



Information Service

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INAUGURATION OF THE PONTIFICATE OF POPE FRANCIS, 13 March 2013 Ceremony of Inauguration of the Pontificate, 19 March 2013	
POPE FRANCIS AND ECUMENISM	
VISIT TO ROME OF HIS HOLINESS TAWADROS II, POPE OF ALEXANDRIA AND PATRIARCH OF THE SEE OF ST MARK, 9 -13 May 2013 Meeting with Pope Francis, 10 May 2013.....	
VISIT TO ROME OF HIS GRACE JUSTIN WELBY, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY Meeting with Pope Francis, 14 June 2013	
VISIT TO ROME OF A DELEGATION FROM THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF STS PETER AND PAUL, 27 – 29 June 2013.....	
CELEBRATION OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY IN ROME, 18-25 January 2013	
ECUMENICAL NEWS	
In Memoriam: Brother Jeffrey Gros, FSC (1938-2013)	
International Joint Commission for Theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, Rome (Italy) 23-27 January 2013.....	
Dialogue between the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Community of Evangelical Churches in Europe (GEKE), Vienna (Austria) 8-9 February 2013	
International Reformed – Catholic Dialogue, Indiana (USA) 7-13 April 2013.....	
Communiqué for the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC III), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) 29 April – 7 May 2013.....	
COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS.....	
DOCUMENTATION SUPPLEMENT	
<i>“The Presence of Christ in the Church, with special reference to the Eucharist”</i> Fourth Agreed Statement of the Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue, 2003-2009	
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014.....	
Letter from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity Materials for the Week of Prayer	

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ADDRESS FOR ALL CORRESPONDENCE

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INAUGURATION OF THE PONTIFICATE OF POPE FRANCIS

CEREMONY OF INAUGURATION OF THE PONTIFICATE 19 March 2013

Pope Francis began his Petrine Ministry as Successor of the Apostle Peter with Mass celebrated in St Peter's Square on Tuesday morning 19 March, the Solemnity of St Joseph, with the participation of representatives of Churches and Ecclesial Communities and of other religious traditions. In his homily, the Holy Father spoke of the 'power conferred on the Successor of Peter'.

The following are excerpts of the English text of the Pope's Homily which was given in Italian.

POPE FRANCIS HOMILY

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I thank the Lord that I can celebrate this Holy Mass for the inauguration of my Petrine ministry on the solemnity of Saint Joseph, the spouse of the Virgin Mary and the patron of the universal Church. It is a significant coincidence, and it is also the name-day of my venerable predecessor: we are close to him with our prayers, full of affection and gratitude.

I offer a warm greeting to my brother cardinals and bishops, the priests, deacons, men and women religious, and all the lay faithful. I thank the representatives of the other Churches and ecclesial Communities, as well as the representatives of the Jewish community and the other religious communities, for their presence. [...]

Today, together with the feast of Saint Joseph, we are celebrating the beginning of the ministry of the new Bishop of Rome, the Successor of Peter, which also involves a certain power. Certainly, Jesus Christ conferred power upon Peter, but what sort of power was it? Jesus' three questions to Peter about love are followed by three commands: feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Let us never forget that authentic power is service, and that the Pope too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service which has its radiant culmination on the Cross. He must be inspired by the lowly, concrete and faithful service which marked Saint Joseph and, like him, he must open his arms to protect all of God's people and embrace with tender affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least important, those whom Matthew lists in the final judgment on love: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison (cf. *Mt.* 25:31-46). Only those who serve with love are able to protect! [...]

ORE, 20 March 2013

* Sources of the texts are designated as follows: OR: *L'Osservatore Romano*, daily edition in Italian; ORE: *L'Osservatore Romano*, weekly edition in English. If texts come from sources other than *L'Osservatore Romano*, this will be noted. When translation is made by the *Information Service* it is indicated by the abbreviation: *IS*.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF CHURCHES AND ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES AND OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

20 March 2013

The day after the ceremony of Inauguration, Pope Francis met the representatives of Churches and Ecclesial Communities and of other religious traditions in the Clementine Hall.

The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew represented the various Christian communities in a special address to the Pope. The Patriarch's attendance at the papal inaugural mass was a historic initiative in as much as it was the first time in history that an Ecumenical Patriarch was personally present at papal installation.

We publish here below the text of the Patriarch's address, followed by the Holy Father's greeting.

ADDRESS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW I

Your Holiness,

In the name of the Lord of powers, we wholeheartedly congratulate You on the inspired election and deserved assumption of Your new high duties as First Bishop of the venerable Church of Senior Rome, defined by the primacy of love.

On this Throne, You succeed Pope Benedict XVI, who boldly retired for reasons of health and fatigue, a man distinguished for his meekness, theology and love. The task and responsibility before You are immense before both God and humankind. The unity of the Christian Churches is surely our foremost concern as one of the fundamental prerequisites for the credibility of our Christian witness in the eyes of those near and afar. In order to achieve this unity, we must continue the inaugurated theological dialogue so that we may jointly appreciate and approach the truth of faith, the experience of the saints, and the tradition of the first Christian millennium shared by East and West alike. It should be a dialogue of love and truth, in a spirit of humility, meekness, and honesty.

After all, the global economic crisis urgently mandates the coordination of our humanitarian action, in which You are well experienced as a result of Your long and fruitful ministry as a Good Samaritan in Latin America, where You pastorally witnessed – like so few others – the bitterness of human pain and suffering. Those who “have” must be motivated to offer – willingly and gladly – to those who “have not.” In this way, peace will be secured through justice as the sole universal request and the basic expectation of all nations. We must feed the hungry, clothe the naked, treat the suffering, and generally care for the needy so that we may hear from our Lord: “Come, O blessed of

my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you” (*Mt.* 25.34).

The selection by Your beloved and esteemed Holiness of a lifestyle of simplicity has highlighted – and will continue to highlight – your priority for what is essential. This fills the hearts of everyone – Your faithful and all people in general – with a sense of hope. It is the hope that this priority will be applied broadly so that judgment and mercy, as “the essence of law” (*Mt.* 23, 23), may prevail in the Church.

Throughout the two-thousand-year history of the Church of Christ, certain truths of the sacred Gospel were misinterpreted by some Christian groups, resulting in secular misconceptions that have unfortunately spread in Christian circles today. Thus, the burden of our obligation and responsibility is to remind ourselves, each other, and the entire world that God became human in Jesus Christ in order that we may lead “a divine way of life” (*Phil.* 3, 20). Indeed, “God is the Lord and has appeared to us” (*Ps.* 117, 27). The one who created all things in the beginning, who guides and provides for all things, descended to the depths of “death on the cross” (*Phil.* 2, 8) in order that, through His resurrection, He may demonstrate that “blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord,” (*Ps.* 117, 26) and in His name alone, to serve His people, so that we may “all be united” (*Jn.* 17, 21), and that “Christ may be all things and in all things” (*Col.* 3, 11).

This world is the domain where we realize this spiritual way of life, where we achieve our integration into the body of Christ, and where we are brought through Him into eternal life. The Church consecrates this earthly life, although it does not consummate its mission in this earthly life. We all realize and recognize this truth, which is why – as pastors and faithful alike – we travel this way of truth, acquiring the heavenly through the earthly.

As the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the worldwide Orthodox Church of Christ, we are certain that Your venerable and dearly beloved Holiness, who commences this historical journey with such favorable auspices as Bishop of Rome, will – together with all those who are willing and able – exhibit special concern for the reparation of secular trends so that humanity may be restored to its “original beauty” of love. We fervently pray with all Christians as well as with people throughout the world that Your Holiness will prove effective in this deeply responsible and highly onerous task.

May our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed and glorified. Thanks be to God, who in every period of time raises up worthy leaders, deserving of their calling to lead and guide His people, for the adoration of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

[www.patriarchate.org/documents/
2013popefrancisaddress](http://www.patriarchate.org/documents/2013popefrancisaddress)

GREETING OF POPE FRANCIS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Before all else, I express my heartfelt thanks for what my brother Andrew has said to us. Many thanks! Many thanks!

It is a source of particular joy for me to meet today with you, the delegates of the Orthodox Churches, of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and of the Ecclesial Communities of the West. I thank you for taking part in the celebration which marked the beginning of my ministry as the Bishop of Rome and the Successor of Peter.

Yesterday morning, during Holy Mass, through you I felt the spiritual presence of the communities which you represent. In this expression of faith, it seemed that we were experiencing all the more urgently the prayer for unity between believers in Christ and at the same time seeing prefigured in some way its full realization, which depends on God's plan and our own faithful cooperation.

I begin my apostolic ministry during this year which my venerable predecessor Benedict XVI, with truly inspired intuition, proclaimed for the Catholic Church as a Year of Faith. With this initiative, which I wish to continue and which I trust will prove a stimulus for our common journey of faith, he wanted to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council by proposing a sort of pilgrimage towards what all Christians consider essential: the personal, transforming encounter with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died and rose for our salvation. The core message of the Council is found precisely in the desire to proclaim this perennially valid treasure of faith to the men and women of our time.

Along with you, I cannot forget all that the Council meant for the progress of ecumenism. Here I would like to recall the words of Blessed John XXIII, the fiftieth anniversary of whose death we shall soon celebrate, in his memorable opening address: "The Catholic Church considers it her duty to work actively for the fulfilment of the great mystery of that unity for which Jesus Christ prayed so earnestly to his heavenly Father on the eve of his great sacrifice; the knowledge that she is so intimately associated with that prayer is for her an occasion of ineffable peace and joy" (AAS 54, 793). These were the words of Pope John.

Yes, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, let us all feel closely united to the prayer of our Saviour at the Last Supper, to his appeal: *ut unum sint*. Let us ask the Father of mercies to enable us to live fully the faith graciously bestowed upon us on the day of our Baptism and to bear witness to it freely, joyfully and courageously. This will be the best service we can offer to the cause of Christian unity, a service of hope for a world still torn by divisions, conflicts and rivalries. The more we are faithful to his will, in our thoughts, words and actions,

the more we will progress, really and substantially, towards unity.

For my part, I wish to assure you that, in continuity with my predecessors, it is my firm intention to pursue the path of ecumenical dialogue, and I thank the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity for the help that it continues to provide, in my name, in the service of this most noble cause. I ask you, dear brothers and sisters, to bring my cordial greetings and the assurance of my prayerful remembrance in the Lord Jesus to the Christian communities which you represent, and I beg of you the charity of a special prayer for me, that I may be a pastor according to the heart of Christ.

And now I turn to you, the distinguished representatives of the Jewish people, to whom we are linked by a most special spiritual bond, since, as the Second Vatican Council stated "the Church of Christ recognizes that in God's plan of salvation the beginnings of her faith and her election are to be found in the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets" (*Nostra Aetate*, 4). I thank you for your presence and I trust that, with the help of the Most High, we can make greater progress in that fraternal dialogue which the Council wished to encourage (cf. *ibid.*) and which has indeed taken place, bearing no little fruit, especially in recent decades. [...]

[...] The Church is likewise conscious of the responsibility which all of us have for our world, for

the whole of creation, which we must love and protect. There is much that we can do to benefit the poor, the needy and those who suffer, and to favor justice, promote reconciliation and build peace. But before all else we need to keep alive in our world the thirst for the absolute, and to counter the dominance of a one-dimensional vision of the human person, a vision which reduces human beings to what they produce and to what they consume: this is one of the most insidious temptations of our time.

We know how much violence has resulted in recent times from the attempt to eliminate God and the divine from the horizon of humanity, and we are aware of the importance of witnessing in our societies to that primordial openness to transcendence which lies deep within the human heart. In this, we also sense our closeness to all those men and women who, although not identifying themselves as followers of any religious tradition, are nonetheless searching for truth, goodness and beauty, the truth, goodness and beauty of God. They are our valued allies in the commitment to defending human dignity, in building a peaceful coexistence between peoples and in safeguarding and caring for creation.

Dear friends, once again I thank you for your presence. I offer all of you my heartfelt, fraternal good wishes.

ORE, 27 March 2013

POPE FRANCIS AND ECUMENISM

MESSAGES ON THE OCCASION OF THE ELECTION AND THE ENTHRONEMENT OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

On the 21st of March, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of the Anglican Communion, presided the inaugural ceremony of his enthronement. Among the many catholic bishops present, also Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor participated in the celebration as well as the Archbishop of Westminster His Excellency Monsignor Vincent Nichols, Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and Monsignor Mark Langham of the same Dicastery. Cardinal Koch handed Archbishop Welby a message signed by Benedict XVI on the 4th of February, day of the election, and a letter from Pope Francis written on March 18th for the enthronement. We publish here below both texts.

LETTER OF POPE BENEDICT

To the Most Reverend
and Right Honourable Justin Welby
Archbishop of Canterbury

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven (*Col 1:3*).

With these words of Saint Paul, I greet you joyfully in the name of the Lord Jesus, “whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (*1 Cor 1:30*), and I offer you my prayerful good wishes on the occasion of your installation as Archbishop of Canterbury.

You take up your office at a time when the Christian faith is being called into question in many parts of the Western world by those who claim that religion is a private matter, with no contribution to offer to public debate. Ministers of the Gospel today have to respond to a widespread deafness to the music of faith, and a general weariness that shuns the demands of discipleship. Yet the hunger for God, even if unrecognized, is ever-present in our society, and the preacher’s task, as a messenger of hope, is to speak the truth with love, shedding the light of Christ into the darkness of people’s lives. May your apostolate yield a rich harvest and may it open the eyes and ears of many to the life-giving message of the Gospel.

Let us give thanks to God that the bonds of affection between Catholics and Anglicans have become firmly established in recent decades, through dialogue and collaboration, as well as personal meetings between our respective predecessors. It is greatly to be

hoped that we will continue to build upon that important legacy. The disappointments that have been encountered and the challenges that remain on our journey towards full communion are well known, but there have also been signs of hope. Recognizing that our unity will arise only as a gift from the Lord, let us entrust ourselves to his Holy Spirit, as we renew our determination to seek genuine unity in faith and to engage more profoundly in common witness and mission.

With sentiments of fraternal regard, I assure you of my prayers as you take up your new responsibilities. Whatever challenges you encounter, may the Lord grant you strength and wisdom, and may the Holy Spirit guide you in all that you undertake in his name.

From the Vatican, 4 February 2013

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

<http://www.news.va>

MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS

To the Most Reverend
and Right Honourable Justin Welby
Archbishop of Canterbury

“May grace and peace be multiplied to you” (*1Pet 1: 2b*)

I thank you for the kind words contained in your message to me at my election, and I wish in turn to offer my greetings and best wishes on the occasion of your Enthronement at Canterbury Cathedral.

The pastoral ministry is a call to walk in fidelity to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Please be assured of my prayers as you take up your new responsibilities, and I ask to pray for me as I respond to the new call that the Lord has addressed to me.

I look forward to meeting you in the near future, and to continuing the warm fraternal relations that our predecessors enjoyed.

From the Vatican, 18 March 2013

FRANCIS

<http://www.news.va>

POPE APPEALS FOR ORTHODOX BISHOPS
KIDNAPPED IN SYRIA

24 April 2013

At the end of his catechesis at the General Audience of Wednesday 24 April 2013, the Holy Father made an appeal regarding the kidnapping of the two Metropolitan Bishops of Aleppo, Syria – Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and Paul Yazigi of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch – who were captured by a group of armed men while they were on a humanitarian mission. The following are the words of the Holy Father with reference to the news.

The abduction of the Greek Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Bishops of Aleppo, news of whose release is contradictory, is yet another sign of the tragic situation in the beloved Syrian nation, where violence and weapons continue to sow suffering and death. As I keep these bishops in my prayers that they may soon return to their communities, I ask God to enlighten hearts and I renew my pressing Easter appeal for an end to bloodshed, for necessary humanitarian aid to be given to people and for a political solution to be found to the crisis as soon as possible.

ORE, 24 April 2013

POPE'S MESSAGE COMMEMORATING
THE EDICT OF MILAN

15 May 2013

On the occasion of the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I visited Milan to take part in the solemn celebrations held for the event. Pope Francis sent a message, through Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, to Cardinal Angelo Scola, Archbishop of Milan, with greetings to the Patriarch and to the participants in the commemoration. We publish here below the text of the Pope's message

Today as then, the common witness of Christian of the East and West, sustained by the Spirit of the Risen One, will agree to the spread of the message of salvation in Europe and the entire world and that, thanks to the foresight of civil authorities, the right to publicly express one's faith will be respected everywhere, and that the contribution that Christianity continues to offer to culture and society in our time will be accepted without prejudice.

<http://www.news.va>

GENERAL AUDIENCE

19 June 2013

"Unity is a grace that we must ask of the Lord that he free us from the temptation of division, of fighting among ourselves, of selfishness, of gossip". The pope said this at the General Audience in St Peter's Square, on Wednesday, 19 June. The

following is an extract of the Pope's catechesis which was originally given in Italian.

[...] Here I come to a second aspect of the Church as the Body of Christ. St Paul says that just as the limbs of the human body, although diverse and many, form one body, so have we been baptized by one Spirit into one body (cf. *1 Cor* 12:12-13). Consequently, in the Church there is variety and a diversity of roles and functions; there is no flat uniformity, but a wealth of gifts that the Holy Spirit distributes. Yet, there is communion and unity: each one relates to the other and comes together to form a single living body, deeply tied to Christ. Let us remember this well: being part of the Church means being united to Christ and receiving from him the divine life that makes us live as Christians; it means staying united to the Pope and to the Bishops who are instruments of unity and communion; and it also means learning to overcome subjectivism and division, to understand each other better, to harmonize the variety and the richness of each person; in a word to love God and the people beside us more, in the family, in the parish, in associations. Body and limb, in order to live, must be united! Unity is superior to conflict, always! Conflicts, if not properly resolved, divide us from each other, separate us from God. Conflict can help us to grow, but it can also divide us. Let us not go down the path of division, of fighting among ourselves! All united, all united in our differences, but united, always: this is the way of Jesus. Unity is superior to conflict. Unity is a grace for which we must ask the Lord that he may liberate us from the temptation of division, of conflict between us, of selfishness, of gossip. How much evil gossip does, how much evil! Never gossip about others, never! So much damage to the Church comes from division among Christians, from biases, from narrow interests. Division among us, but also division among communities: Evangelical Christians, Orthodox Christians, Catholic Christians, why are we divided? We must try to bring about unity. I will tell you something: today, before leaving home, I spent 40 minutes, more or less, half an hour, with an evangelical pastor and we prayed together and sought unity. Because we have to pray together as Catholics and also with other Christians, pray that the Lord give us the gift of unity, unity among us. But how will we have unity among Christians if we are not capable of it among ourselves, as Catholics? Or in our families? So many families fight and are divided! Seek unity, the unity that builds the Church. Unity comes from Jesus Christ. He sends us the Holy Spirit to create unity.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us ask God: help us to be members of the Body of the Church, ever more deeply united to Christ; help us not to cause the Body of the Church to suffer through our conflicts, our divisions, our selfishness. Help us to be living limbs bound one to the other by that unique force, love, which the Holy Spirit pours into our hearts (cf. *Rom* 5:5). [...]

ORE, 26 June 2013

VISIT TO ROME OF HIS HOLINESS TAWADROS II POPE OF ALEXANDRIA AND PATRIARCH OF THE SEE OF ST MARK

9 – 13 May 2013

His Holiness Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St Mark made a visit to Rome from 9 to 13 May 2013, to meet the Holy Father Pope Francis.

Forty years ago, the predecessor of Pope Tawadros, Shenouda III, was received by Pope Paul VI in the Vatican on the 10th of May 1973. On that occasion the Pope and the Patriarch signed an important common Christological Declaration launching the bilateral ecumenical dialogue between the two Churches. In commemoration of that historic encounter, on Friday morning, 10 May, Pope Francis received in his private library the Head of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt with the accompanying delegation in the presence of the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity Cardinal Kurt Koch and other members of the Council.

The exchange of greetings and gifts by The Holy Father Francis and Pope Tawadros was followed by a moment of prayer in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel.

We publish here below a translation of the Holy Father's greeting, delivered in Italian, and the text of the Patriarch's address.

