report.

ARCIC's Theology

- Authority:** Conflict may arise (i.e. between Scripture and tradition) . . . [71]
The seal upon the truthfulness . . . will be the reception by the whole Church [71]
. . . if the definition (i.e. of the Pope) were not manifestly a legitimate interpretation of biblical faith . . . Anglicans would . . . reserve (it) for study and discussion.[95]
- Ministry:** . . . Their ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood (i.e., of the believer) but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit.[15]
- Eucharist:** . . . his members . . . enter into the movement of his self-offering.[14]
. . . the elements are not mere signs, Christ's body and blood become really present and are really given.[15]

We acknowledge that ARCIC has not fully adopted the traditional Roman Catholic position on some disputed doctrines. This is highlighted by the unfavourable reception it has received from the conservative Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Yet while the Final Report adopts a largely Anglican stance in respect of the doctrines which have been promulgated by the Church of Rome *since* the Reformation, it largely accepts the Roman Catholic view of those doctrines which were in dispute *at the time of* the Reformation. Thus the claimed 'convergence' is in part at least at the expense of fundamental biblical truths. It appears to us also that the general position of ARCIC is not consistent with the Declaration prefaced to the Church of Ireland Constitution which states:

"The Church of Ireland, as a Reformed and Protestant Church, doth hereby re-affirm its constant witness against all those innovations in doctrine and worship whereby the Primitive Faith hath been from time to time defaced or overlaid, and which at the Reformation this Church did disown and reject". (Prayer Book p.346).

We greatly regret ARCIC's departure at certain key points from the faith which we believe to be God's revelation to mankind. We could not participate in any Church which did not clearly and officially teach that our authority in matters of doctrine is Scripture and which did not derive its doctrines faithfully from that starting point. In particular the doctrine of Justification by Faith, through God's unmerited Grace, is at the heart of Anglican belief. Articles 6 and 11, among others,

teach these things without ambiguity. We hope that those who do not accept our Church's teaching on these matters will nevertheless accept that they are fundamentals which we cannot abandon or distort.

The Way Ahead

We believe that there is a great need for more frank and honest discussion between our two communions. The new ARCIC commission is continuing this important work. We are encouraged that the Anglican team is more representative, particularly in terms of theological viewpoint, than was its predecessor. We hope that it will grapple seriously with the issues which ARCIC I left unresolved or resolved in ways that are not compatible with the Articles of Religion of our Church. In particular, we hope and pray that it will take seriously the very clear teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ which is summarised in the words:

Scripture cannot be broken. (Jn. 10:35).

This teaching provides a way forward which all Christians should be prepared to follow.

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Appendix I

Some Key Dates

Date	
1054	Eastern Church broke with Rome.
1483	Birth of Martin Luther.
1517	Birth of Reformation.
1541	Regensburg (Ratisbon) Conference – Contrarini a champion of Justification by Faith – lost opportunity.
1545-63	Council of Trent.
1549-52	English Prayer Book and Ordinal.
1715	Wake became Archbishop of Canterbury – “Wake Correspondence.”
1833	Birth of Anglo Catholic movement – Assize Sermon.
1845	Newman's essay on Development of Doctrine – “Seeds” of new doctrines supposed to have been there from the first.
1854	Immaculate Conception of B.V.M. – Dogma.
1870	Vatican I – Papal Infallibility.
1889	Lord Halifax and Fr. Portal dialogue.
1897	Leo XIII declares Anglican Orders ‘null and void’.
1922	Malines Conversations.
1950	Bodily Assumption of B.V.M. – Dogma.
1962-65	Vatican II.
1966	Archbishop Ramsey visits Vatican – “Common Declaration.”
1966-68	Preparatory Commission – “Malta Report”.
1971	ARCIC first Agreed Statement – Eucharist.
1973	Second Agreed Statement – Ministry.
1976	Authority I Statement.
1981	Authority II
1982	ARCIC Final Report.

Appendix II

Vatican II

We have noted the softening of attitudes towards other Christian traditions which was a feature of the second Vatican Council. Yet the Roman Catholic Church is clearly regarded as the Church par excellence: the fulness of catholicity, including unity, subsists in her. We may ask, does the prodigal still have to come home?

One change in the Decree on Ecumenism is important – Paragraph 21, as it left the Council, made reference to the separated brethren thus: “*Moved* by the Holy Spirit (they) *find* in the sacred Scriptures God speaking to them in Christ”. This was changed to “while *invoking* the Holy Spirit they *seek* in these very Scriptures God as He speaks to them in Christ”. Moorman suggests that this significant change was made by the Pope himself who had given way to the more conservative element in his entourage.

