



SECRETARIAT OF STATE

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From the Vatican, 27 June 2008

Your Grace,

The Holy Father extends a cordial greeting to Your Grace and to the Bishops of the Anglican Communion who are gathering with you for the Fourteenth Lambeth Conference. Mindful that a primary objective of your meeting is the spiritual renewal which comes from prayer and contemplation of the Cross and Resurrection of the Lord, His Holiness assures you of a remembrance in his prayers at this time. You may be certain that many Catholic brothers and sisters join him in commending the participants in the Conference to the loving care of our heavenly Father.

The theme of your Conference, "Equipping Bishops for God's Mission", is a matter that goes to the heart of the well-being of the Anglican Communion. The ecclesiological questions which form the framework of your deliberations are a reminder that ministry conferred by ordination is bound by the apostolic faith handed down from the beginning and by the "regula fidei" faithfully transmitted, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through the ages. Our different understanding of the divine plan for this ministry in the Church is one of the issues which the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission has been addressing for the past forty years. New issues that have arisen in our relationship pose a further and grave challenge to the hope for full and visible unity that has been the long-standing goal of our joint ecumenical endeavour. Thus in our most recent Common Declaration (23 November 2006) we committed ourselves "in our continuing dialogue to address the important issues involved in the emerging ecclesiological and ethical factors making [our] journey more difficult and arduous."

His Holiness is pleased to know that a Catholic delegation led by Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, with the participation also of Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Archbishop of Westminster, will be present. It is a sign of the fact that we are indeed pilgrims together towards the goal of unity that the Lord desires for his disciples. In prayerful solidarity, therefore, the Holy Father joins you in the Lord's prayer "That they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (Jn 17:21).

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Secretary of State

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