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER

Your Holiness,
Dear Brothers in Christ,

For me it is a great joy and a truly graced moment to be able to receive all of you here, at the tomb of Saint Peter, as we recall that historic meeting forty years ago between our predecessors, Pope Paul VI and the late Pope Shenouda III, in an embrace of peace and fraternity, after centuries in which there was a certain distance between us. So it is with deep affection that I welcome Your Holiness and the distinguished members of your delegation, and I thank you for your words. Through you, I extend my cordial greetings in the Lord to the bishops, the clergy, the monks and the whole Coptic Orthodox Church.

Today's visit strengthens the bonds of friendship and brotherhood that already exist between the See of Peter and the See of Mark, heir to an inestimable heritage of martyrs, theologians, holy monks and faithful disciples of Christ, who have borne witness to the Gospel from generation to generation, often in situations of great adversity.

Forty years ago the Common Declaration of our predecessors represented a milestone on the ecumenical journey, and from it emerged a Commission for Theological Dialogue between our Churches, which has yielded good results and has prepared the ground for a broader dialogue between the Catholic Church and the entire family of Oriental Orthodox Churches, a dialogue that continues to bear fruit to this day. In that solemn Declaration, our Churches acknowledged that, in line with the apostolic traditions, they profess "one faith in the One Triune God" and "the divinity of the Only-begotten Son of God ... perfect God with respect to his divinity, perfect man with respect to his humanity". They acknowledged that divine life is given to us and nourished through the

seven sacraments and they recognized a mutual bond in their common devotion to the Mother of God.

We are glad to be able to confirm today what our illustrious predecessors solemnly declared, we are glad to recognize that we are united by one Baptism, of which our common prayer is a special expression, and we long for the day when, in fulfilment of the Lord's desire, we will be able to communicate from the one chalice.

Of course we are well aware that the path ahead may still prove to be long, but we do not want to forget the considerable distance already travelled, which has taken tangible form in radiant moments of communion, among which I am pleased to recall the meeting in February 2000 in Cairo between Pope Shenouda III and Blessed John Paul II, who went as a pilgrim, during the Great Jubilee, to the places of origin of our faith. I am convinced that – under the guidance of the Holy Spirit – our persevering prayer, our dialogue and the will to build communion day by day in mutual love will allow us to take important further steps towards full unity.

Your Holiness, I am aware of the many marks of attention and fraternal charity that you have shown, since the early days of your ministry, to the Catholic Coptic Church, to its Pastor, Patriarch Ibrahim Isaac Sidrak and to his predecessor, Cardinal Antonios Naguib. The institution of a "National Council of Christian Churches", which you strongly desired, represents an important sign of the will of all believers in Christ to develop relations in daily life that are increasingly fraternal and to put themselves at the service of the whole of Egyptian society, of which they form an integral part. Let me assure Your Holiness that your efforts to build communion among believers in Christ, and your lively interest in the future of your country and the role of the Christian communities within Egyptian society find a deep echo in the heart of

the Successor of Peter and of the entire Catholic community.

"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together" (1 Cor 12:26). This is a law of the Christian life, and in this sense we can say that there is also an ecumenism of suffering; just as the blood of the martyrs was a seed of strength and fertility for the Church, so too the sharing of daily sufferings can become an effective instrument of unity. And this also applies, in a certain sense, to the broader context of society and relations between Christians and non-Christians: from shared suffering can blossom forth forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, with God's help.

Your Holiness, in sincerely assuring you of my prayers that the whole flock entrusted to your pastoral care may be ever faithful to the Lord's call, I invoke the protection of both Saint Peter and Saint Mark: may they who during their lifetime worked together in practical ways for the spread of the Gospel, intercede for us and accompany the journey of our Churches.

ORE 15 May 2013

ADDRESS OF POPE TAWADROS II

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God Amen.

"Christ has risen, truly He has risen"

"Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place" (2 Cor 2:14).

On behalf of the Coptic Orthodox Church, The Holy Synod and all the Copts of Egypt worldwide, I would like to congratulate Your Holiness on Your divine appointment as Pope and Bishop of Rome. It is one of the highest offices in the Christian community, but also of immense relevance worldwide, particularly in the current historical phase when inter-religious dialogue has become so important.

Being guided by the Holy Spirit, I deliberately wanted this visit to coincide with my congratulations to Your Holiness, in the 40th anniversary of the visit by His Holiness, the Late Pope Shenouda III, the so-called Pope of the Arabs and the Pioneer of the Enlightenment Movement in the Coptic Orthodox Church, to Pope Paul VI, from the 4th until the 10th of May 1973 (the day when the two Popes signed the Joint Statement), in the Vatican City, the first visit ever paid by the Pope and Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Alexandria to the Vatican. In this year I was still studying at the Faculty of Pharmacy at Alexandria University in Egypt. It may be worth noting that, as a response to that visit, His Holiness Pope John Paul II visited Egypt in 2000.

Thus, this is an unforgettable occasion for me, both for its great inherent importance and for its marking the anniversary of the historical and most significant event by Pope Shenouda III. May this visit of love and brotherhood be the first of a long series between our two great Churches. Therefore I propose that the 10th of May of each year should be considered as a celebration of brotherly love between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church.

As my first trip ever outside Egypt after enthronement last November, I'm visiting Your Holiness coming from Egypt, "the Nile Country", a huge land with a wonderful geographical location. My Country is the place where the most ancient culture in the world was born, the Pharaonic Civilization. But it is not only this. Egypt is the birthplace or the setting of many other important Civilizations of antiquity: the Greek, the Roman, the Coptic and finally the Islamic.

Egypt has witnessed divine signs like no other place on earth. As the Prophet says, "Out of Egypt, I have called my son" and "Blessed be Egypt my people". A number of prophets and saints were born and lived in Egypt, a country well renowned for its religious coexistence.

Over a span of time of more than three years, the Holy Family visited Egyptian villages and governates moving from East to West and from North to South, thus making the whole country blessed with the sign of the Holy Cross. And Jesus Christ made its soil sacred by treading on it. Later on, in the early years of Christianity, St. Mark the Evangelist spread the Christian doctrine through Egypt and was martyred in Alexandria, the city of Alexander the Great, also known as "the Mediterranean Spouse".

My Coptic Church is a very ancient one, with a history that spans over more than nineteen centuries. It was founded by St. Mark the Evangelist in the 1st century and in the course of time it has been irrigated until now with the blood of numerous martyrs, thus becoming stronger and stronger.

Christian Monasticism originated in Egypt by the great St. Anthony, the so-called Father of all monks, who established the practice of monastic life. Later on, the practice of common life established by St. Pachomius, who was born in Upper Egypt in the middle of the 3rd century, was extended from Egypt to the rest of the world. Monasticism was instrumental in the formation of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

The Copts have grown in the world, as a solid religious entity with a clear Christian character. Doubtless the contribution of the Coptic Orthodox Church is great and many. The patriarchs and popes of Alexandria played a leading role in the Christian theology.

I would like to emphasize that the relationships between Italy and Egypt are utterly solid and long established, spanning over more than two millennia. The two countries can boast marvelous Mediterranean

civilizations and human heritage that make them unique in the world.

Therefore, Italy has a great place and worth in our hearts. It is mentioned also in the Holy Bible, in the Epistles of Paul of Tarsus, the apostle that, in the 1st century of Christianity, together with St. Peter established the seat of the Christian Church in Rome, the town where they both were also martyred. Approximately in the same years, the apostle St. Mark established the seat of the Christian Coptic Orthodox Church in the town of Alexandria.

The Coptic Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church are strongly interconnected. They have always worked together since the early ecumenical councils (going back to the first Nicaea Council in 325 A.D., when the "Nicene Creed" was formulated in the fourth century, with the contribution of the courageous deacon Athanasius, the youngest Pope of the Coptic Church and the so-called "Protector of the Faith").

The greatest witness of the strong relationships between the two Churches is the foundation of our two Dioceses in Italy: Bishop Barnaba in Turin and Bishop Kiroulos in Milan who are the Official Representatives of the Coptic Orthodox Church, taking care of all affairs of the Copts, which number is always increasing.

Everyone here praises the love, the fruitful cooperation and the great support of the Catholic Church to the Egyptian Church founded in your beautiful Country. Both Churches, the Catholic and the Coptic, have always worked together, in the Middle East and in the Western World, to make peace prevail. The most important aim for both is the promotion of ecumenical dialogue in order to get to the most pursued goal, unity. Therefore and for the first time ever, I insisted to participate personally in the Enthronement Ceremony of the Patriarch of Catholic

Church in Egypt, Patriarch Ibrahim Isaac. Last February, we also formed the Council of Churches in Egypt with the participation of all Egyptian Churches, as an expression of solidarity and love between brothers.

I am proud of my beloved Country, Egypt, "the Homeland which lives inside us" as His Holiness Pope Shenouda III used to say, and I am honored and very glad to be here in the Vatican. Despite its being the smallest country in the world, it is the most important country for its great influence and Holy Service. The Vatican Museums and libraries contain stunning artistic treasures that bear witness to the excellence of man's genius over the time. Finally, it is important to stress the fundamental role the Country plays in the field of ethics and its constant efforts in building peace on earth.

I will end my speech by wishing that the excellent relationships between the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Catholic may become stronger and more prosperous. Working together to promote ecumenical dialogue and peace on earth will be our mutual aim. May our Lord help and support Your Holiness in Your Holy mission.

I hope I can soon be honored by the visit of Your Holiness in my beloved country, Egypt. Once again, the entire Coptic Church, the religious communities and the Egyptian people express their utmost joy and delight to Your Holiness.

Finally I would like to thank Your Holiness for the kind hospitality and may the peace of the Lord be with you all. See you in Egypt.

ORE 15 May 2013

VISIT TO ROME OF HIS GRACE JUSTIN WELBY ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

14 June 2013

"Let us travel the path towards unity, fraternally united in charity". This was Pope Francis' invitation to His Grace Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of the Anglican Communion, on Friday morning, 14 June. Official addresses followed the private audience in the Library and gifts were exchanged in the presence of the delegation accompanying Archbishop Welby and the delegation of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The Pontiff offered the Archbishop an etching of St Peter's Square made in 1775, and the Archbishop gave him an engraving with his episcopal motto. The exchange of gifts was followed by a moment of prayer in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel. The Anglican delegation comprised Archbishop David Moxon, Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and Canon Jonathan Goodall, the Archbishop's personal assistant. The Catholic delegation included Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Council, Monsignor Mark Langham of the same Dicastery and Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster.

We publish here below the English text of the Pope's Address, which was given in Italian followed by Archbishop Welby's discourse.

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS

Your Grace, Dear Friends,

On the happy occasion of our first meeting, I make my own the words of Pope Paul VI, when he addressed Archbishop Michael Ramsey during his historic visit in 1966: "Your steps have not brought you to a foreign dwelling ... we are pleased to open the doors to you, and with the doors, our heart, pleased and honoured as we are ... to welcome you 'not as a guest or a stranger, but as a fellow citizen of the Saints and the Family of God'" (cf. *Eph* 2:19-20).

I know that during Your Grace's installation in Canterbury Cathedral you remembered in prayer the new Bishop of Rome. I am deeply grateful to you – and since we began our respective ministries within days of each other, I think we will always have a particular reason to support one another in prayer.

The history of relations between the Church of England and the Catholic Church is long and complex, and not without pain. Recent decades, however, have been marked by a journey of rapprochement and fraternity, and for this we give heartfelt thanks to God. This journey has been brought about both via theological dialogue, through the work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, and via the growth of cordial relations at every level through shared daily lives in a spirit of profound mutual respect and sincere cooperation. In this regard, I am very pleased to welcome alongside you Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster. These firm bonds of friendship have enabled us to remain on course even when difficulties have arisen in our theological dialogue that were greater than we could have foreseen at the start of our journey.

I am grateful, too, for the sincere efforts the Church of England has made to understand the reasons that led my Predecessor, Benedict XVI, to provide a

canonical structure able to respond to the wishes of those groups of Anglicans who have asked to be received collectively into the Catholic Church: I am sure this will enable the spiritual, liturgical and pastoral traditions that form the Anglican patrimony to be better known and appreciated in the Catholic world.

Today's meeting, my dear brother, is an opportunity to remind ourselves that the search for unity among Christians is prompted not by practical considerations, but by the will of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who made us his brothers and sisters, children of the One Father. Hence the prayer that we make today is of fundamental importance.

This prayer gives a fresh impulse to our daily efforts to grow towards unity, which are concretely expressed in our cooperation in various areas of daily life. Particularly important among these is our witness to the reference to God and the promotion of Christian values in a world that seems at times to call into question some of the foundations of society, such as respect for the sacredness of human life or the importance of the institution of the family built on marriage, a value that you yourself have had occasion to recall recently.

Then there is the effort to achieve greater social justice, to build an economic system that is at the service of man and promotes the common good. Among our tasks as witnesses to the love of Christ is that of giving a voice to the cry of the poor, so that they are not abandoned to the laws of an economy that seems at times to treat people as mere consumers.

I know that Your Grace is especially sensitive to all these questions, in which we share many ideas, and I am also aware of your commitment to foster reconciliation and resolution of conflicts between nations. In this regard, together with Archbishop Nichols, you have urged the authorities to find a peaceful solution to the Syrian conflict such as would guarantee the security of the entire population,

including the minorities, not least among whom are the ancient local Christian communities. As you yourself have observed, we Christians bring peace and grace as a treasure to be offered to the world, but these gifts can bear fruit only when Christians live and work together in harmony. This makes it easier to contribute to building relations of respect and peaceful coexistence with those who belong to other religious traditions, and with non-believers.

The unity we so earnestly long for is a gift that comes from above and it is rooted in our communion of love with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. As Christ himself promised, "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (*Mt* 18:20). My dear brother, let us travel the path towards unity, fraternally united in charity, and with Jesus Christ, our elder Brother, as our constant point of reference. In our worship of Jesus Christ we will find the foundation and *raison d'être* of our journey. May the merciful Father hear and grant the prayers that we make to him together. Let us place all our hope in him who "is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" (*Eph* 3:20).

ORE, 19 June 2013

DISCOURSE OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
Apostolic Palace, Vatican City, 14 June 2013

Your Holiness,
Dear Friends,

I am full of love and gratitude to be here. In the last few days we have been remembering the death of Blessed Pope John XXIII in the midst of the Second Vatican Council. At the Requiem said at Lambeth Palace fifty years ago this weekend by Archbishop Michael Ramsey, my much-loved predecessor said of him: 'Pope John has shown us again the power of being, by being a man who touches human hearts with charity. So there has come to many a new longing for the unity of all Christians, and a new knowledge that however long the road may be, charity already makes all the difference to it.'

Having for many years found inspiration in the great corpus of Catholic social teaching, and worked on its implications with Catholic groups; having spent retreats in new orders of the Church in France, and being accompanied by the Prior of another new order; I do indeed feel that I am (in the words of Pope Paul VI to Archbishop Michael) coming to a place where I can feel myself at home.

Your Holiness, we are called by the Holy Spirit of God, through our fraternal love, to continue the work that has been the precious gift to popes and archbishops of Canterbury for these past fifty years, and of which this famous ring is the enduring token. I

pray that the nearness of our two inaugurations may serve the reconciliation of the world and the Church.

As you have stressed, we must promote the fruits of our dialogue; and, with our fellow bishops, we must give expression to our unity in faith through prayer and evangelisation. It is only as the world sees Christians growing visibly in unity that it will accept through us the divine message of peace and reconciliation.

However, the journey is testing and we cannot be unaware that differences exist about how we bring the Christian faith to bear on the challenges thrown up by modern society. But our 'goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey' (Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi* 1), and we can trust in the prayer of Christ, '*ut omnes unum sint*' (*Jn* 17:21). A firm foundation of friendship will enable us to be hopeful in speaking to one another about those differences, to bear one another's burdens, and to be open to sharing the discernment of a way forward that is faithful to the mind of Christ pressed upon us as disciples.

That way forward must reflect the self-giving love of Christ, our bearing of his Cross, and our dying to ourselves so as to live with Christ, which will show itself in hospitality and love for the poor. We must love those who seek to oppose us, and love above all those tossed aside — even whole nations — by the present crises around the world. Also, even as we speak, our brothers and sisters in Christ suffer terribly from violence, oppression and war, from bad government and unjust economic systems. If we are not their advocates in the name of Christ, who will be?

Your Holiness, dear brother, I assure you of the love, respect and prayer of the bishops, clergy and people of the Anglican Communion.

ORE, 19 June 2013

VISIT TO ROME OF A DELEGATION
FROM THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF STS PETER AND PAUL

27 – 29 June 2013

Within the framework of a well-established tradition, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Istanbul) sends a delegation to Rome each year to celebrate with the Church of Rome its patronal feast of Sts Peter and Paul, on June 29th. In turn, a delegation from the Church of Rome goes to Phanar, the headquarters of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, to participate in the celebration of the patronal feast of St Andrew on November 30th.

This year's delegation sent to Rome by His Holiness Bartholomew I, was led by His Eminence Metropolitan Ioannis (Zizioulas) of Pergamon, Co-President of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. The delegation also included the Bishop of Sinope His Grace Athenagoras (Peckstadt), and Reverend Archimandrite Prodromos Xenakis, Vice-Secretary of the Eparchial Holy Synod of the Church of Crete.

We publish here below the English text of the Pope's discourse, which was given in Italian as well as the letter sent to the Holy Father by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Address of Metropolitan Ioannis.

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Friday, 28 June 2013

Dear Brother,
Dear Brothers in Christ,

I am especially glad to offer you a warm welcome in the Church of Rome, as it celebrates the feast of its patron saints, Peter and Paul. Your presence on this occasion is a sign of the profound bond uniting the Church of Constantinople to the Church of Rome in faith, hope and charity. The fine custom of an exchange of delegations between our Churches for their respective patronal feasts, which started in 1969, gives me great joy: fraternal encounter is an essential part of the journey towards unity. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to His Holiness Bartholomew I and to the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, who this year have chosen once again to send a high-ranking delegation. I recall with fraternal affection the exquisite gesture of His Holiness Bartholomew I, in choosing to honour me with his presence at the celebration of the inauguration of my ministry as Bishop of Rome. I am sincerely grateful to Your Eminence too for your participation in that event, and I am pleased to welcome you again on this occasion.

The search for unity among Christians is an urgent task – you have said that "it is not a luxury, but an imperative" – from which, today more than ever, we cannot prescind. In our world, which hungers and thirsts for truth, love, hope, peace and unity, our witness demands that we should at last be able to proclaim with one voice the good news of the Gospel and to celebrate together the Divine Mysteries of new life in Christ! We are well aware that unity is primarily a gift from God for which we must pray without ceasing, but we all have the task of preparing the conditions,

cultivating the ground of our hearts, so that this great grace may be received.

An essential contribution to the search for full communion between Catholics and Orthodox is offered by the Mixed International Commission for Theological Dialogue, co-chaired by Your Eminence, Metropolitan Ioannis, and my Venerable Brother Cardinal Kurt Koch. I thank you sincerely for your valued and tireless labour. This Commission has already produced many common texts and is now studying the delicate theme of the theological and ecclesiological relationship between primacy and synodality in the Church's life. It is significant that today we are able to reflect together on these areas in truth and love, beginning from what we have in common, yet without concealing what still divides us. This is no mere theoretical exercise: it demands in-depth knowledge of one another's traditions in order to understand them and sometimes also to learn from them. I am speaking for example of Catholic Church's reflection on the meaning of episcopal collegiality and the tradition of synodality, so characteristic of the Orthodox Churches. I am confident that the effort to reflect together, complex and laborious though it is, will bear fruit in due course. I find it reassuring to know that Catholics and Orthodox share a notion of dialogue that is not about seeking a theological lowest common denominator on which to reach a compromise, but is rather about deepening our grasp of the sole truth that Christ has given to his Church, a truth that we never cease to understand better, as we follow the Holy Spirit's promptings. Hence, we must not be afraid of encounter and true dialogue. This does not lead us away from the truth; rather, through an exchange of gifts, it leads us, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, towards the whole Truth (cf. *Jn* 16:13).