Efforts to give the Virgin Mary a more exalted position were restrained. It had been feared that two more Marian dogmas would be added. Mary was placed within *Lumen Gentium* (The Church) and not in a chapter to herself and so nearer to the Divine. Pope Paul did, however, give her a new title – “Mother of the Church”.

Again relief was expressed when the ‘two sources of revelation’ formula contained in the draft scheme on Divine Revelation was changed. The double source was of course made up of the Bible and Tradition. Yet the Council continued to accord to Tradition a place equal to that of Scripture:

Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honoured with equal feelings of devotion and reverence.

Appendix III

ARCIC II

The original ARCIC commission has been disbanded. A new Commission has been appointed to continue the discussions. One quarter of the Anglican and one quarter of the Roman Catholic members from the original Commission (asterisked) will remain. The full membership of the new Commission is as follows:

Anglican:

- Rt. Rev. Mark Santer, Bishop of Kensington (Co-chairman)
- *Rt. Rev. Arthur Vogel, Bishop of West Missouri
- *Rev. Prof. Henry Chadwick, Emeritus Professor of Divinity, Cambridge University
- *Rev. Julian Charley, Rector of St. Peter’s Everton
- Ven. J. A. Baycroft, Archdeacon of Ottawa
- Rt. Rev. Donald Cameron, Asst. Bishop of Sydney
- Rev. Dr. Kortright Davis, Vice-Principal, Codrington College, Barbados
- Rt. Rev. David Gitari, Bishop of Mt. Kenya East
- Rev. Prof. Oliver O’Donovan, Regius Prof. of Moral and Pastoral Theology, Oxford University
- Prof. John Pobee, Professor of Religious Studies, Ghana University
- Mrs. Mary Tanner, Study Secretary of the Board for Mission and Unity
- Rev. Prof. Robert Wright, Professor of Church History, General Seminary, New York
- Canon Christopher Hill, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Assistant for Ecumenical Affairs

Roman Catholic:

- Rt. Rev. Cormac Murphy-O’Connor, Bishop of Arundel and Brighton (Co-chairman)
- *Fr. Pierre Duprey WF, Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity
- *Fr. Jean Tillard OP, Dominican Faculty of Theology, Ottawa
- *Rev. Dr. Edward Yarnold SJ, Campion Hall, Oxford
- Fr. A. Adappur SJ, Lumen Institute, Cochin, India
- Rev. J. Akpunomou, Rector of the Major Seminary, Enugu, Nigeria
- Rt. Rev. Mgr. Brian Ashby, Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand

Sister M. Cecily Boulding OP, Lecturer in Systematic Theology,
Ushaw College, Durham
Rt. Rev. Raymond Lessard, Bishop of Savannah, USA
Rev. Brendan Soane, Lecturer in Moral Theology, Allen Hall,
London
Rev. John Thornhill, Aquinas Academy, Sydney
Very Rev. Mgr. Richard Stewart, Secretariat for Promoting
Christian Unity.
(One further R.C. member to be appointed)

Appendix IV

The Growth of Sacerdotal Views of Priesthood

Cyprian was born about the year 200 A.D. and converted to the Christian faith in middle life about the year 246. The great influences on his Christian life were the Bible and Tertullian, 'the Master' as he called him. Cyprian became bishop of Carthage and made very significant changes in teaching about the Christian ministry.

Ignatius had stressed the role of the bishop in combating heresy. Irenaeus too had stressed the episcopal succession of truth within a living tradition. Cyprian, however, did much to change over from the universal sacerdotalism of the New Testament to the particular sacerdotalism of a later age. Cyprian used both pagan notions and a literal application of the Old Testament texts about Jewish priesthood to the Christian ministry. The ministry was defined in relation to the cult. Previous writers had sometimes use sacrificial language (especially Malachi 1 vv. 10–11) to describe the Holy Communion and had also occasionally used realistic language to describe the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament. The new twist in Cyprian was that in the Holy Communion we in some sense offer the body and blood of Christ as our sacrifice.

Another important change of emphasis also took place following Cyprian's influence. In the earliest Church, authority was collective and communal. Early office bearers were representative of the whole community. Their authority was delegated by the whole Church. The Church was a one-class society. The idea of a universal primate and hierarchical structures of authority as seen even in the documents of Vatican II and ARCIC is very different from the New Testament approach. Cyprian opposed the idea of a universal primate, but he did sharpen the distinction between clergy and laity. It is perhaps significant that one of the major criticisms directed against the ARCIC Ministry statement has been the failure to give the laity any real place in the authoritative structures of the Church.