Venerable Brothers, I thank you once again for being here with us on the occasion of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Let us confidently invoke their intercession and that of Saint Andrew, Peter's brother, for our faithful and for the needs of the whole world, especially the poor, the suffering and those unjustly persecuted on account of their faith. I ask you, finally, to pray for me – I need your prayers – and to ask your people to pray for me, that the Lord may assist me in my ministry as Bishop of Rome and Successor of Peter.

ORE, 3 July 2013

LETTER FROM THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH
BARTHOLOMEW I TO POPE FRANCIS

His Holiness and Beatitude Pope Francis of Senior Rome: rejoice in the Lord

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (1 Pet 1:3-4) is also our confession from the most holy Church of Constantinople-New Rome with Peter the chief of the Apostles, even as we address a wholehearted fraternal greeting and festive embrace to Your esteemed and beloved Holiness on this auspicious day of celebration in honor of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, which marks the Patronal Feast of Your venerable Church of Rome.

In continuation of this tradition, the Ecumenical Patriarchate participates once again this year in the joy that on this day above all adorns the Throne of the ancient Church of Rome of Your Holiness. Therefore, it delights with You and Your devout faithful on the occasion of the feast of these two holy Apostles, expressing the expectation and hope that the overtures of Your Holiness toward simplicity and charity, universally received with a sense of gratitude and gratification, will profoundly nurture the Church and orient its attitude toward the essential dimensions of lawfulness, justice and mercy, in accordance with the doctrines and demands of its founder, our Lord Jesus Christ, who has truly called us all “to a living hope.”

The well and widely known position of Your Holiness on these issues of simplicity and charity proved very moving. Moreover, it is also true that the Church of Christ and its members have always been inspired by the very same ideas and principles of charity and simplicity. Contemporary Christian communities are replete with philanthropic and beneficent institutions and individuals; nonetheless, the needs are also plentiful, particularly in our age – an age of financial crisis and challenge, but also a crisis of values and establishments – which is precisely why we must constantly motivate people's charitable

sensitivities in order to respond to and resolve problems of poverty.

This spirit of simplicity must surely also characterize relations among Churches and Christians, who for reasons known to the Lord are divided today into different Christian churches and confessions. It is our personal hope that the incomplete dialogues among the various Churches – and especially the dialogue between our two great Churches of Roman Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity, a dialogue of love, theology and truth – will continue to bear fruit in a spirit of simplicity and fraternity, of mutual understanding and truthfulness, in order to bring about the desired result of rapprochement through the unique authenticity in Christ, which alone is ultimately able to unite – and will unite – all Christians.

Your Holiness, our faith is not a compilation of diverse opinions promulgated to integrate discussion in a harmonious way; it is the revelation of the singular truth expressed through and in the divine person of Jesus Christ, in order that the final goal for all those in dialogue should be to approach, touch, comprehend and experience His divine person, who recapitulates the truth manifested to those that are with Him in the Holy Spirit.

The Patronal Feast of a Church – today of Your Church in Rome and next November of our Church in Constantinople, when we commemorate the holy Apostle Andrew, first-called among the apostles – constitutes a highlight and milestone in its spiritual journey. It provides an opportunity to reflect on the past and envisage the future. Events and occurrences in the past must be duly assessed and accordingly categorized into those that are proper and to be promoted, or else into those that are improper and to be shunned.

Would that every new period of such celebration be filled with those initiatives and activities on the part of Your venerable Holiness and Your historical Church, which should be emulated, praised and advanced. In this way, we shall be enabled to approach the truth in Christ properly as brothers, sharing and sojourning with Him “into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” so that “our faith may be tested by fire and found to result in praise, honor and glory” (1 Pet 1.7). “For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish . . . instead honoring everyone, loving the family of believers, and fearing God.” (1 Pet 2.15 and 17).

Through our Patriarchal Delegation, led by His Eminence Metropolitan John of Pergamon, while also comprising His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Sinope and the Very Reverend Archimandrite Prodromos Xenakis, we convey these heartfelt sentiments and wholehearted congratulatory wishes – on behalf of our Church of Constantinople as well as personally, as well as of all Orthodox Christians throughout the world – on this jubilant and illustrious celebration.

Behold, with confident anticipation, we now contemplate our mutual journey to the common cup. We are not ignorant of the existing impediments to the desirable unity of all Christians. Nevertheless, we shall not cease working with all our strength and aspiring to the All-Holy Spirit. According to Gregory the Theologian, Archbishop of Constantinople, “this Spirit is most prudent and extremely loving; if it should discover fishermen, it can lure to Christ the entire world, captivating them by the fishing net of the word,” just as Peter did. Indeed, “it can transform the passion of fanatical persecutors and create a Paul in the place of Saul, captivating them with the same intensity of piety as they had been captivated by evil. Such is the Spirit of meekness.” Today, the same Spirit also renders us “bold heralds” of Christian unity, for whose sake we ceaselessly “bend our knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. For this Spirit “always was, is, and shall be; it is without beginning and without end.” Thus it shall always inspire in us the desire for unity in simplicity and the salvation of all. “Let us, however, stand together and glorify the Trinity together,” Father, Son and Holy Spirit, “through whom alone can we acquire one assembly, one worship, adoration, power, perfection, and sanctification.” This is how the same Spirit “delights in bestowing upon us its divine gifts.”

Wherefore, in celebrating together with Your beloved Holiness, we recite the hymns of our Orthodox Church in honor of our mutual and glorious patron saints: “Rejoice, blessed and matching counterparts, sharing a single soul in two bodies. Rejoice in the Lord forever, Peter and Paul. We invoke your unceasing prayers for us and implore the fulfillment of your promises to us.” Rejoice and be mindful of us. As you stand directly before the Holy Trinity, entreat for the salvation of us all, so that we may obtain the eternal gifts in Christ Jesus our Lord. To Him be all glory and might, honor and worship, gratitude and thanksgiving, together with His Father, who is without beginning, and His All-Holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

June 22, 2013

Your Holiness’
Beloved brother in Christ

ORE, 3 July 2013

ADDRESS BY HIS EMINENCE
METROPOLITAN IOANNIS OF PERGAMON

28 June 2013

Your Holiness,

It is a special privilege and a great honor for us to address Your Holiness in the capacity of a special Delegation from the Holy Church of Constantinople

on the occasion of the feast of the patron Saints of the venerable Church of Rome, the Church “presiding in love”, according to the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch. His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, has given us the mandate to convey to Your Holiness His brotherly love and the warm congratulations of the sister Church of Constantinople on the solemn occasion of this great feast.

It has become by now a long tradition to exchange visits of official Delegations from the Churches of Rome and Constantinople on the occasion of the feasts of their respective patron Saints. This is a sign of their strong commitment to the sacred cause of the restoration of the full communion which existed between them in the first Christian millennium. This communion was broken on account of disagreements of matters of faith but also because of the freezing of love. It is only through a dialogue of love and faith that this communion can be restored. To such a dialogue of love and faith our two Churches are now fully committed following the will of our Lord that His disciples maybe one as He and His Father are one so that the world may believe (*Jn* 17: 21). Our presence here testifies to this commitment.

Your Holiness,

We live in a world which is tormented by adversity and conflict. Human greed, pride and selfishness threaten the peace and stability of societies and nations in many parts of the world. Poverty and injustice lead many people to misery and despair. Even nature and creation suffer the consequences of human sin. Religion is often used to justify conflict and war instead of offering peace to the world. In such a situation the message of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ becomes the only hope of the world. This message can be effective only if Christians are united. Christian unity is not a luxury but an imperative for the Church, particularly in our time. We cannot preach love and peace to the world unless we first practice them ourselves. This makes humility and dialogue the only path we can follow in order to be faithful to the Gospel of our Lord.

Your Holiness,

It is with deep gratitude and satisfaction that the whole Christian world, and the Church of Constantinople in particular, witness the spirit of simplicity and Christian humility with which Your Holiness has been serving the Church since your ascent to your high office. This spirit sets an example for all Christians in the difficult times in which we live. At the same time it offers us the hope that the difficult and thorny issue of Roman primacy which has divided Christendom in the past can be placed in a spirit of true ecclesial communion and synodality, as it was understood and practiced in the early undivided Church. This will bring nearer the time of the

restoration of our full communion which our Lord desires.

Your Holiness,

The Holy Bible informs us that St. Peter and St. Andrew were brothers in the flesh. They met together the Lord and became also brothers in Christ by believing in Him as the Saviour and the Messiah. This faith they bequeathed to the Churches of Rome and Constantinople through their preaching and martyrdom. In celebrating the feast of one of them we celebrate also the feast of the other. Today is our common feast, the feast of the two brothers who were first called by the Lord.

With these thoughts and feelings, which our Patriarchal Delegation expresses to Your Holiness on this solemn occasion, allow us to present to You this personal letter and Gift of His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, expressing on behalf of the Holy Synod and the Church of Constantinople the congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the feast of the patron Saints of this venerable Church.

May our Lord through the intercessions of His Holy Apostles, whose memory we celebrate today, grant His protection and blessing to the Church for the glory of the Triune God and the unity of all in the name of Christ.

CELEBRATION OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY IN ROME

18 – 25 January 2013

GENERAL AUDIENCE

16 January 2013

At the conclusion of the General Audience on Wednesday 16 January in the Paul VI Hall, the Holy Father recalled the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, held every year from 18 to 25 January. The following is a translation of the Pope's words originally pronounced in Italian.

[...] The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins the day after tomorrow, Friday 18 January. This year its theme is: "What does God require of us?", inspired by a passage of the Prophet Micah (cf. *Mic 6: 6-8*). I invite everyone to pray, asking God with insistence for the great gift of unity among all disciples of the Lord. May the inexhaustible power of the Holy Spirit encourage us to be sincerely committed to seeking unity so that we may all profess together that Jesus is the Saviour of the World. Many thanks.

ORE, 23 January 2013

ANGELUS

20 January 2013

"One of the gravest sins that disfigure the Church's face is that against her visible unity", especially, "the historical divisions that divided Christians and that have not yet been resolved". This was Benedict XVI's message at the Sunday Angelus in St Peter's Square, referring to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The following is a translation of the Pope's reflection which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today the liturgy proposes the Gospel episode of the wedding at Cana, recounted by John, an eyewitness of the event. This episode has been allocated to this Sunday which immediately follows the Christmas season because, together with the visit of the Magi from the East and the Baptism of Jesus, it forms the trilogy of the Epiphany, in other words the manifestation of Christ. The miracle of the wedding at Cana is in fact "the first of his signs" (*Jn 2:11*), that is, the first miracle that Jesus worked with which he showed his glory in public, inspiring faith in his disciples.

Let us briefly recall the events that occurred during that wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. It happened that there was not enough wine and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, pointed this out to her Son. He answered her that his hour had not yet come; but then acquiesced to

Mary's request and, having had the six large jars filled with water, he transformed the water into wine, an excellent wine, better than the previous one. With this "sign" Jesus revealed himself as the messianic Bridegroom come to establish with his people the new and eternal covenant, in accordance with the prophets' words: "as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you" (*Is 62:5*). Moreover, wine is a symbol of this joy of love; but it also alludes to the blood that Jesus was to pour out at the end to seal his nuptial pact with humanity.

The Church is the Bride of Christ who makes her holy and beautiful with his grace. Nevertheless this bride formed of human beings is in constant need of purification. And one of the gravest sins that disfigure the Church's face is that against her visible unity, the historical divisions that separated Christians and that have not yet been resolved. The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is taking place in these very days, from 18 to 25 January, an event much appreciated by believers and communities, which reawakens in all the desire for, and spiritual commitment to, full communion.

Very important in this regard was the prayer vigil I celebrated about a month ago in this square with thousands of young people from all over Europe and with the ecumenical community of Taizé: a moment of grace in which we experienced the beauty of forming one in Christ. I encourage everyone to pray together so that we may achieve "what the Lord requires of us" (cf. *Mic 6:6-8*), as the theme of the Week this year says. The theme was suggested by several Christian communities in India, who invite the faithful as brothers and sisters in Christ, to work hard to achieve visible unity among Christians, and to overcome every type of unjust discrimination. Next Friday, at the end of these days of prayer, I shall preside at Vespers in the **Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls**, in the presence of the Representatives of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Dear friends, once again I would like to add to the prayer for Christian unity the prayer for peace. Praying that in the various wars that are, unfortunately, still raging, the despicable massacre of defenceless civilians may cease, an end be put to every form of violence and the courage be found for dialogue and negotiation. For these intentions, let us invoke the intercession of Mary Most Holy, Mediatrix of grace.

After the Angelus

I greet all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors present at today's Angelus. In these days, we are

celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Let us join our prayers to those of our brothers and sisters of all Churches and communities, that we may dedicate ourselves ever more earnestly to working towards our visible unity in Jesus Christ. God bless you and your loved ones!

I wish you all a good Sunday and a good week. Thank you. Have a good Sunday!

ORE, 23 January 2013

GENERAL AUDIENCE

23 January 2013

[...] I hope that in every community the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will encourage the commitment to ask the Lord insistently for the gift of unity and to live in fraternal communion.[...]

ORE, 30 January 2013

POPE BENEDICT XVI CONCLUDES
THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

25 January 2013

“Ecumenism will not bear lasting fruit unless accompanied by concrete actions of conversion”, the Holy Father said on Friday afternoon, 25 January, at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at the Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls for Second Vespers of the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. The following is a translation of the Pope’s Homily which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is always a joy and a special grace to find ourselves gathered together around the tomb of the Apostle Paul for the conclusion the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I greet with affection the Cardinals present, in the first place Cardinal Harvey, Archpriest of this Basilica, and with him the Abbot and the Community of monks that are hosting us. I greet Cardinal Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and all the collaborators of that Dicastery. I address my cordial and brotherly greetings to His Eminence Metropolitan Gennadios, representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch; Reverend Canon Richardson, personal representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury in Rome; and all representatives of the different Churches and Ecclesial Communities gathered here this evening. Moreover, I am particularly pleased to greet the members of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, to whom I wish fruitful work at the Plenary Session that is taking place these days in Rome. I greet as well the students of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey on their visit to Rome for the purpose of deepening their knowledge of the

Catholic Church, and to Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox young people who are studying here. I greet lastly all present, gathered here to pray for unity among all disciples of Christ.

This celebration is set in the context of the Year of Faith, inaugurated last 11 October, on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. Communion in the same faith is the basis for ecumenism. Unity, in fact, is given by God as inseparable from faith; St Paul says it efficaciously: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all” (*Eph* 4:4-6). The profession of baptismal faith in God, Father and Creator, that is revealed in his Son Jesus Christ, pouring forth the Spirit who gives life and who sanctifies, already unites Christians. Without faith — that is primarily a gift from God, but is also the response of man — the entire ecumenical movement would be reduced to a form of “contract” which adheres to a common interest. The *Second Vatican Council* reminds Christians that “the closer their union with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, the more deeply and easily will they be able to grow in mutual brotherly love” (*Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 7). The doctrinal questions that we still share must not be overlooked or minimized. Rather, they should be faced with courage, in a spirit of brotherhood and mutual respect. Dialogue, when it reflects the priority of faith, permits us to open ourselves to the action of God with a firm trust that by ourselves we cannot create unity; it is the Holy Spirit who guides us toward full communion, and makes us accept the spiritual wealth present in the different Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

In today’s society it seems that the Christian message has less and less of an effect on personal and community life; and this is a challenge for all the Churches and Ecclesial Communities. Unity is in itself a privileged means, almost a presupposition to proclaiming in an ever more credible way the faith to those who do not yet know the Saviour, or who, despite having received the proclamation of the Gospel, have almost forgotten this precious gift. The scandal of division that undermined missionary activity was the impulse that started the ecumenical movement as we know it today. Full and visible communion among Christians is to be understood, in fact, as a fundamental characteristic for an ever clearer witness. As we journey towards full unity, it is thus necessary to pursue a practical collaboration among the disciples of Christ for the cause of transmitting the faith to the contemporary world. Today there is great need for reconciliation, dialogue and mutual understanding — not in a moralistic perspective but as authentic Christians for an ever stronger presence in the context of our time.

True faith in God, then, is inseparable from personal holiness, just as it is from the search for

justice. In the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which ends today, the theme of our meditation was: "What does God require of us?", inspired by the words of the Prophet Micah, which we have heard (cf. 6:6-8). It was proposed by the Student Christian Movement in India, in collaboration with the All India Catholic University Federation and the National Council of Churches in India, who also prepared aids for reflection and prayer. To those who collaborated in this I would like to express my deep gratitude and, with great affection, I assure you of my prayers for all Christians in India, who at times are called to witness to their faith in difficult conditions. "To walk humbly with God" (cf. *Mic* 6:8) means above all to walk in radical faith, like Abraham, trusting in God, finding in him our every hope and aspiration. However, it also means crossing over barriers, over hatred, racism and the social and religious discrimination that divides and damages society as a whole. As St Paul affirms, Christians must first offer a luminous example in the quest for reconciliation and for communion in Christ, such that overcomes every kind of division. In his Letter to the Galatians, the Apostle to the Gentiles says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (3: 27-28).

Our search for unity in truth and in love, lastly, must never lose sight of the fact that unity among Christians is the work and gift of the Holy Spirit and goes far beyond our own efforts. Thus, spiritual

ecumenism, especially prayer, is the heart of the ecumenical task (cf. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 8). Yet, ecumenism will not bear lasting fruit unless it is accompanied by concrete actions of conversion that move our consciences and foster the healing of memory and of relationships. As the Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican Council II asserts, "there can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart" (n. 7). An authentic conversion, like that called for by the Prophet Micah and of which the Apostle Paul is a significant example, will bring us ever closer to God, to the centre of our life, in such a way as to bring us also closer to one another. This is a fundamental element of our ecumenical commitment. Renewal of the interior life of our heart and mind, which is reflected in daily life, is crucial to every dialogue and path of reconciliation, making ecumenism a commitment of mutual understanding, respect and love, "that the world may believe" (*Jn* 17:21).

Dear brothers and sisters, let us confidently invoke the Virgin Mary, incomparable model of evangelization, that the Church, "a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race" (*Lumen gentium*, n. 1), may proclaim with candour, in our time, Christ the Saviour. Amen.

ORE, 30 January 2013

ECUMENICAL NEWS

IN MEMORIAM

Brother Jeffrey Gros, FSC (1938-2013)

Brother Jeffrey Gros, a De La Salle Christian Brother for 58 years, died in Chicago, IL on August 12, 2013 after a long bout with cancer. He was well known in the ecumenical movement for his competence and passion for Christian unity. He published widely in theological journals and periodicals, edited numerous books on ecumenism, and spoke to various religious and educational groups throughout the world. Gros served as one of the co-editors of the series entitled *Growth in Agreement*, which collects and presents reports and agreed statements of international ecumenical bilateral dialogues among churches. Brother Jeffrey served for ten years as Director of Faith and Order for the National Council of Churches in the United States and for fourteen years as Associate Director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. More recently, he was the Distinguished Professor of Ecumenical and Historical Theology at *Memphis Theological Seminary*. Brother Jeffrey was president of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, consultant to the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Archdiocese of Chicago, adjunct professor at Catholic Theological Union, and Dean of the Institute for Catholic Ecumenical Leadership.

Brother Jeffrey was to deliver the keynote address at last year's Society for Pentecostal Studies meeting in Virginia, but he was too ill to attend. A colleague read his speech for him.

"I can leave us with no better admonition as scholars," Brother Jeffrey wrote, "than that of the late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin to his own Charismatic Catholics shortly before he died: 'My friends, always remember what you as a community continue to offer to the whole church of Jesus Christ and to a society so desperately in need of the fire of God's love.'"

INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION FOR THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Rome (Italy), 23 – 27 January 2013

The tenth meeting of the International Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches took place in Rome from January 23 to 27, 2013, hosted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting

Christian Unity. It was chaired jointly by His Eminence Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and by His Eminence Metropolitan Bishop of Damiette.

Joining delegates from the Catholic Church were representatives of the following Oriental Orthodox Churches: the Antiochian Syrian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicosate of All Armenians), the Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia), the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. No representative of the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church was able to attend.

The two delegations met separately on the morning of January 23. The Joint Commission held plenary sessions on January 23, 24, 25 and 26, each of which began with a brief prayer service using material prepared for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

At the beginning of the first session, Cardinal Koch noted with sadness that the heads of two of the Oriental Orthodox Churches had passed away since the last meeting: His Holiness Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark, and His Holiness Abuna Paulos I, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church who had hosted the 2012 meeting of the dialogue. The members observed a moment of silent prayer for the repose of the two patriarchs, and also for Bishop Mikhael Al-Jamil, Procurator General of the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate, a member of the dialogue who died in December 2012. Prayers were also offered for the new Coptic Orthodox Patriarch, His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, and for the new Coptic Catholic Patriarch, His Beatitude Ibrahim Isaac Sidrak. The members congratulated Most Reverend Paul Rouhana on his ordination as Maronite Bishop of Sarba in July 2012, and regretted very much that Armenian Catholic Archbishop Peter Marayati of Aleppo was not able to attend because of the dramatic situation in his city.

At this tenth meeting, the members continued their study of the ways in which full communion among our churches was expressed in the first five centuries. In particular, the role of mutual recognition of saints was examined. His Eminence Dr. Gabriel Mar Gregorios presented a paper, "Saints as an Element of Communion and Communication in the Early Church: A Biblical-Theological Perspective," and Father Mark Sheridan, OSB, read his parallel study, "The Saints as an Element in the Communion and Communication in the Early Church." The commission also considered the procedures employed by their churches to recognize new saints. Father Ronald Roberson, CSP, offered a paper entitled "The Process of

Recognition/Canonization of Saints in the Catholic Church in History and Today,” which was coupled with a study by His Eminence Archbishop Nareg Alemezian, “The Procedure for Introducing a Saint into the Church Directory of Feasts – Recognition/Canonization in the Armenian Apostolic Church.” Briefer summaries of the canonization/recognition procedures in their own churches were offered by Metropolitan Bishoy (Coptic Orthodox Church), His Eminence Metropolitan Theophilus George Saliba (Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch), Father Daniel Seifemichael Feleke (Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church), His Eminence Metropolitan Youhanon Mar Demetrios (Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church), and His Eminence Metropolitan Theophilose Kuriakose (Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church). Based on these studies, the members noted that the mutual recognition of saints – which in the first five centuries was largely a local phenomenon – was a constitutive element in the expression of full communion at that time.

On September 13 and 14, 2012, a drafting committee met in Rome and produced an initial draft document entitled, “The Exercise of Communion in the Life of the Early Church and its Implications for our Search for Communion Today.” The bulk of the commission’s time at this tenth meeting was spent carefully examining this draft text, to which a section on the mutual recognition of saints will also be added. The comments and observations of the members were noted by the drafting committee and will be taken into account as it prepares a more ample text for consideration at the next meeting.

On January 25, the Commission was received in audience by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. Metropolitan Bishoy extended greetings to the Holy Father on behalf of the members of the commission. He thanked him for the condolences he expressed upon the recent deaths of the Coptic and Ethiopian patriarchs, and for his congratulatory message to Pope Tawadros II. He also presented him with a hand painted icon of the Blessed Virgin Saint Mary the Mother of God as a gift.

Pope Benedict then addressed the Commission in these words: “It is with joy in the Lord that I welcome you, the members of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Through you I extend fraternal greetings to the heads of all the Oriental Orthodox Churches. In a particular way I greet His Eminence Anba Bishoy, Co-President of the Commission, and I thank him for his kind words. Before all else I would like to recall with appreciation the memory of His Holiness Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark, who died recently. I also remember with gratitude His Holiness Abuna Paulos, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church, who last year hosted the Ninth Meeting of the International Joint

Commission for Theological Dialogue in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I was saddened, too, to learn of the death of the Most Reverend Jules Mikhael Al-Jamil, Titular Archbishop of Takrit and Procurator of the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate in Rome and a member of your Commission. I join you in prayer for the eternal rest of these dedicated servants of the Lord. Our meeting today affords us an opportunity to reflect together with gratitude on the work of the International Joint Commission, which began ten years ago, in January 2003, as an initiative of the ecclesial authorities of the family of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. In the past decade the Commission has examined from an historical perspective the various ways in which the Churches expressed their communion in the early centuries. During this week devoted to prayer for the unity of all Christ’s followers, you have met to explore more fully the communion and communication which existed between the Churches in the first five centuries of Christian history. In acknowledging the progress which has been made, I express my hope that relations between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches will continue to develop in a fraternal spirit of cooperation, particularly through the growth of a theological dialogue capable of helping all the Lord’s followers to grow in communion and to bear witness before the world to the saving truth of the Gospel. Many of you come from areas where Christians, as individuals and communities, face painful trials and difficulties which are a source of deep concern to us all. Through you, I would like to assure all the faithful of the Middle East of my spiritual closeness and my prayer that this land, so important in God’s plan of salvation, may be led, through constructive dialogue and cooperation, to a future of justice and lasting peace. All Christians need to work together in mutual acceptance and trust in serving the cause of peace and justice in fidelity to the Lord’s will. May the example and intercession of the countless martyrs and saints who down the ages have borne courageous witness to Christ in all our Churches, sustain and strengthen all of us in meeting the challenges of the present with confidence and hope in the future which the Lord is opening before us. Upon you, and upon all those associated with the work of the Commission, I cordially invoke a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit’s gifts of wisdom, joy and peace. Thank you for your attention.”

Later on the same day, the members attended the Vespers Service presided over by Pope Benedict XVI in the Basilica of Saint Paul the Apostle Outside the Walls for the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Cardinal Koch hosted a meal at the *Domus Sanctae Marthae* in the Vatican on Thursday evening, January 24 for the members of the dialogue commission and the staff of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. His Eminence Cardinal Leonardo Sandri,

Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, also attended the dinner.

The eleventh meeting of the International Joint Commission will take place in Kerala, India, hosted by the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. The members will plan to arrive on Monday, January 27, 2014. Separate family meetings will take place on January 28, followed by plenary sessions on January 29, 30, 31, and February 1.

The members concluded with joyful thanks to God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for what has been accomplished at this meeting.

THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ARE:

Representatives of the Oriental Orthodox Churches (in alphabetical order):

Antiochian Syrian Orthodox Church: H.E. Mor Theophilus George Saliba, Archbishop of Mount Lebanon, Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Syrian Orthodox Church, Beirut, Lebanon; H.E. Kuriakose Theophilose, Metropolitan of the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Theological Seminary and President of the Ecumenical Secretariat of the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church in India, Ernakulam, India.

Armenian Apostolic Church [Catholicosate of all Armenians]: H.E. Khajag Barsamian, Archbishop of the Eastern Diocese of the USA, New York (unable to attend, represented by Reverend Father Shahe Ananyan, Etchmiadzin, Armenia); H.E. Archbishop Yeznik Petrossian, General Secretary of Bible Society of Armenia, Etchmiadzin, Armenia.

Armenian Apostolic Church [Holy See of Cilicia]: H.E. Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy in the USA, New York; H.E. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian, Ecumenical Officer of the Holy See of Cilicia, Antelias, Lebanon.

Coptic Orthodox Church: H.E. Anba Bishoy (co-chair), Metropolitan of Damiette, Egypt; Rev. Fr. Shenouda Maher Ishak, West Henrietta, New York, USA; H.G. Bishop Daniel of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Sydney, Australia (observer); Bishop Barnaba of Torino and Rome (observer).

Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church: Rev. Fr. Kaleab Gebreselassie Gebre, Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Patriarchate, Asmara, Eritrea (unable to attend).

Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church: Archbishop Markos of Eastern Gojjam (unable to attend); Rev. Fr. Daniel Seifemichael Feleke of Holy Trinity Theological University College in Addis Ababa.

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church: H.E. Metropolitan Dr. Gabriel Mar Gregorios, President of the Department of Ecumenical Relations, Diocese of Trivandrum, India; H. E. Metropolitan Dr. Youhanon

Mar Demetrios, Bishop of Delhi (co-secretary), Delhi, India.

Representatives of the Catholic Church:

His Eminence Cardinal Kurt Koch (co-chair), President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Most Reverend Paul-Werner Scheele, Bishop Emeritus of Würzburg, Germany.

Most Reverend Youhanna Golta, Patriarchal Auxiliary Bishop of the Coptic Catholic Patriarchate, Cairo, Egypt.

Most Reverend Archbishop Basilius Georges Casmoussa, Syrian Catholic Patriarchate, Beirut, Lebanon (observer).

Most Reverend Peter Marayati, Armenian Catholic Archbishop of Aleppo, Syria (unable to attend).

Most Reverend Woldetensae Ghebregiorgis, Apostolic Vicar of Harar, Ethiopia, President of the Ecumenical Commission of the Catholic Church in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Most Reverend Paul Rouhana, OLM, Maronite Bishop of Sarba and General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches, Jounieh, Lebanon.

Rev. Fr. Frans Bouwen M.Afr., Consultant to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Jerusalem.

Rev. Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB, Executive Director, Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Saint John's Abbey and University, Colledgeville, Minnesota, USA.

Rev. Fr. Ronald G. Roberson, CSP, Associate Director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, US Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, USA.

Rev. Fr. Mark Sheridan, OSB, Pontifical Athenaeum of Saint Anselm, Rome, Italy.

Rev. Fr. Mathew Vellanickal, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Changanacherry, India.

Rev. Fr. Boghos Levon Zekiyian, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome.

Prof. Dietmar W. Winkler, Consultant to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Salzburg, Austria.

Rev. Fr. Gabriel Quicke, Official of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, (co-secretary), Rome, Italy.

Rome, 26 January 2013

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY
AND THE COMMUNITY OF EVANGELICAL CHURCHES
IN EUROPE (GEKE)

Vienna (Austria), 8 – 9 February 2013

The Community of Evangelical Churches in Europe (GEKE) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity held their first meeting, of a series of consultations, from 8 to 9 February 2013 at the Albert-Schweitzer Haus in Vienna. This cycle of conversations, the first between the Protestants of Europe and the Catholic Church, programmed to last several years, will focus on the understanding of the concept of Church and on what the expression ‘aims of ecumenism’ involves today. The delegations comprising seven theologians each were co-chaired by Bishop Friedrich Weber (Braunschweig) and Bishop Karl-Heinz Wiesemann (Speyer).

The other delegates appointed by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity were the Most Rev. Philip Boyce (OCD) Bishop of Raphoe (Ireland), Prof. Dr. Michel Deneken (Strasbourg, France), Prof. Dr. Josef Freitag (Erfurt, Germany), Prof. Dr. Angelo Maffei (Brescia, Italy), Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Thönissen (Paderborn, Germany) and Prof. Dr. Myriam Wijlens (Erfurt, Germany); Msgr. Dr. Matthias Türk (Vatican City), co-secretary. The GEKE delegation comprised Dr. John Bradbury (Cambridge, Great-Britain), Prof. Dr. Stephanie Dietrich (Oslo, Norway), Prof. Dr. Fulvio Ferrario (Rome, Italy), Prof. Dr. Friederike Nüssel (Heidelberg, Germany), Prof. Dr. Miriam Rose (Jena, Germany) and Prof. Dr. Stefan Tobler (Hermannstadt/Sibiu, Romania); Prof. Dr. Martin Friedrich (Vienna, Austria), co-secretary.

The meeting was held in a relaxed atmosphere, starting with the study of two fundamental texts: the 1994 document «The Church of Christ», published at the conclusion of the doctrinal conversations of the GEKE and the evaluation of the evangelical-catholic dialogue results as presented by Cardinal Walter Kasper in the 2009 study entitled «Harvesting the Fruits». The delegates were aware of the various points of agreement and possibilities of rapprochement on which they needed to work more thoroughly. The next meeting will take place at Speyer in Germany on 16 – 17 December 2013.

INTERNATIONAL REFORMED-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

South Bend, Indiana (USA), 7 – 13 April 2013

The third meeting of the fourth phase of international dialogue between the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity took place 7 - 13 April 2013, at the University Of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, USA. The PCPCU and the WCRC are especially grateful to the University of Notre Dame and its President,

Rev. John Jenkins, C.S.C., for hosting and extending gracious hospitality during the dialogue meeting.

The overall theme of this phase, which is scheduled to be completed by 2017, is *Justification and Sacramentality: The Christian Community as an agent for Justice*. Bishop Kevin Rhoades, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend in Indiana, USA, and Rev. Dr. Martha Moore-Keish, of the Columbia Theological Seminary, in Decatur, Georgia, USA, co-chair this dialogue on behalf of the Catholic Church and the World Communion of Reformed Churches respectively. The secretaries for the co-chairs are Rev. Dr. Douwe Visser, Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion for the WCRC and Rev. Dr. Gregory J. Fairbanks of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The Reformed participants for this meeting included Rev. Dr. Reinerio Arce-Valentin (Cuba); Rev. Dr. Marina Ngursangzeli Behera (India); Dr. Christopher Dorn (USA); Rev. Dr. George Hunsinger (USA); Dr. George Sabra (Lebanon) and Rev. Dr. Lindsay Schlüter (Scotland). Rev. Dr. Benebo Fubara-Manuel (Nigeria) was unable to attend.

The Catholic participants were Dr. Peter Casarella (USA); Dr. Peter De Mey (Belgium); Rev. Dr. William Henn, OFM cap. (USA/Italy) and Rev. Dr. Jorge Scampini, O.P. (Argentina). Dr. Annemarie Mayer (Germany) was unable to attend.

The topics discussed during this meeting included Justification and Sanctification from Reformed and Catholic perspectives, and The Prophetic Office and Authority in the Church from Reformed and Catholic perspectives. The meeting had papers prepared by Drs. Arce-Valentin and Christopher Dorn for the WCRC and Drs. Mayer and Casarella for the PCPCU.

It is hoped that this phase of international dialogue will build upon agreements already achieved, help Reformed and Catholic Christians grow together in faith, and assist in the discernment of whether the WCRC will affiliate with the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ). The JDDJ is a 1999 common agreement of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation concerning the nature of justification, which was a central issue of the Protestant Reformation. In 2006 the World Methodist Council affiliated with the JDDJ, highlighting sanctification.

There have been three previous phases of dialogue between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU). These phases resulted in the reports: “The Presence of Christ in Church and World” (1970-1977); “Towards a Common Understanding of the Church” (1984-1989) and “Church as Community of Common Witness to the Kingdom of God” (1998-2005). The World Communion of Reformed Churches was born through the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council in June 2010.

The group will convene in Scotland for its fourth meeting of these conversations in April, 2014 to study “Justification: Holy Communion/Eucharist and Justice” and “Justification and Justice: Sanctification/Universal Call to Holiness.”

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE
ANGLICAN – ROMAN CATHOLIC
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION (ARCIC III)

Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), 29 April – 7 May 2013

The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, the official body appointed by the two Communion to engage in theological dialogue, has held the third meeting of its new phase (ARCIC III), at the Mosteiro de Sao Bento, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 29 April to 7 May 2013. This is the first time in its forty year history that ARCIC has met in Latin America, and, indeed, in the southern hemisphere.

Members of the Commission are grateful to Dom Filipe da Silva OSB, the Abbot, to his community for their gracious hospitality, and to the Archdiocese of Rio de Janeiro. The Commission participated in daily Vespers and in the Sunday Eucharist at the monastery church, and were held in prayer throughout by the monastic community.

A wide range of papers was prepared for the meeting and discussed, taking the Commission further towards its goal of producing an agreed statement. The mandate for this third phase of ARCIC is to explore: *the Church as Communion, local and universal, and how in communion the local and universal Church come to discern right ethical teaching.* In exploring this mandate, the members of the Commission engaged in theological analysis and shared reflection on the nature of the Church and those structures which contribute to discernment and decision-making. A day was spent considering some case studies of ethical issues which members had prepared, and analyzing the ways in which the two Communion have come to their present teaching on these matters.

Over the forty years of its work, ARCIC has produced a number of Agreed Statements. The work of ARCIC I received official responses from the two Communion. The Commission continued its task of preparing the documents of ARCIC II for presentation to the respective Communion to assist with their reception. Members reviewed responses already given to each of the five agreed statements and will prepare introductions for them that place each of these documents within the current ecumenical situation.

The Commission welcomed at a meal leaders of the local Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, including Anglican Bishop Filadelfo Oliveira and Roman Catholic Bishop Francisco Biasin, and members of the local Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Brazil. ARCIC is keen to deepen its relationship with such local and regional ARCs and rejoices both

Communion are exploring concrete ways of sharing documents and discussion about ARCIC’s work.

Members of the Commission spent most of a day in the City of God, one of the many *favelas* (neighbourhoods housing large numbers of the poor and displaced) that surround Rio de Janeiro. They were warmly welcomed by the Roman Catholic parish and their priest Fr. Marcio Jose’. Fr. Nicholas Wheeler, the Anglican parish priest, arranged for the Commission to visit three projects in the community (a day centre for seniors, a community development centre, and a mural project that portrays the community’s history and provides a vision of the City of God from Revelation), and to learn from the local police how officers engage positively with the community. The evening concluded with ecumenical vespers. As one member of the Commission wrote in reflection, ‘In offering thanks, one of our bishops said he was trying to think of a word to sum up our visit, and could only think of ‘hope’. Hope sprang from real ecumenical activity (unashamedly from a Christian base but working to support any community good), and the sheer hard work and organizing by local people.’

The Commission will prepare further papers, expand the case studies, and continue its work in preparation for its next meeting 12-20 May 2014.

MEMBERS OF ARCIC III present at the meeting

Co-Chairs

The Most Revd. Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, England.

The Rt. Revd. Christopher Hill, Bishop of Guildford, Acting Co-Chair.

ROMAN CATHOLICS

The Revd. Robert Christian OP, *Angelicum* University, Rome, Italy.

The Revd. Adelbert Denaux, Dean, Tilburg School of Catholic Theology, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

The Most Revd. Arthur Kennedy, auxiliary bishop, Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

Professor Paul D. Murray, Durham University, England.

Revd. Sister Teresa Okure SHCJ, Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Professor Janet E. Smith, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit, Michigan, USA.

The Revd. Professor Vimal Tirimanna CSsR, *Alphonsianum* University, Rome, Italy.

The Very Revd. Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB, Ampleforth Abbey, England.

ANGLICANS

Canon Dr Paula Gooder, Birmingham, England / The Church of England.

The Rt. Revd. Christopher Hill, Bishop of Guildford, England / The Church of England.

The Rt. Revd. Nkosinathi Ndwandwe, Bishop Suffragan of Natal, Southern Area, Southern Africa.

The Rt. Revd. Linda Nicholls, Area Bishop for Trent-Durham, Diocese of Toronto, Canada.

The Revd. Canon Michael Nai-Chiu Poon, Trinity Theological College, Singapore/Province of South East Asia.

The Revd. Peter Sedgwick, St Michael's College, Llandaff, Wales / Church in Wales.

The Revd. Dr Charles Sherlock, Anglican Diocese of Bendigo, Australia.

The Revd. Canon Jonathan Goodall, Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative.

CONSULTANTS

The Revd. Odair Pedroso Mateus, Faith and Order Secretariat, World Council of Churches.

The work of the Commission is supported by the Co-Secretaries, Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan (Anglican Communion Office), Monsignor Mark Langham (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) and Mr Neil Vigers (Administrative Assistant, Anglican Communion Office).

COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS

TELEGRAM OF POPE FRANCIS TO
THE JEWISH COMMUNITY FOR
THE FEAST OF PASSOVER

25 March 2013

Pope Francis sent a telegram to the Chief Rabbi of the Jewish community in Rome, Dr. Riccardo Di Segni, to mark the feast of Pesach or Passover, which this year begins at sundown, Monday, March 25th. Below, is the translation of the full text of the message, addressed to the Chief Rabbi, with whom the Holy Father met on March 20th during the course of his audience with delegations from other Christian confessions and non-Christian religions.

A few days on from our meeting, and with renewed gratitude for your having desired to honor the celebration of the beginning of my ministry with your presence and that of other distinguished members of the Jewish community, I take great pleasure in extending my warmest best wishes to you and Rome's entire Jewish community on the occasion of the Great Feast of Pesach. May the Almighty, who freed His people from slavery in Egypt to guide them to the Promised Land continue to deliver you from all evil and to accompany you with His blessing. I ask you to pray for me, as I assure you of my prayers for you, confident that we can deepen our ties of mutual esteem and friendship.

From the Vatican, 25 March 2013

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EASTER GREETINGS FROM THE CHIEF RABBI OF ROME

Following Pope Francis' message to Dr Riccardo Di Segni and to the entire Jewish community of Rome for Passover, the Chief Rabbi of Rome responded with his best wishes for Easter. The following is the English translation of the message sent to Pope Francis.

I thank you very much for the good wishes which you sent to me and my community on the eve of *Pesach*, thereby reinforcing the beautiful and recent custom of exchanging messages on major holidays between the two banks of the Tiber. In reciprocating these greetings I would like to point out that Easter is particularly significant because this major feast which often coincides on the calendar, as it did this year, represents both a connection and a separation between our two religions. A separation which throughout history, as in the past few days has given rise to demonstrations of anti-Jewish feelings of hostility and intolerance. If both faiths are now experiencing their respective feast days with joy and harmony, unlike what happened in the past, it is thanks to all those who have committed themselves to the work of healing and we must be grateful to the Lord. Our prayer for you is in a spirit of respect and fraternal friendship, aware of the difficulty of wishing you not only what we consider to be in your own good but also and most of all what you consider as your own good, however different and incomprehensible this may be. In these days of ritual prayer which bear the weight of a history of misunderstanding, I hope that the Holy and Blessed One will enable us to mutually understand the meaning of diversity and the importance of brotherhood.

ORE, 10 April 2013

DOCUMENTATION SUPPLEMENT

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE CHURCH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE EUCHARIST

Fourth Agreed Statement of the Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue 2003-2009

ABBREVIATIONS

Previous Agreed Statements of the International Commission for Dialogue between Disciples of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church:

- A&C *Apostolicity and Catholicity*, 1982
CCIC *The Church as Communion in Christ*, 1992
RHF *Receiving and Handing on the Faith*, 2002

Documents of the Second Vatican Council (references by paragraph number from the English translation in Norman P. Tanner, SJ (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ii, Sheed & Ward, London and Georgetown University Press, Washington DC 1990, unless otherwise indicated).

- SC *Sacrosanctum concilium*: Constitution on the sacred liturgy, 1963
LG *Lumen gentium*: Dogmatic constitution on the church, 1964
UR *Unitatis redintegratio*: Decree on ecumenism, 1964
PO *Presbyterorum ordinis*: Decree on the ministry and life of priests, 1965

Documents of earlier Councils are also taken from Norman Tanner's edition and are referred to as 'Tanner' with volume and page number.

References to the Faith and Order Commission's Statement, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Geneva 1982, are abbreviated, with paragraph numbers as appropriate, as follows:

- B The Statement on Baptism
E The Statement on the Eucharist
M The Statement on the Ministry

[The whole document is referred to as BEM]

- PL *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J-P Migne, published in Paris from 1844 to 1865. There is now an on-line database of the first edition plus indexes published by Chadwick-Healey, Cambridge, 1996-2008, which enables column references to be made to the original.
- CCC *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, English translation published by Geoffrey Chapman, London 1992 (references by paragraph number)
- CDC *The Church for Disciples of Christ: seeking to be truly church today*, A Report and Resource by the Commission on Theology of the Council on Christian Unity, ed. Paul A Crow, Jr. & James O Duke, St Louis MO 1998 (references by page number).

Biblical references are from the NRSV, except where otherwise noted.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE CHURCH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE EUCHARIST

INTRODUCTION

1. This Agreed Statement completes the fourth phase of the international dialogue between Disciples of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church, the goal of which is the achievement of full, visible unity between our two communions. Although the ecumenical mood has changed since 1976, when plans for this dialogue were first made, neither Disciples nor Catholics would be satisfied with any lesser goal. The three earlier Agreed Statements considered ‘Apostolicity and Catholicity’ (*A&C*, 1977-82), ‘The Church as Communion in Christ’ (*CCIC*, 1983-92), and ‘Receiving and Handing on the Faith’ (*RHF*, 1993-2002). The theme chosen for the fourth phase was ‘The Presence of Christ in the Church, with special reference to the Eucharist’. The earlier Statements continued to inform our work during this phase.

2. We began our work by recalling areas of convergence and agreement – not least on the sacraments and ways in which faith is handed on – that have emerged in the three previous phases of this international dialogue. One shared affirmation is the significance of spiritual ecumenism, of setting all our work within the context of prayer for God’s guidance. The Agreed Statement following the dialogue’s first phase spoke of the ‘evangelical space’ found by those who ‘are set free as communities and as individuals from seeking to justify our divisions and...are moved to seek a shared life in a reconciled community’. When this happens ‘new possibilities for genuine exchange and sharing’ are discovered (*A&C* §19). To this end, we spent considerable time building relationships and presenting our ecclesiological self-understandings. We are not in full ecclesial communion, and therefore cannot share the Eucharist together. Our lack of full communion contradicts the will of Christ and impels us to listen to God’s Word and follow God’s leading towards overcoming our divisions.

3. Our meetings were held in Bari, Italy in 2004, Indianapolis, USA in 2005, Rome, Italy in 2006, St Louis, USA in 2007 and Vienna, Austria in 2008. Each meeting was set within a context of daily worship, both morning and evening, including Catholic and Disciples celebrations of the Eucharist. As well as the two main theological papers for each meeting, there was a Bible study and opportunity for theological reflection. On each occasion there were opportunities to meet with representatives from the local churches.

4. In this period of dialogue we have discovered significant agreement in faith in relation to common understandings on aspects of our theme, which are now presented in this Statement. The first section of the Statement reiterates the shared commitment of Disciples and Catholics to the unity willed by Christ for his Church. The second section considers the presence of Christ in the world and the Church. We understand both the Word of God and the sacraments as means of the continuing presence of the Risen Christ. The third section specifically addresses the understanding of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. The fourth section discusses the priesthood of Christ and his ministers. The Conclusion summarises our arguments briefly and notes areas of further work for our Dialogue.

1 Oneness in Christ in the Church

1.1 A Shared Commitment to the Unity of the Church

5. Catholics and Disciples both confess the oneness of the Church and recognize it as the gift of God. For Disciples and Catholics, the visible unity of the Church is at the heart of the Gospel. In its second Agreed Statement, the Commission noted that ‘Alexander Campbell was convinced that “the union of Christians is essential to the conversion of the world.”... The Roman Catholic Church too proclaims that it has a specific mission for the unity of the world, and affirms that this unity is signified and given by the Eucharistic communion. It too teaches that the restoration of unity among all Christians is linked with the salvation of the world’ (*CCIC*§8).¹ The goal of our dialogue is the visible unity of our two communions.

6. The basis for this goal is our unity in Christ. What is the nature of this union between Christ and the Church? Both Disciples and Catholics agree that the Church is communion in Christ. The Church is the covenant people of God, founded by and in Jesus Christ and sustained and empowered by the Holy Spirit Following the Apostle Paul, both Disciples and Catholics speak of the Church as the Body of Christ (*1 Cor* 12:27). The North American Disciples’

1. A. Campbell, ‘Foundation of Christian Union’, *The Christian System* (4th ed., Cincinnati OH 1867), 107; UR §1.

Commission on Theology, speaking of the divinely constituted nature of the Church, said, ‘The church is that community called into being by the Gospel, which is God’s covenant of love in Jesus Christ, and given its life through the power of God’s Spirit in order to praise and serve the living God’ (CDC 19). In the words of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, ‘The universal Church appears as “a people made one by the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” ... Christ, the one mediator, set up his holy church here on earth as a visible structure, a community of faith, hope and love; and he sustains it unceasingly and through it he pours out grace and truth on everyone’ (LG, §§4, 8).

7. Without such an understanding of the union of the Church with Christ, the Church would be reduced to a solely human organization and its mission undermined. At Pentecost the mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit became the mission of the Church, which is sent to proclaim and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity. The members of the Church following the apostles were sent to bear witness to the truth of Christ, They are empowered by the Holy Spirit to extend and expand the sending of the Son by the Father and the sending of the same Spirit by the Risen Christ into the world of all places and all times. They are washed in the blood of the Lamb, made holy as the bride of Christ. In an earlier phase of our dialogue, the Commission agreed that ‘the Holy Spirit guides the Church, which because of this guidance will not finally fail in its task of proclaiming the Gospel’ (RHF, §2.4).

8. The Church lives from Christ, in Christ, and for Christ. At the same time, we recognize the importance of distinguishing between Jesus Christ and his Church. If we identify Christ with the Church without distinction, we run the risk of failing to recognize the sins of the members of the Church or else blaming these sins on Christ. While Christ is the sinless Incarnate Word of God, his saving mission to human subjects leaves them free and does not prevent them from rejecting his grace. The *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* states that ‘While Christ, “holy, blameless, unstained” (Heb. 7:26) knew no sin (see 2 Cor. 5:21), and came only to expiate the sins of the people (cf. Heb. 2:17), the Church, containing sinners in its own bosom, is at one and the same time holy and always in need of purification and it pursues unceasingly penance and renewal’ (LG §8).

1.2 One Faith, One Baptism, One Body

9. The first Agreed Statement of the Commission affirmed that Catholics and Disciples share the apostolic faith of the Church in one God, revealed in

three persons. This faith has been faithfully proclaimed from age to age in different times and circumstances (A&C, §§36-37). In the third phase of the Dialogue members discovered that Disciples and Catholics shared more agreement about the first seven ecumenical councils than had previously been recognized (RHF §§3.12-13). That unity of faith is also expressed in the one baptism, which we share, as affirmed in *Apostolicity and Catholicity* (A&C §24).

10. If we share one faith and one baptism, in what sense can we speak of being part of One Body? The first Agreed Statement spoke of Catholics and Disciples as having ‘a communion in via’. ‘The unique unity of the One Church of God is the goal. We are already on the way; we have taken the first step in faith through baptism which is also the call to that final unity’ (A&C §57). This reflects the recognition, expressed in the *Decree on Ecumenism*, that ‘those who believe in Christ and have been truly baptized are in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church’ (UR §3);² it also corresponds to the less-formally-stated Disciples conviction that persons baptized in other churches (whether as infants or at a later age) are sisters and brothers in Christ, in no need of ‘rebaptism’ by immersion.

11. The fact remains that our communion at present is imperfect. We need to explore further the implications of the kind of communion with the Catholic Church, although it is imperfect, which is enjoyed by those who belong to separated communities. While there is an apparent lack of agreement on substantial questions of faith, we need to identify and explore these questions more precisely than we have done so far. Thus we have appreciated with new force two related questions, which we pose to each other. Catholics ask Disciples in what ways they understand themselves to be catholic and apostolic? Disciples ask Catholics what space there is for Disciples within the Catholic understanding of the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church. In *Apostolicity and Catholicity* the Commission spoke of ‘a quality of evangelical life marked by the will to be faithful to Christ and open to one another ... This *metanoia* thus provides what might be called an “evangelical space”... in which we find God’s grace newly available to bind us together in praising, blessing,

2. The phrase ‘in *quadam cum ecclesia catholica communione, etsi non perfectia*’ has been variously translated. The translation in the text is from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §818; Tanner renders it ‘in some kind of communion with the Catholic Church, even though this communion is imperfect’, Tanner ii, 910; W.M. Abbott gives ‘a certain, though imperfect, communion’, *The Documents of Vatican II* (Geoffrey Chapman, New York NY 1966), 345; Austin Flannery gives ‘some, though imperfect, communion’, *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Leominster 1981), 455.

beseeking the God who makes us one' (*A&C* §19). Further reflection upon this may offer some clues to enable us to answer the questions posed above.

12. *Apostolicity and Catholicity* described our task as to give external expression to the communion on the way (*A&C* §57). Ecumenical dialogue should discover and publicly acknowledge the unity we already share, and then 'put this unity to work' through various kinds of encounter and joint action.³ With this in mind, we give thanks for the way Disciples and Catholics in numerous local settings have begun to pray for and with one another, to engage in common witness, to act together on behalf of persons marginalized by society, and to participate in each other's community life. These are important signs of hospitality, 'making room' for one another as those who are commonly incorporated into the body of Christ. We hope that our communities will be able to take advantage of the many signs of *koinonia* already officially permitted; and we recommend that information about such activities be widely disseminated in our congregations and parishes, and that they be encouraged to express our communion *in via* in ways appropriate to their local settings.

1.3 Summary

13. Disciples and Catholics therefore discover promising agreement in their understanding of the implications of their belief in the unity of the Church in Christ. This understanding of the Church as communion (explored particularly in the second Agreed Statement) obliges us to regard the Church's existence as part of the revealed will of God and not a matter of human construction. Equally it underlines the seriousness of our separation from anyone who shares the common apostolic faith in the triune God.

2 The Risen Christ and the Living Word: Word and Sacrament in the Church

14. Unity in Christ is more than identification with a group of people who have a continuous historical existence and look to a common founder. The significance of the resurrection of Christ is that he is dynamically present in both Church and world. The final promise of Christ – 'I am with you always' (*Mt.* 28:20) – has been a personal source of guidance for Christians through the ages; it has also been the basis of a wider belief in the presence of Christ in the world and of a specific belief in the presence of Christ in the Church. For example, we agreed that in the mission of

the Church Christ is present in prayer, in the reading of the Bible, in the liturgy, in the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist, in the preached Word, in the care of the poor and the sick, and in self-sacrificing love.

2.1 The Presence of the Risen Christ in the World

15. The world itself is God's creation and, although it has been marred by the sinfulness of humanity, God's purpose for it will not be finally frustrated. Catholics and Disciples believe that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, was sent into the world by God to reveal God's redemptive will and that by his death and resurrection this redemption was achieved. No longer confined to a particular place and time, the risen Christ is present in the world God created. In St Matthew's Gospel Jesus identifies himself with those who are hungry, thirsty, naked, sick strangers or in prison (*Mt.* 25:40). Christians through the ages have been inspired by the thought, not only that Christ sends them into the world with the promise of his continuing presence, but also that he is already there waiting to be recognised in the world. There is a long tradition in the Church that those who are not professed Christians may do God's will. In his ministry Christ emphasised that 'whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother' (*Mk.* 3:35). Many aspects of public life in the modern world reflect the attempt to embody Christian values, and Christians are able to join with non-Christians in urging political action on questions such as the relief of poverty, hunger and disease. Christians believe that Christ is mysteriously present in the world in a hidden way, and that he sends his Holy Spirit to be the agent in the righting of wrongs and the remedying of injustice, as well as in the healing of the nations. One day Christ will return in glory; we do not know the time but live waiting and praying.

2.2 The Presence of the Risen Christ in the Church

16. Both Disciples and Catholics also speak of the *gift* of Christ's presence, experienced in the Church. Christ promised that he would be present wherever two or three gather in his name (*Mt.* 18:20); he constantly urged his disciples to pray, just as he prayed himself (*Mk.* 6:46, *Lk.* 9:28, *Jn.* 14: 13-16, *Jn.* 17, *Heb.* 5:7). The apostles likewise urged their churches to pray (*Eph.* 6:18, *1 Thess.* 5:13, *1 Pet.* 4:7, *1 Jn.* 3:21-22). When the churches gathered together they were urged to 'offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (*1 Pet.* 2:5b) and to live lives of holiness.

3. J. Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism and Politics* (Crossroad, New York 1988), 139-40.

17. Both Disciples and Catholics recognize those whose lives stand out as revealing the holiness willed by God – a response to the gift of Christ, which manifests itself in the fruits of the Spirit and compassionate living. The holiness of the Church is the gift of God. The Son of God has given himself for her to sanctify her and make a source of sanctification (*Jn.* 17:19, *1 Cor.* 3:17, *Eph.* 5: 25b-27). The holiness of the Church is a perpetual resource for her members who recognise their need of conversion and sanctification. But we both also insist that spiritual life involves a constant struggle and a humility that resists any claims to our own ‘achievement’ of holiness. The focus is always on the work God has done and is doing in us. Beyond that, spiritual growth is always linked to concern for the other – an insight reinforced by the supreme example of God's self-giving love for the other seen in the Incarnation and the Cross. In thinking about these matters, we acknowledged a shared treasury of spiritual teachers and persons whose writings and lived witness we look to for inspiration, persons in whom we ‘see’ Christ.

18. Because divisions among Christians contradict the holiness to which the Christian community is called, Paul rebuked the Corinthians for their bad behaviour at the Lord's Table. Indeed he told them that the consequence of these divisions was that they were unable to discern the Lord's body (*1 Cor.* 11:17-34), thereby illustrating the link between Christian living and the sacraments of the Church. The Pauline emphasis was not unique. In John's Gospel the identification of Christ with the Word who ‘was in the beginning with God’ (*Jn.* 1:2), the ‘spring of water gushing up to eternal life’ (*Jn.* 4:14) and ‘the living bread that came down from heaven’ (*Jn.* 6:51) enables us to understand the ways in which Word and sacrament are integrally related in the life of the Church.

2.3 The Dynamism of God's Word

19. In the Bible the Word of God is active and potent. The Old Testament presents the Word as performative: the Word brings about something. It is the biblical way of expressing God's effective action: ‘by the word of the Lord the heavens were made’ (*Ps.* 33:6). At the same time, God's Word calls for a response; it must be heard in faith. In the New Testament, the Word of God becomes flesh so that now in these last days God has spoken to us by the Son (cf. *Heb.* 1:2). The Word become flesh is the central mystery of the New Testament: God's hidden purpose now revealed. The Word of God and mystery are two ways of speaking about one reality, Christ, who died and rose again, ‘the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints’ (*Col.* 1:25-26). ‘When I came to

you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom’ (*1 Cor.* 2:1).

2.4 The Unity of Word and Sacrament

20. In the Pauline letters, the Greek term *mysterion* (‘mystery’) was sometimes translated into Latin as *sacramentum*.⁴ Its primary meaning is not a ritual action but God's saving plan revealed in Christ. Both baptism and Eucharist were instituted by Christ as means for incorporating ‘those who were being saved’ (*Acts* 2:47) into the Christian community. In early Christian thought Word and sacrament were not understood as two different realities, but as two ways of referring to the same reality. When the word ‘sacrament’ began to be used to refer as well to ritual signs, the biblical sense was retained, so that these signs were understood to be participations in the great sacrament (mystery) of Christ's saving work, made present in the Church, which is like a sacrament of Christ's action: ‘What was visible in our Saviour has passed over into his mysteries (Pope Leo I).⁵ These signs are not contrasted with the word; they are, as Augustine explained, the ‘visible word’.⁶ This understanding deeply marked the Christian tradition from its first centuries.

21. Because of the biblical sense of God's Word, the early Church understood that the words of Jesus spoken in a sacrament were, by divine power, efficacious. Medieval Catholic theologians continued this teaching. Disciples retained the biblical sense of the efficaciousness of the sacraments. Biblical texts were used to show that ‘persons are begotten by the

4. In the first century of the history of Disciples the word ‘sacrament’ was rarely used; instead Holy Baptism and Holy Communion were referred to as ‘ordinances’, reflecting the belief (going back to John Calvin) that they were to be seen more as instituted by Christ than by the Church. In the twentieth century Disciples concluded that this was a distinction without a difference. Thus the British Churches of Christ scholar William Robinson published a guide for church members on baptism and communion in 1925 entitled *Holy Ordinances*, and a later one on *The Sacraments and Life* in 1949.

5. ‘Quod itaque Redemptoris nostri conspicuum fuit, in sacramenta transivit’, Leo the Great, *Sermon* 74.2, *PL* 54, 398; cf *LG* §1.

6. ‘If you take away the word, what is the water except merely water? The Word is added to the element and the result is the sacrament, as a kind of visible word: ‘Detrahe verbum, et quid est aqua nīc aqua? Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit Sacramentum, etiam ipsum tanquam visibile verbum’, Augustine, *Tractatus in Joannis Evangelium*, 80.3, (*PL* 35:1840); English translation in *Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vii, ed P. Schaff (1888, reprinted 1983, Grand Rapids MI), 344.

Spirit of God, impregnated by the Word, and born of the water'.⁷ Belief in the power of baptism to remit sins was a basic belief of the early Disciples movement. The purpose of the sacraments is fully achieved only when they are received in faith. Underlying all sacramental belief is a conviction of the power and readiness of God through the Holy Spirit to respond to the prayers of those who ask in faith.

22. The reading of the Scriptures is another way in which the Word of God is heard in the ecclesial community. Celebrations of baptism and the Eucharist in both traditions normally include readings from the Old and New Testaments. In baptism Jesus's command to baptize is repeated and obeyed and there is a prayer that by the use of water the one to be baptized will be cleansed from sin. In the Eucharist Jesus's words of institution in relation to the bread and wine (either as recorded in the Gospels or by St Paul) will be invariably repeated.

23. Preaching in sacramental worship is understood as an extension of God's efficacious word, words about the Word Incarnate. Christ is also present through the preached Word. Both Catholics and Disciples emphasize the power of preaching. Disciples and Catholics celebrate the Eucharist at least every Sunday, so that proclamation of the Word on Sundays always occurs with the celebration of the sacrament. Our agreement about the power of God's Word proclaimed clarifies the role of the ordained minister as the witness to the Word transmitted through the Church.

24. Because Christ is the living Word, the celebration of word and sacrament is an effective action, not simply a recollection of the past or a reading of written words. Both Disciples and Catholics believe that in the Church Christ himself acts in the sacraments. For Catholics the Eucharistic prayer at the centre of the Mass makes this clear. For Disciples the prayers at the Table and the words of institution highlight the centrality of Christ's action. Christ's action in the Eucharist is affirmed also in the hymns sung by Disciples before the prayers of thanksgiving for the bread and wine where Christ's sacrifice is pleaded before God. Typically in these hymns the passion is recalled and also represented; the focus is on the present action of the Risen Christ, actively present and awaiting a welcome in faith.

7. 'Remission of Sins', Proposition 10 in Campbell, *The Christian System*, 201.

2.5 Summary

25. We therefore come to a threefold understanding of the presence of Christ – in the world, in the Church and in the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, each based on the dynamic Word of God. All three are integrally linked. Indeed the sacramental approach to the whole of life is one way of affirming our underlying faith that we live in God's world and that God is continually active in it. With this understanding we can turn to examine the presence of Christ in the Eucharist in particular.

3 The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

3.1 The Eucharist, Sacrament of Communion in Christ

26. Disciples and Catholics share the conviction that the Eucharist is at the centre of the Church's life, where we are one in the Risen Christ and hear his Word together. The Second Vatican Council teaches that 'through the sacrament of the Eucharistic bread there is represented and produced the unity of the faithful, who make up one body in Christ (see *1 Cor.* 10:17) (*LG* §3). The celebration of the Eucharist is 'the chief means through which believers are expressing in their lives and demonstrating to others the mystery which is Christ, and the sort of entity the true Church really is' (*SC* §2). For Disciples, 'the affirmation that the church today, as in apostolic times, is called to gather at the Lord's Table on the first day of the week has been a prominent and enduring feature of Disciples church life. Indeed, it is a mark of our identity as a church'. Disciples experience the Lord's Supper as 'an act of inexhaustible spiritual richness ... that [they] share in common with Christians of all times and places'. 'The Lord's Supper means more than the church is ever quite able to say about it' (*CDC* 139).

27. Both Disciples and Catholics teach that the Church is communion in Christ and is characterized by visible unity, within which we receive the Eucharist, the sacrament of the Church's unity. *The Church as Communion in Christ* affirmed:

This visibility is realized especially in the celebration of the Eucharist. There, gathered together and after having confessed their faith, the baptized people receive the body and blood of Christ, the Son of God, who reconciled humanity to God in one body through the cross. There they enter into communion with the saints and members of the whole household

of God. Moreover, what is celebrated at the Eucharist has to be actualized in a life of common prayer and faith, of faithfulness to the Gospel, of sharing the spiritual and even material goods of the community, and of commitment to the will of God that the saving work of Christ be extended as offer to all (CCIC §48).

28. Because the Church's visible unity is so central for both Catholics and Disciples, the divisions which keep us from sharing the Eucharist together are especially painful. But different ways of understanding the Church and its unity lead us to different practices in offering Eucharistic participation. The founders of the Disciples, notably Alexander Campbell and Barton Warren Stone, taught that the communion service demonstrated the oneness of all believers. For Catholics, sharing the Eucharist signifies full communion in Christ's body, the Church, which means sharing agreement on the content of faith, the sacraments and ministry of the Church, and structures of authority (see *LG* §14).

3.2 The Eucharist, Sacrament of the Real Presence of Christ

29. Disciples and Catholics regard the sacrament of the Eucharist as a privileged, unique place of Christ's presence, where his words are spoken in obedience to his command and are made powerful by the Holy Spirit, making effective for those gathered what Christ first promised to his followers at the Last Supper. Christ's dynamic word brings his presence to those gathered at the Eucharist for their forgiveness, healing and transformation. Because Christ has entered the realm of the Spirit after his resurrection, he offers himself now to believers through the Spirit as the bread of heaven, his very self-given for the sake of the world so that 'whoever eats me will live because of me' (*Jn.* 6:57). Both Disciples and Catholics know the power of the celebration of the Eucharist, which remains for them the central and most important prayer of the Church. It is communion in the body and blood of Christ.

3.2.1 Some Historical Aspects of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

30. While both Disciples and Catholics teach a lively faith in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, they have inherited a set of historical controversies about the meaning of this teaching. Their understanding of these controversies shapes their understanding of each other and of each other's teaching concerning Christ's Eucharistic presence.

31. For the first millennium of the Church's history the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of the Eucharist was affirmed without significant dissent. In the patristic period, Christian thinkers taught that the bread and wine were transformed into Christ's body and blood. The prayer to the Holy Spirit that the bread and wine might become the body and blood of Christ shows how ancient and widespread was this belief. Patristic writers in the early centuries of the Church used a large number of analogies and concepts to explain this change in the elements of bread and wine, but following the lead of Irenaeus they related denial of the change to a denial of the Incarnation. By the fourth century, Eucharistic doctrine on the conversion (*conversio*) of the bread and wine was sufficiently developed that Hilary of Poitiers could speak of 'the Word made flesh remaining in us "naturally."' He joined the nature of his eternity in the sacrament of his flesh which he allows us to share.⁸ In the fifth century Augustine explained that the Eucharist contained the reality that it symbolized.⁹

32. However, the patristic synthesis between the real and the symbolic disappeared towards the end of the first millennium and there followed a period of controversy in the Western Church about the mode of Christ's presence, which lasted for most of the second millennium of Christian history. Already in the ninth century, Paschase Radbert had developed a materialistic view of the change in the bread and wine, as though it were a physical or material change. Two centuries later, Berengar presented a 'symbolic' understanding of the Eucharist in which the gifts may be called the body and blood of Christ but in fact remain bread and wine. These positions stimulated controversies and popular misunderstanding in their day, but they also motivated theologians to seek clearer understandings of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

8. 'Si enim vere Verbum caro factum est, et vere nos Verbum carnem cibo dominico sumimus; quomodo non naturaliter manere in nobis existimandus est, qui et naturam carnis nostrae jam inseparabilem sibi homo natus assumpsit, et naturam carnis suae ad naturam aeternitatis sub sacramento nobis communicandae carnis admiscuit?' Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 8, 13, *PL* 10.246.

9. 'Si enim sacramenta quaedam similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt, non haberent, omnino sacramenta non essent. Ex hac autem similitudine plerumque etiam ipsarum rerum nomina accipiunt.' 'For if sacraments had not some points of real resemblance to the things of which they are sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all. In most cases, moreover they do in virtue of their likeness bear the names of the reality which they resemble', Augustine, *Letter* 98.9, *PL* 33.364 (English translation in *Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, I (ed. P. Schaff, New York 1886), 410; cf. *Sermons* 227.1 and 272, *PL* 38.1099, 1257-68.

33. To describe the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, theologians, synods and popes began to use the term ‘transubstantiation’ and the word entered official teaching for the first time in 1215 when the Fourth Lateran Council used it in defining the Eucharist.¹⁰ The meaning of this term ‘transubstantiation’ was brought to maturity by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. Aquinas used transubstantiation both as a means to counter materialist views of the Eucharist, and to affirm the change of bread and wine inherited from the patristic period and manifested by the Eucharistic prayer to the Holy Spirit. Aquinas used Aristotle’s philosophy, which was popular in the universities of his day and hence had an apologetic value. He argued that in the Eucharist the ‘substance’ – what it is – of the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, leaving only the ‘accidents’ – what it appears to be – remaining. Aquinas does not try to explain how this happens. He simply asserts that there is a change, not how it occurs. He emphasizes the uniqueness of this mysterious change: it is not a local or material change, but a supernatural change. Aquinas writes that the body of Christ begins to be present in the elements not in a local way, as though occupying a particular place, but ‘by conversion of the substance of bread into itself (i.e. the body of Christ). Yet this change is not like natural changes, but is entirely supernatural, and effected by God’s power alone...The whole substance of the bread is changed into the whole substance of Christ’s body and the whole substance of the wine into the whole substance of Christ’s blood.’¹¹ Because Christ is present in his humanity as well as his divinity in the Eucharist, Aquinas explains, it must involve his bodiliness though this is the transformed body of the risen Christ that Paul describes as ‘a spiritual body.’ Aquinas gives not a physical but a metaphysical account of what takes place at the conversion of the bread and wine.¹²

34. By the time of the Protestant Reformation, common understandings of the Eucharistic presence had again been replaced by a variety of viewpoints. Terms once understood in common now received different interpretations. Just as today ‘substance’ would have a materialist meaning – something we can touch and feel – so in the sixteenth century it was taken

10. Fourth Lateran Council, Constitution 1, Tanner i, 230.

11. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologia*, third part, qu 75, art 4 (ET by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Allen TX 1948), v, 2443-4.

12. Cf. Aidan Nichols, OP, ‘The consecration of the bread and wine destroys not the natural qualities of the bread and wine but these no longer manifest its ultimate reality. Its true substance, what is supremely important, lies elsewhere’, *Epiphany: A Theological Introduction to Catholicism* (Collegeville MN, 1996), 295.

to mean ‘materially present’, which was just the opposite of what Aquinas had intended when he used the term ‘transubstantiation’ to oppose materialist misunderstandings. Martin Luther held to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist ‘under the bread and wine’, but repudiated the concept of transubstantiation. In the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* John Calvin condemned the use of the term ‘transubstantiation’ on the grounds of its relatively recent date, but he acknowledged that the Fathers (in particular Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose and John of Damascus) did use the term ‘*conversio*’. His particular objection was to William of Ockham, more than to Aquinas, and his primary emphasis was that ‘the truth of this mystery accordingly perishes for us unless the true bread represents the true body of Christ’.¹³

35. While the Reformers discussed Christ’s presence in the Eucharist in various ways, the Council of Trent (1545-63) defended the ‘true, real and substantial’ presence of Christ against attempts to understand it ‘as in a sign or figure’ or to combine Christ’s presence with a remaining presence of bread and wine. Trent began by recognizing that ‘though we can hardly express ... in words’ the mode of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, ‘we can grasp [it] with minds enlightened by faith’. It therefore used the term and concept of ‘transubstantiation’ in order to affirm that the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, explaining, ‘the holy catholic church has suitably and properly called this change transubstantiation’.¹⁴ While Trent made clear that the term was used ‘most aptly’, its primary intention was to condemn terms or concepts that deny its meaning.

36. Disciples of Christ came into existence in the nineteenth century, toward the end of this second millennium, which had been filled with controversies about Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist. They separated from the Presbyterian Churches because Disciples did not believe that the requirement to accept the Secession Testimony as well as the Westminster

13. J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, ch XVII, §14 (ed. J.T. McNeill, London 1960), ii, 1376. Although the first edition of the *Institutes* was published before the Council of Trent met, the final Latin edition appeared in 1559 after Session 13 of the Council (1551), canon 2 of which anathematized those who denied the change which the Catholic Church ‘most aptly calls transubstantiation’; by this time opposing positions were already becoming entrenched. But Calvin’s relevance lies more in the way in which he contextualises the Tridentine decrees than in any direct influence on the development of Disciples some 250 years later, since Disciples’ philosophical frame of reference was essentially taken from Bacon and Locke.

14. Council of Trent, Session 13 (1551), ch 1, canon 1 and ch 4, Tanner ii, 694, 697, 695.

Confession as a condition of the admission to communion was scriptural (cf. RHF §3.16). Furthermore it prevented response to Christ's invitation to his table. Hence Disciples tended to resist traditions about the Eucharist that insisted on precision or detail in explaining Christ's presence. Disciples have continued to resist attempts to explain the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist too fully, not because they do not believe it, but because they have wished to avoid divisive controversies over a mystery where a variety of understandings has coexisted in the history of the Church.

37. The nineteenth century was a period when religious beliefs were defined as much in terms of denials as affirmations. For example, although Disciples always saw the Lord's Supper as being more than a recollection of the Last Supper, they criticized the use of the term 'transubstantiation' as involving an unnecessarily metaphysical explanation. Moreover, the earliest Disciples were reared in the philosophical atmosphere of Scottish common sense realism in which what Aquinas described as 'accidents' were understood to constitute the real, and what he described as 'substance' was seen as an unnecessary abstraction. In this different philosophical framework, then, transubstantiation was taken to mean almost the opposite of what Aquinas had intended. And the use of Aristotle's philosophical base by Aquinas – an effective apologetic tool in thirteenth-century Europe – no longer made sense within the different philosophical framework in nineteenth-century Britain and North America.

3.2.2 Contemporary Catholic and Disciples Teaching on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

38. The ecumenical era has offered the opportunity for greater mutual understanding of different approaches to the question of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist. Nevertheless, we also recognize that we are referring to a great mystery of our faith, a mystery not in the sense that it is unknown but that there is an inexhaustible depth in its meaning.

39. Our Bible studies helped us to discover the many ways that the presence of God is expressed in the Bible and to relate this to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. In the divine name in Exodus 3:14 the dynamic and creative presence of God in the world and in history is revealed, and this divine presence is also shown to be salvific in the theophanies of the Old Testament. The temple showed a kind of 'dwelling' for God in the midst of the people, which connoted a dynamic presence. This tradition is continued in the New Testament when it teaches that 'the fullness of

God dwells' in Jesus Christ (*Col. 1:19*), and that the Risen Lord continues to dwell in the world in a continuous and new way after the resurrection. The body of the Incarnate Son, now transferred into the realm of the Spirit, still comes to us in the Eucharist and transmits divine life. In the Gospel of John, Jesus reveals himself as the bread of life, come down from heaven for the sake of the world.

40. Contemporary Catholic teaching broadened its focus when, in discussing the principles of liturgical renewal, it emphasized the many ways that Christ is present in the Church's liturgical celebrations. Vatican II's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* teaches that Christ 'is present through the sacrifice which is the mass, at once in the person of the minister – "the same one who then offered himself on a cross is now making his offering through the agency of priests" – and also, most full, under the Eucharistic elements. He is present through his power in the sacraments; thus, when anyone baptizes, Christ himself is baptizing. He is present through his word, in that he himself is speaking when scripture is read in church. Finally, he is present when the church is praying or singing hymns, he himself who promised, "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (*Mt. 18:20*)' (*SC* §7).

41. The meaning of the term 'transubstantiation' continues to be normative for Catholic teaching today. In using this term, the Council of Trent intended to defend the mystery of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, which it did by opposing two extreme positions. On the one hand, Trent condemned positions in which Christ is present 'as in a sign or figure', or present along with the bread and wine, which remain. On the other hand, the Council of Trent taught the mystery of Christ's presence by counteracting materialistic interpretations of it. This meaning intended by Trent is highlighted when Catholics teach that the bread and wine become the body and blood of the risen, glorified Lord.

42. In the nineteenth century, early Disciples did not use the language of 'transubstantiation' to describe their belief in Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, and today they still find the conceptual framework from which it emerged unfamiliar and therefore would not readily use the term. Nevertheless later twentieth-century work on Aristotle's understanding of the term 'substance' and its use in Aquinas and other scholars of that period has exposed the way in which this terminology has been misunderstood in the past. Furthermore Disciples readily acknowledge that the ultimate significance of the bread and wine in the Eucharist is not to be explained by their physical characteristics alone. Thus they affirm the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, which makes

receiving the bread and wine a true communion in his body and blood.

43. Disciples also have characteristic ways of describing the presence of Christ at the Eucharist. They affirm that Christ is the host at the Eucharistic feast, and that his presence is experienced in the communion of the faithful. They also affirm that by the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become for us, through faith, the Body and Blood of Christ. Disciples gladly make their own the words of the statement in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* to confess 'Christ's real, living and active presence in the Eucharist' which is 'unique' and 'does not depend on the faith of the individual.' (E §13). In the celebration of the Eucharist, 'the Spirit makes the crucified and risen Christ really present to us in the Eucharistic meal (E §14) so that it becomes a 'foretaste' of the 'final renewal of creation' (E §22). Disciples find that their characteristic ways of speaking of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist have been enriched by the ecumenical dialogue and they welcome this expansion of their perspectives.

44. The presence of Christ in the Eucharist now awaits a welcome by the believer's reception of communion: it should not be considered in isolation from this purpose. Catholics continue the practice of the early Church in reserving communion from the Eucharistic celebration for those absent from the celebration due to illness. This remains the primary purpose of reservation of the consecrated elements, but in the Western Church this reservation also led to the adoration of Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament. Prayer in front of the reserved sacrament, processions and devotions surrounding the reserved sacrament, and communion taken to the sick continue to be lively aspects of Catholic life today. Catholic liturgical instructions make clear that even adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament should be understood as an extension of the sacramental action of the Eucharistic celebration and that they have the purpose of sacramental and spiritual communion.¹⁵ Disciples welcome this clarification of a practice, which is unfamiliar to them. The anxiety felt by Disciples concerns any localization of the presence of Christ in the bread and wine, which is detached from the total Eucharistic celebration. For themselves Disciples find prayer before the reserved sacrament open to misunderstanding, although they respect the contemplative and communal traditions of prayer to which it has given rise.

15. *Eucharisticum mysterium (Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery)* §§5, 24-25, 49-50, 62 in Flannery, *Vatican Council II 1981*, 106, 116-7, 129-30, 134. Reservation of the sacrament was provided for by Canon 13 of the Council of Nicaea (Tanner, i, 12).

3.2.3 Summary

45. Disciples and Catholics have used different language to describe the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and they have emphasized different moments of this mystery. Yet we both affirm the mystery of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, especially in the bread and wine; we both oppose reductionist understandings that see Christ's presence as simply materialist or figurative. We reached some real convergence on this topic through the elimination of mutual misunderstandings, though we also recognize many remaining differences.

3.3 The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Sacrifice of Christ

46. Both Disciples and Catholics believe that the Eucharist is the sacrament which makes real in a special way the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the entire life, ministry and passion that led to the cross. With Paul, we experience the communion cup as a 'sharing in the blood of Christ'. The Eucharistic prayer typically recalls not only the passion of Christ, but the whole story of creation and redemption, and it also looks forward to the consummation of the work of Christ in his coming again. In this way the Church fulfils the Pauline injunction 'to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (1 Cor. 11:26).

3.3.1 Some Historical Aspects of the Sacrificial Understanding of the Eucharist

47. In the New Testament, Christ's death on the cross is called an offering, made by Christ the high priest, who instead of offering sacrifices daily, instead 'once for all...offered himself' for sins (Heb. 7:27). In this 'single sacrifice for sins' (Heb. 10:12) Christ offered his body once for all (Heb. 10:10). The sacrificial understanding of Christ's death is prefigured in the Last Supper, where, according to Paul and the Gospel writers, Jesus linked the bread and the wine to his body, given for you', and his 'blood, shed for you' – the 'new covenant in his blood' (Mt. 22: 26-28, Mk.14:22-25, 1 Cor. 11:23-27). In the early Church theologians (e.g. Justin, Irenaeus, Hippolytus of Rome and many others) continued the tradition of sacrificial interpretations of the Eucharist.

48. In medieval Western thought the sacrificial interpretation of the Eucharist received less theological reflection than the understanding of the real presence of Christ. The patristic teaching concerning the sacrificial character of the Eucharist was developed to encompass the view that the mass was a satisfaction for sin, which could be offered daily on behalf of the living

and the dead. Lay participation in the sacrifice was understood primarily in terms of spiritual identification with Christ in his passion, which was expressed devotionally in meditation, relating successive stages of the mass to stages of the passion. The propitiatory character of the sacrifice also encouraged the belief that particular masses could be directed to specific votive intentions: this led to the endowment of masses for the benefit of the souls of the donors and their family and friends.

49. Following Martin Luther, the Reformers of the sixteenth century rejected these theological interpretations and the practices that had accompanied them. Viewing the Mass as a sacrifice made it into a ‘work’ rejected by their theology of God’s grace, they argued. They emphasized that the Eucharist was not a repetition but a memorial of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, which had been made once-for-all and was sufficient to atone for the sins of all humanity. The Reformers differed among themselves about the meaning they gave to ‘memorial’.

50. To counteract the Reformers, the Council of Trent cited teaching from the early centuries of the Church and taught that the Mass is a sacrifice in a true and proper sense and not just ‘a bare commemoration’. Trent also said that the Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the cross, though offered in a different, unbloody manner. Though Christ offered himself once-for-all in a bloody way on the cross, Trent teaches, the same Christ is contained and immolated in a unbloody way in the Mass.¹⁶

51. Three centuries later, the Disciples of Christ received and made their own, without much debate, the Reformers’ rejection of sacrificial interpretations of the Eucharist. Disciples emphasized the character of the Eucharist as a meal where the sacrifice offered is the praise and thanksgiving of the believers.

3.3.2 Contemporary Catholic and Disciples Teaching on the Sacrificial Understanding of the Eucharist

52. Both Disciples and Catholics have benefited from the twentieth century recovery of the biblical understanding of memorial (*anamnesis*), whereby what is remembered is re-presented or re-enacted by the worshipping community. In our discussions, we linked the recovery of memorial (*anamnesis*) to the larger recovery of the dynamism of God’s Word. For

Catholics, the recovery of biblical language of memorial (*anamnesis*) helps to correct some theological misinterpretations of the teaching of the Council of Trent. While Trent taught that a new oblation of the Cross was not being made at every Eucharistic celebration, some theological interpretations of Trent gave the impression of a new oblation repeated daily during the Eucharistic celebration. It was not easy for some Catholic theologians to find a conceptual tool which allowed the radical once-for-all (*ephapax*) oblation to be held together with its perpetual presence in sacramental form. But the biblical concept of memorial provided this tool. For Disciples, the recovery of the biblical meaning of memorial helps to prevent misunderstanding this term as simply mental recall, even though the Reformers themselves avoided this misunderstanding: ‘These acts of God in history [in the *anamnesis*] were those which had meaning for eternity, and they were here set forth and actualized in the lives of the worshippers’.¹⁷

53. Both Catholics and Disciples participated in drafting the statement of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, and we find it particularly helpful in its discussion of memorial (*anamnesis*). It says, ‘The Eucharist is the sacrament of the unique sacrifice of Christ, whoever lives to make intercession for us’ (*E* §8) and its accompanying commentary: ‘It is in the light of the significance of the Eucharist as intercession that references to the Eucharist in Catholic theology as “propitiatory sacrifice” may be understood. The understanding is that there is only one expiation, that of the unique sacrifice of the cross, made actual in the Eucharist and presented before the Father in the intercession of Christ and of the Church for all humanity.’ The Eucharist is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered by the worshippers; and by being joined to Christ they are also drawn into the self-offering which constitutes Christ’s sacrifice to the Father. The Eucharist hence re-presents to those sharing in it the sacrifice of the cross; and communion in the body and blood of Christ is both based upon and results in a call to discipleship.

54. We have found the perspective of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* helpful to understand sacrificial interpretations of the Eucharist. But we also noted that in their response to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (which was largely positive), the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity did note that the notion of intercession does not seem sufficient for explaining the Catholic sense of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist. The response noted that Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice is not repeated, but since the high priest is the crucified

16. ‘Teaching and canons on the most holy sacrifice of the mass’, canon 3, ch 2, Council of Trent (Session 22), Tanner, ii, 735, 733.

17. W. Robinson, *A Companion to the Communion Service* (Oxford 1942), 35.

and risen Lord, this sacrifice can be said to be ‘made eternal,’ an idea not fully captured by the simple term ‘intercession.’ The response notes that Catholic faith ‘links the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist to the sacrament of the body and blood [of Christ] more closely than is done in the text.’¹⁸

55. In our discussions we discovered more convergence than we had earlier recognized on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. Both of our traditions teach that the sacrifice of Christ has occurred once for all and can never be repeated. Yet in the celebration of the Eucharist, the Church remembers by re-presenting the sacrifice of Christ in a sacramental way. As long ago as the Edinburgh Faith and Order Conference of 1937 the view of Disciples or Churches of Christ was described in this way: ‘The Eucharist has been for them the great churchly service in which the Church as a royal priesthood offers worship, but not of a pattern of her own designing, nor one determined by her own preferences. Rather the priestly Church offers worship through her Great High Priest, who is here set forth in His Holy Redeeming Act as *sacrificium*.’¹⁹ More recently Disciples have described this remembering (*anamnesis*) as ‘not merely a recollection of something long gone and hence remote from us, but a representation which makes what is past a vivid and lively reality here and now. Jesus Christ himself with all he has accomplished for us and for all creation is present in this *anamnesis*’ (CDC 144). These affirmations, which may suggest more convergence with the Roman Catholic Response to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* than the text of *BEM* itself, have striking similarities to the teaching presented by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which explains that ‘in the sense of Sacred Scripture the memorial is not merely the recollection of the past events but the proclamation of the mighty works by God for men’ (CCC §1363). So ‘when the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ’s Passover, and it is made present: the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present’ (CCC §1364). In citing a text from the Council of Trent²⁰, the Catechism explains that the Eucharist is a sacrifice ‘because it *re-presents* (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its *memorial* and because it *applies* its fruit’ (CCC §1366).

56. Disciples and Catholics agree that the Eucharist is the sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ.

18. M. Thurian (ed.), *Churches Respond to BEM*, vi (Geneva 1988), 20-21.

19. R. Dunkerley (ed.), *The Ministry and the Sacraments* (London 1937), 264.

20. ‘Teaching and canons on the most holy sacrifice of the mass’, ch. 1, Council of Trent (Session 22), Tanner, ii, 733.

Although the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross cannot be repeated, Christians in the celebration of the Eucharist are drawn into the movement of Christ’s self-offering. ‘United with him and with the whole Church on earth and in heaven,’ affirms the Basis of Union of the United Reformed Church, ‘his people gathered at his table present their sacrifice of thanksgiving and renew the offering of themselves.’²¹ Adding nothing to what Jesus has already done, ‘the whole people of God...in response to the sacrifice of Christ, offer up our own sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, a giving of ourselves to God who brings good news to sinners (CDC 145). In the Eucharist the Church unites itself to Christ’s intercession with the Father for all people and for the whole of creation. ‘The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value,’ the *Catechism* explains (CCC §1368).

3.3.3 Summary

57. Disciples and Catholics both understand the Eucharist as the sacrament which makes present the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. We have been surprised by the amount of convergence that we discovered, even though we recognize that we have different emphases. Now we will examine a distinct but related topic: the different ways that sacrificial language has been applied to the presiders at the Eucharist when they have been described in priestly language.

4 The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers

4.1 Some Historical Aspects of the Priestly Understanding of the Ordained Ministry

58. Just as sacrificial interpretations began to be applied to the Eucharist in the early centuries of the Church, there also developed a sacerdotal or priestly interpretation of the one presiding at the Eucharist. Such usage does not occur in the New Testament, which calls the Church ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood’ (1 Pet. 2:9), but does not use any one word to describe those presiding over the communal Eucharist. But as the parallels between the Last Supper and the Eucharist were developed, using the language of Hebrews 10:10 and the Old Testament, in liturgical and theological imagery during the patristic period, the presider at the Eucharist was seen to stand in a sacramental relation to the sacrificial self-giving of Christ the High Priest and came to be called a ‘priest’.

21. Basis of Union of the United Reformed Church §15. (The majority of Churches of Christ in Great Britain became part of this Church in 1981.)

59. By the medieval period in the Western Church, a priestly interpretation dominated the theology and practice of the ordained ministry. The Council of Trent continued this emphasis by making the priestly category central in its doctrinal teaching about ordination. God had always provided for priests, it taught. At the Last Supper, Christ had made the apostles priests and entrusted them with the sacrifice of the Eucharist.²²

60. The Council of Trent emphasized these elements especially to counter those points which the Reformers had denied, in particular the sacrificial interpretation of the Eucharist, the priestly understanding of the ordained ministry, and the sacramental character of ordination. While the Reformers emphasized the importance of the ordained ministry for the Church, they underlined the tasks of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care entrusted to the ordained minister. In addition, the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anabaptist reformers in Europe felt themselves forced to choose between continuity in episcopal office and continuity in teaching. In this situation they discontinued or deemphasized the office of the bishop and taught that apostolic succession came primarily through continuity in teaching. They also ceased to refer to the ordained presbyters as 'priests' and spoke of the 'priesthood of the faithful'. Disciples of Christ inherited this Reformation legacy. Although among Disciples an ordained minister or elder is the normal presider at the sacraments of both Eucharist and Baptism, they have not been in the habit of using the term 'priest', which has a specific application to the Eucharist, to describe the one who also baptizes and preaches (CCIC §45).

61. The Second Vatican Council repeatedly addressed the question of ordained ministry and its relationship to the whole Church. On the one hand, the Council spoke of the 'common priesthood' of all of the faithful, who 'by virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist' as well as exercising their priesthood through reception of the sacraments, prayers and thanksgiving, and lives of holiness, self-denial, and charity. On the other hand, the ministerial priesthood of the ordained is described as different from the common priesthood 'in essence and not simply in degree' because it 'forms and governs the priestly people' and 'brings about the Eucharistic sacrifice' (LG §10). It exists to foster and nourish the common priesthood of all of the baptized.

62. Furthermore, the Council, following ancient tradition, affirmed the episcopate rather than the

presbyterate as the fundamental category for understanding ordained ministry. Rather than seeing the episcopate as conferring simply additional jurisdiction and authority, the Council emphasized the sacramentality of the episcopal ministry and the collegiality of the bishops acting together as successors of the apostles. While the bishop's ministry continues to be understood as a participation in Christ's priesthood, it also confers the offices of teaching and governing (LG §21). Finally, the work of preaching is given the eminent place among the functions of the bishop (LG §25). Presbyters²³ also, as fellow-workers with the bishops, have 'as their first charge to announce the gospel of God to all' (PO §4).

4.2 Contemporary Catholic and Disciples Teaching Concerning the Priestly Understanding of the Ordained Ministry

63. On some issues related to ordained ministry, our two traditions are in agreement. Both Disciples and Catholics agree, for example, that the measure and norm of all priesthood is Christ's unique priesthood. Christ serves as the mediator between God and human beings, sanctifying us through offering himself as a full, perfect, once-for-all sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 'Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself' (Heb. 7:27). Through his death and resurrection, constituting his unique and abiding high priestly role, he established a new relationship between God and humankind (Jn. 17:21).

64. In addition, Disciples and Catholics agree that Christ has made of the baptized a priestly people, bound to Christ and hence to each other as his body. Because they are a priestly people, the baptized are to offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15, Ps. 116:17), to present their bodies 'as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God ... your spiritual worship' (Rom. 12:1).

65. Disciples and Catholics also agree that the ordained ministry is to be seen in the context of the apostolicity of the Church. In an earlier phase of dialogue, the Commission has discussed and agreed on the relationship between the Eucharist and maintaining continuity with the apostolic community. *The Church as Communion in Christ* stated, 'Both Disciples and Catholic share an intention to live and teach in such a way that, when the Lord comes again, the Church may be found

22. 'Canons on the most holy sacrifice of the mass', Canon 2, Council of Trent (Session 22), Tanner, ii, 735.

23. The Latin 'presbyteri' is uniformly translated as 'priests' in PO, whereas the Latin in the phrase 'ministerial priest' in LG §10 is 'sacerdos ministerialis'.

witnessing to the faith of the apostles' (CCIC §27). It was also agreed that the Holy Spirit works to link the past with the present and to maintain the Church in the memory of the apostolic faith, making it present and enabling succeeding generations to appropriate the event remembered. 'In the Eucharist especially, the Spirit makes Christ present to the members of the community' (CCIC §28).

66. In addition, the Commission agreed that the Holy Spirit 'gives a variety of gifts or *charisms* which enable the Church as a whole to receive and hand on the Apostolic Tradition. At the heart of these are the gifts appropriate to worship, particularly in the celebration of the Lord's Supper' (CCIC §41). But within the multiplicity of gifts given to the Church, 'there is a particular charisma given to the ordained ministry to maintain the community in the memory of the Apostolic Tradition. Both Disciples and Roman Catholics affirm that the Christian ministry exists to actualize, transmit, and interpret with fidelity the Apostolic Tradition which has its origin in the first generation' (CCIC §45).

67. At the same time, while agreeing about the relationship between the ordained ministry and continuity with the apostolic tradition, Disciples and Catholics understand and articulate this relationship differently. Disciples came from Reformation traditions which rejected episcopacy as they knew it in the sixteenth century, although 'Disciples have always recognized that the work of the ministry, shared in the local congregation by ordained ministers and ordained elders, is essential to the being of the Church and is a sign of continuity with the Apostolic Tradition' (CCIC §45). The Commission noted that Catholics believe that the bishop, in collaboration with 'presbyters, deacons, and the whole community in the local church, and in communion with the whole college of bishops throughout the world united with the Bishop of Rome as its head, keeps alive the apostolic faith in the local church so that it may remain faithful to the Gospel' (CCIC §45). Hence, the Commission has agreed that, despite different ways of structuring the ordained ministry, for both communions the ordained ministers have a unique role in maintaining the whole community in the apostolic tradition. Both traditions affirm that 'the whole Church shares in the priesthood and ministry of Christ' and both 'also affirm that ordained ministers have the specific charisma of representing Christ to the Church and that their ministries are expressions of the ministry of Christ to the whole Church' (CCIC §45). This already represents a significant agreement on the apostolic nature of our ordained ministries and on the issue of apostolic succession, although with different understandings and expressions contained within it.

68. On the issue of the representation of Christ by the ordained, Disciples and Catholics both agree and disagree. While they agree that ordained ministers represent Christ, the head of the Church, they disagree first about the nature of this representation of Christ and secondly about the relationship between the ordained ministry and the priesthood of the faithful.

69. First, Disciples and Catholics disagree about the representation of Christ by the ordained. For Catholics, the priesthood of the baptized and the ministerial priesthood are two connected but distinct participations in the priesthood and person of Christ, differing 'in kind and not only degree' (LG §10). On the one hand, all of the faithful are given a participation in the priesthood of Christ through baptism. Christ continues his priesthood through the baptized who consecrate the world to God through their spiritual sacrifices. 'There is no member who does not have a part in the mission of the whole Body' (PO §2). The participation of the baptized in Christ's priesthood finds its consummation in the Eucharist. On the other hand, by the intention and command of the Lord, this sacramental life requires the action of apostolic ministers who act in his person and speak in his name. The ministerial priesthood is given in a sacrament distinct from baptism whereby the ordained 'are so configured to Christ the Priest that they can act in the person of Christ the Head' (PO §2). Catholics believe that the ordained ministers exercise this function in a special way at the Eucharist. 'There, acting in the person of Christ and proclaiming His mystery, they join the offering of the faithful to the sacrifice of their Head' (LG §28). In presiding at the Eucharist, the ordained act in the name of all the baptized and for their sake. 'Through the ministry of priests, the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is made perfect in union with the sacrifice of Christ, the sole Mediator. Through the hands of the priest and in the name of the whole Church, the Lord's sacrifice is offered in the Eucharist in an unbloody and sacramental manner until He Himself returns' (PO §2). Hence those ordained to the ministerial priesthood share in the person and work of Christ, the great high Priest, for the purpose of enabling the priesthood of the baptized.

70. Disciples have not developed such a detailed understanding of the relationship between the ordained ministry and the priesthood of Christ. They understand ordination to be, not a sacrament distinct from baptism, but sacramental in a wider sense. The foundation of the ordained ministry is Jesus Christ, the great high Priest, who is head of the Church 'which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all' (Eph. 1:22-23). The whole community, commonly referred to by the phrase 'the priesthood of all believers', shares in the continuing ministry of Christ as members of his body. Hence in declaring the living Word, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the ordained call the Church

to its own identity in Christ.²⁴ But Disciples believe that the ordained have a distinctive role in the life and ministry of the Church, revealed especially at the celebration of the Eucharist. An ordained minister, as representative of Christ presiding at the Lord's Table, serves in Christ's place as host at the Table. The ordained serve in the priestly role by leading the offering of sacrifices of praise and worship. By the action of the Holy Spirit, acting through the Eucharistic prayer and the faith of the community, the bread and wine become for our sake the body and blood of Christ.

71. Secondly, because they understand the relationship of the ordained to Christ's priesthood somewhat differently, Disciples and Catholics differ in the way they see and articulate the relationship of the ordained to the whole Church. On the one hand, they agree that 'not all the members have the same function' (*Rom.* 12:4). On the other hand, Catholics describe the participation in Christ's priesthood of the baptized and the ministerial priesthood as differing in kind and not only in degree, a conception foreign to the Disciples tradition which rather speaks of the ordained calling the whole community to its identity in Christ, or representing Christ to the community. While Catholics emphasize the difference between lay and ordained, they also teach that the two are interrelated. 'The common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood, though they differ in essence and not only in degree, are nevertheless interrelated,' Vatican II taught. 'Each in its own particular way shares in the one priesthood of Christ' (*LG* §10). Catholics note that the ordained ministry exists for the sake of the Church and not apart from the Church. In explaining this difference, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that 'the ministerial priesthood is at the service of the common priesthood. It is directed at the unfolding of the baptismal grace of all Christians' (*CCC* §1547). Disciples find such clarifications helpful. But they also wish to emphasize the value of the gifts given to all of the baptized, and they fear any description of the ordained ministry that seems to undermine those gifts.

4.3 Summary

72. Disciples and Catholics agree the priesthood of Christ is the criterion for all priesthood in the Church. We also agree that the whole people of God is a priestly people 'called by God for his own' (*1 Pet.* 2: 9).

24. Compare the statement of *The COCU Consensus* (ch 7, §31), which Disciples in the USA have officially affirmed: 'Ordination marks them as persons who represent to the Church its own identity and mission in Jesus Christ': J.A. Burgess & J. Gros, FSC, *Growing Consensus: Church Dialogues in the United States, 1962-1991* (New York/Mahwah, NJ, 1995), 56.

Where we disagree is on the relationship between the priesthood of the faithful and that of the ordained ministry. In an earlier phase, it was recognized that Disciples carry out the role of *episcopus* (oversight) differently from Catholics, but that for both the ordained ministry has a unique role in keeping alive the memory of what Christ has done and thus maintaining the Church in continuity with the apostolic faith. In this phase, we discovered further agreement about the ordained ministry, but some remaining disagreement. While both Disciples and Catholics agree that the ordained represent Christ the high priest in their ministry, we disagree about the nature of this representation of Christ and whether they have a priesthood distinct in kind from the priesthood of the faithful. These disagreements will need further exploration in a future phase of our dialogue together.

5 Conclusion

73. Because Disciples and Catholics share a commitment to the unity of the Church, we have carefully listened to each other and talked together to discern a way forward in our dialogue. We began with our common conviction that God is present throughout the world and in the Church, speaking a Word that is dynamic and effective. In Christ, the Word of God became flesh, and through his death and resurrection he moved into a new dimension that enables him to be present to all time and space.

74. We sought in particular to relate the presence of the Risen Christ and God's dynamic Word to our understanding of the Eucharist on points where we have disagreed. The active character of God's Word helped us to understand the power of the words of the *anamnesis* in the Eucharist, calling to mind all that God has done for us in the work of redemption and proclaiming this in a way that makes these past events effective in the present. This also illuminated the efficacy of the words of the prayer to the Holy Spirit that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ²⁵. Because Christ is risen from the dead, he can offer himself to believers for their nourishment in a unique way in the Eucharist, a sign and foretaste of the new creation that will be completed when he comes again in glory. Our common confession on the efficacy of God's Word and the power of Christ's resurrection helped us to reach more convergence on the Eucharist than has previously been possible for Catholics and Disciples.

25. «Fiat» in the Roman liturgy or 'become for us' in Eucharistic prayers I and II; compare with «be for us» in the corresponding points in the liturgy of the holy communion in the Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland (1964 and 1967) and the Missals of the United Protestant Church.

75. We therefore agree on the integral link between the presence of Christ in the world, in the Church, and in the Word and sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Furthermore we agree that the sacramental approach to life affirms our underlying faith that we live in God's world and that God is continually active in it.

76. Through this dialogue we have come to understand both why different views had been taken in the past on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and also that our perceptions of each other's beliefs had been based on misunderstandings. Both Catholics and Disciples seek to defend the essential mystery of the way in which the bread and wine in the Eucharist become the body and blood of Christ. To combat materialist understandings of this change (*conversio*), as well as others, Catholics developed the Aristotelian category of 'substance' to refer to the underlying reality of things. The concept of transubstantiation was therefore essentially a defence against such materialist understandings. However, transubstantiation was itself in turn misunderstood in materialist terms by the Protestant Reformers; and early Disciples thinkers, cradled in Scottish common sense realism, rejected it as unnecessary or unhelpful metaphysical speculation. Both Catholics and Disciples agree that a materialist account of what happens at the Lord's Table is to be rejected, and both affirm the ultimate impossibility of fathoming this sacramental mystery.

77. Catholics and Disciples agree that the Eucharist is the sacrament of the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. The Eucharist is the new covenant in Christ's blood, sealed by his death on the cross for our redemption. In the Eucharist the Church unites itself to Christ's self-offering to the Father for all people and for the whole of creation.

78. Both Catholics and Disciples affirm the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist, and both therefore see it as a priestly celebration. However, Catholics identify the priestly action specifically with the presiding minister, while Disciples understand the whole priestly people of God to be those who celebrate the Eucharistic sacrifice. Nevertheless Disciples normally expect the presiding minister to be an ordained minister or elder, and anyone who might preside can only do so after having been identified and

called by the congregation for that representative office. There is further work to be done here in clarifying these points, which we have barely begun to address.

79. Nevertheless this is the first time in more than thirty years of our Dialogue when we have engaged in a detailed discussion of the Eucharist. This Statement is not an exhaustive account of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Rather it is a promising beginning – a 'communion in via'. We have identified several areas where further work needs to be done:

a) it is necessary to explore more deeply our discussion of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist (§45) and on the sacrificial understanding of the Eucharist (§57), in order to examine how far our differences remain Church-dividing;

b) it is also necessary to examine the ecclesial implications of this topic, especially the relationship between ordination and priesthood on the one hand, on which our discussion has only just begun (§§69-70) and the relationship between the ordained ministry and the representation of Christ on the other (§§40, 61, 69, 74). We have discussed the latter before, but the Eucharistic context gives it a new priority.

c) in the background there remains the question of apostolic succession in relation to ordained ministry (§65-67), which again we have touched on before.

As a result we may be able to identify more precisely the substantial matters of faith on which agreement still needs to be reached for the attainment of full communion (§11).

80. Once again we have discovered that by careful mutual explanation and listening to each other misunderstandings have been overcome. The extent of agreement is significant and offers hope to Disciples and Catholics for our greater unity. We present it as a contribution to the one ecumenical movement.

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A Comment on

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE CHURCH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE EUCHARIST

FOURTH AGREED STATEMENT OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST-ROMAN CATHOLIC
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR DIALOGUE
2003-2009

This fourth report of this international dialogue which began in 1977, and has published three previous reports, focuses on some important questions in ecumenical dialogue. This report builds on insights of previous phases of the dialogue. The discussion is approached in a careful and nuanced way. Areas of agreement are clearly set out, as are differences and questions in need of further dialogue. This report represents a welcome contribution to ecumenical literature.

The report is offered with a clear statement of its *status* at the beginning, namely that “it is a joint statement of the Commission, not an authoritative declaration by the Roman Catholic Church or by the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council, which will study the document in due course.” At the same time, the “authorities who appointed the Commission, have now allowed the statement to be published so that it may be widely discussed.”

A sense of the continuity of this dialogue from phase to phase can be seen in the fact that the need to focus on the theme of this report was already stated by the second report, *The Church as Communion in Christ* (CCIC, 1992). Outlining its future work, the latter spoke of the need “to discuss our teachings on the presence of the Lord in the celebration of the supper, its sacrificial nature, the role of the ordained minister and the role of the community” (CCIC, no. 53a). Here, in phase four, these themes are taken up. The conclusion of this fourth phase says that “this is the first time in thirty years of dialogue that they have engaged in a detailed discussion of the Eucharist,” and modestly indicates that their treatment of it in this statement “is not an exhaustive account of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Rather it is a promising beginning — a ‘communion in via’” (no. 79).

This and other aspects of this report point to the organic nature of the work of this international dialogue since it began in 1977. This document consists of an Introduction, four sections, and a conclusion, together presenting a logical process in which to focus on the main themes.

In this commentary I will point to some significant aspects of each section of the report, and then present some reflections on it.

Introduction

The brief Introduction (ns. 1-4) recalls several important affirmations about the context in which dialogue on the main theme takes place, affirmations seen also in their previous reports. The first is that the goal of this dialogue is “the achievement of full visible unity between our two communions” (no.1). This shared commitment of Disciples and Catholics to full visible unity is stated elsewhere in the text (e.g. no 5, cf. 73). The theological reason for this goal is based on the fact that “Our lack of full communion contradicts the will of Christ and impels us to listen to God’s Word and follow God’s leading towards overcoming our divisions” (no.2).

Related to this goal is another important “shared affirmation,” namely, “the significance of spiritual ecumenism, of setting all our work within the context of prayer for God’s guidance” (no.2). This affirmation of the importance of spiritual ecumenism, has been there from the first phase of dialogue, whose report *Apostolicity and Catholicity* (A&C 1981) provides a whole section on spiritual ecumenism. acknowledges that it is God’s grace which will bring about visible unity. Visible unity will come “from the one grace of the Spirit of God dynamically present among Christians even in their divided condition” (A&C no. 14), so that the work of Christian unity “is profoundly and radically a spiritual one ... it comes from and is a response to the Holy Spirit” (A&C no.15). It is for this reason, as the present report states, that “each meeting was set within a context of daily worship, both morning and evening, and included bible study, as well as reflection on theological *papers*” (no. 3).

In relation to spiritual ecumenism, the Commission recalls that the report of the first phase spoke of the ‘evangelical space’ found by those who ‘are set free as communities and as individuals from seeking to justify

our divisions and ... are moved to seek a shared life in a reconciled community'. When this happens, 'new possibilities for genuine exchange and sharing' are discovered' (*A&C* No. 19) (no. 2). In short it is through the *metanoia* fostered by spiritual ecumenism, that creates the conditions—the evangelical space—that allows them to engage in the authentic dialogue required to seek the unity of Christians. And to this end, the report says, “we spent considerable time building relationships and presenting our ecclesiological self-understandings”(no.2). In this light, they could say, at the beginning of this report that, in this period of dialogue, “the Commission has discovered significant agreement in faith in relation to common understandings on aspects of our theme, which are now presented in this Statement”(no. 4). They were also able to conclude, at the end of the dialogue “that by careful mutual explanation and listening to each other misunderstandings have been overcome. The extent of agreement is significant and offers hope to Disciples and Catholics for our greater unity”(no.80). Spiritual ecumenism characterized by prayer, promotes changes of mind and heart allowing one to create the readiness to move in the direction of reconciliation.

Reflection on the *Introduction*

This goal of unity at which the dialogue aims also reveals the deep level of commitment motivating the partners in this dialogue. Some ecumenical observers believe that one finds today less sense of commitment to this goal of visible unity by Christians than in previous decades. If so, this is not the case in this dialogue. In the view of the Catholic Church full visible unity is the primary goal of ecumenism in general. Many other bilateral dialogues involving the Catholic Church articulate this same goal, as does the multilateral dialogue of Faith and Order.

The recognition that spiritual ecumenism is fundamental, and creates the “evangelical space” which allows the dialogue partners to break through the walls of hostility, and to help lead their constituencies to do the same, is an important realization with which to confront the powerful forces of division that have prevailed for centuries. It is an acknowledgement that, although dialogue, cooperation and other important ecumenical activities are very important in the quest for Christian unity, the achievement of unity depends on the grace of God. Prayer for unity is primary, and must always accompany dialogue. From a Catholic point of view, these perspectives correspond very much to what is stated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (ns. 820-822).

Section 1: Oneness in Christ in the Church **(ns 5-13)**

As Sub-section 1.1 (A Shared Commitment to the Unity of the Church) begins, Catholics and Disciples start by making an important confession of faith: “both confess the oneness of the church and recognize it as the gift of God.” They state too, that “for Disciples and Catholics, the visible unity of the Church is at the heart of the Gospel”, it is “essential to the conversion of the world,” and it is “linked with the salvation of the world”(CCIC, no. 8) (no. 5).

They express together further important aspects of the relation of Christ to the Church, and other basic aspects of shared faith. They do not attempt a full ecclesiology here, and have said more about the Church in previous reports. But they present some important areas of agreement, adding to what is said above. Both agree “that the Church is communion in Christ,” “the covenant people of God, founded by and in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit,” “the Body of Christ.” They speak also of the divinely constituted nature of the Church, and its trinitarian basis (no. 6). The importance of this conviction is that “Without an understanding of the union of the church with Christ, the church would be reduced to a solely human organization and its mission undermined”(no. 7). Together they say that “At Pentecost the mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit became the mission of the Church”. They had previously agreed and recall here, that ‘the Holy Spirit guides the Church, which because of this guidance will not finally fail in its task of proclaiming the Gospel’ (*Receiving and Handing on the Faith*, RHF, no. 2.4) (no. 7). The basis of the goal of the dialogue, the visible unity of our two communions, “is our unity in Christ” (no. 6).

Having just spoken of the union of the Church with Christ, this subsection comes to an end with the Commission dealing with the problem of sin in the Church. While “The Church lives from Christ, in Christ, and for Christ”, the Commission recognizes the importance of distinguishing between Jesus Christ and his Church, so as to avoid the risk of failing to recognize the sins of the members of the Church, or of blaming these sins on Christ. Wanting to avoid the latter, it cites *Lumen gentium*, which states that ‘While Christ, “holy, blameless, unstained” (*Heb. 7:26*) knew no sin (see *2 Cor. 5:21*), and came only to expiate the sins of the people, the Church, containing sinners in its own bosom, is at one and the same time holy and always in need of purification and it pursues unceasingly penance and renewal’(LG 8)”(no. 8).

Subsection 1.2 (One Faith, One Baptism, One Body) points to two important areas of agreement in faith, already affirmed in the Commission’s first agreed statement (*A&C*, ns.36-37), and thus helps prepare the reader for discussion of the Eucharist which soon follows. The first is Trinitarian faith. “Catholics and

Disciples share the apostolic faith of the church in one God, revealed in three persons” (no. 9). The second gets directly into sacramental life: “unity of faith is also expressed in the one baptism, which we share....” *A&C* no. 24”(no.9).

Such basic affirmations lead to the question: “in what sense can we speak of being part of One Body?”(No. 10). The answer is an honest recognition that they share degrees of communion, as in agreed areas of faith just mentioned, and at the same time acknowledge limits to the communion they share: “our communion at present is imperfect There is an apparent lack of agreement on substantial questions of faith (and) we need to identify and explore these questions more precisely than we have done so far.”(no. 11). The first agreed account had described this situation as “a communion in via”. “We are already on the way; we have taken the first step in faith through baptism which is also the call to that final unity” (*A&C* no.57). For Catholics the *Decree on Ecumenism 3* confirms this: “Those who believe in Christ and have been truly baptized are in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church”. Disciples confirm this, with their conviction, “less-formally-stated”, “that persons baptized in other churches (whether as infants or at later age) are sisters and brothers in Christ, in no need of rebaptism by immersion.”

The dialogue comes back to the question of how to build up this “communion in via”, how to make use of the “evangelical space” resulting from *metanoia* “in which we find God’s grace newly available to bind us together in praising, blessing, beseeching the God who makes us one’ (*A&C*, no. 19) (no. 11). This unity which we already share should be put to work through various kinds of encounter and joint action. It expresses gratitude for the many ways in which, on the local level such cooperation is already taking place: common prayer, common witness, common social action. Such activities, in contrast to the divisions of the past, “make room” for one another as those who are commonly incorporated into the body of Christ. They “express our communion *in via*” (no.12).

This section ends with this important statement. “This understanding of the Church as communion (explored particularly in the second agreed statement) obliges us to regard the church’s existence as part of the revealed will of God, and not a matter of human construction. Equally it underlines the seriousness of our separation from anyone who shares the common apostolic faith in the triune God” (no. 13).

Reflection on *Section 1*

Particularly notable in Section 1 is the strong way in which the report speaks of the necessity of unity as “essential for the conversion of the world”, “linked to the salvation of the world.”(no.5), and the common

conviction that the understanding of the Church as communion obliges us to regard the Church’s existence as “part of the revealed will of God and not a matter of human construction (no. 13).” Disciples and Catholics here speak of agreements on a number of important aspects of the Church, and of the apostolic faith.

Significant too for this dialogue, and for the wider ecumenical movement is the “less formally stated,” Disciples’ conviction stated above, which also relates to infant and adult baptism. Disciples have understood themselves “as a believers’ church after the pattern of the New Testament church and have practiced baptism upon confession of faith in Christ.” They generally did not recognize the validity of infant baptism until the twentieth century (*CCIC*, no. 13). The position, that baptism requires a personal profession of faith (to the exclusion of infant baptism), is held today by other Christian families, indeed some of the fastest growing communities. It is therefore an important ecumenical problem, and has been discussed in this dialogue. Already in the first phase of this dialogue significant convergences were reached. Catholics described historical, theological and pastoral reasons for the practice of infant baptism, but also that they see the fundamental belief of their church regarding baptism as “expressed with new clarity in the revised rite for adult baptism, which includes personal confession of faith.” At the same time “Disciples have an increasing appreciation for the place of infant baptism in the history of the Church. In part, this involves understanding infant baptism in relation to Christian nurture in both the family and the Christian community”, and that it has been “a pastoral response to a situation where members are no longer predominately first generation Christians”(*A&C* no. 30). Convergence was found also on the mode of baptism. (*A&C* no.25). The “less formally stated” Disciples conviction continues to contribute to Disciples-Catholic rapprochement on the issue of infant and adult baptism, and might give important witness to other bilateral relationships and dialogues seeking to resolve this ecumenical problem.

Section 2 The Risen Christ and the Living Word: Word and Sacrament in the Church (Nos. 14-25)

The dialogue prepares for its reflection on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist in Section 3, by situating it, first, in Section 1, within some reflections on the church and on aspects of faith held in common, and then, in Section 2, in the broader context of the presence of the risen Christ in the world, and in the Church. In the Church the risen Christ is present in Word and Sacrament.

Section 2 focuses specifically on the resurrection of Christ. “The significance of the resurrection of Christ is that he is dynamically present in both Church and

world. The final promise of Christ – ‘I am with you always’ (Mt. 28:20) ... has been the basis of a wider belief in the presence of Christ in the world and of the specific belief in the presence of Christ in the Church”(no. 14). And therefore, the Commission could agree “that in the mission of the Church Christ is present in prayer, in the reading of the Bible, in the liturgy, in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist [Catholics would say in five other sacraments as well] in the preached Word, in the care of the poor and the sick, and in self-sacrificing love”(no.14). The broad expansiveness of the presence of the risen Christ becomes the context in which to appreciate later (in Section 3) the intensity of his presence in the Eucharist.

The importance of this reflection on the Risen Christ is that it is reflection on the heart of the redemption. Sub-section 2.1’s discussion of “the presence of the risen Christ in the World” gives them the opportunity to confess together that “Catholics and Disciples believe that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, was sent into the world by God to reveal God’s redemptive will and that by his death and resurrection this redemption was achieved”. The impact of this: “No longer confined to a particular place and time, the risen Christ is present in the world God created”, even if in a hidden way, which they illustrate with several examples (no. 15).

In subsection 2.2, (The Presence of the Risen Christ in the Church), Disciples and Catholics together “speak of the gift of Christ’s presence, experienced in the Church”(no. 16). They affirm that he is the source of holiness in the Church. “The holiness of the Church is the gift of God. The Son of God has given himself for her to sanctify her and make (her) a source of sanctification (Jn. 17:19, 1 Cor. 3:17, Eph. 5:25b-27). The holiness of the Church is a perpetual resource for her members who recognize their need of conversion and sanctification.” At the same time, there must be an active response by the Christian to this gift: “we both also insist that spiritual life involves a constant struggle and a humility that resists any claims to our own ‘achievement’ of holiness. The focus is always on the work God has done and is doing in us”(no. 17). At the same time, “Divisions among Christians contradict the holiness to which the Christian community is called” by the presence of the Risen Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 11: 17-34) (no. 18).

The biblical reflection in this subsection comes to a close by recalling the identification, in John’s Gospel, “of Christ with the Word who ‘was in the beginning with God’(Jn. 1:2) ... and ‘the living bread that came down from heaven’ (Jn. 6:51)” enabling us “to understand the ways in which Word and sacrament are integrally related in the life of the Church.” This leads to a discussion on “The Dynamism of God’s Word” (subsection 2.3) and then on the Unity of Word and Sacrament (subsection 2.4). In the scriptures, God’s Word calls for a response. In the new Testament, the Word of God becomes flesh “is the central mystery of

the new Testament: God’s hidden purpose now revealed. The Word of God and mystery are two ways of speaking about one reality, Christ, who died and rose again...”(no. 19).

This brief reflection on the dynamism of Christ’s word leads to a reflection (2.4) on “The Unity of Word and Sacrament”(ns. 20-25). “In early Christian thought Word and Sacrament were not understood as two different realities but as two ways of referring to the same reality” (no. 20). “Because of the biblical sense of God’s Word, the early Church understood that the words of Jesus spoken in a sacrament were by divine power, efficacious,” a teaching continued by Medieval theologians. “Belief in the power of baptism to remit sins was a basic belief of the early Disciples movement.” “Underlying all sacramental belief is a conviction of the power and readiness of God through the Holy Spirit to respond to the prayers of those who ask in faith”(no. 21).

Two paragraphs (ns. 22-23) reflect on ways in which, in both communities, the Word of God is heard in the ecclesial community. For both, celebrations of Baptism and Eucharist normally include readings from the Old and New Testaments. In Baptism Jesus’ command to baptize is repeated, and In the Eucharist Jesus words of institution in relation to the bread and wine (either as recorded in the Gospels or by St. Paul) will be invariably repeated (no.22). Preaching in sacramental worship is also understood as an extension of God’s efficacious word, words about the Word Incarnate. Christ is also present through the preached word. “Both Catholics and Disciples emphasize the power of preaching.” “Our agreement about the power of God’s word proclaimed clarifies the role of the ordained minister as the witness to the Word transmitted through the Church”(no. 23).

“Because Christ is the living Word, the celebration of word and sacrament is an effective action, not simply a recollection of the past or a reading of written words. Both Disciples and Catholics believe that in the Church Christ himself acts in the sacraments”(no.24).

The brief summary at the end of Section 2 pulls its main integrally related themes together (no. 25), setting the stage for Section 3 and the discussion of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

Reflection on *Section 2*

Both Sections 1 and 2 illustrate that the discussion of these issues bring us into the heart of the Church, by touching on traditional marks of the church, its unity and its holiness. Disciples and Catholics together say that “The visible unity of the Church is at the heart of the Gospel” (Section 1, no. 5). “The holiness of the Church is the gift of God. The Son of God has given himself for her to sanctify her and make a source of sanctification”(Section 2, no. 17). Together they speak

of the divine nature of the church, its existence as part of the revealed will of God, and not a matter of human construction.

In Section 2 the dialogue provides further Christological and ecclesiological reflection to prepare for the treatment of the Eucharist in Section 3. Discussing the presence of the risen Christ in the world and in the Church provides a powerful witness to Christ's promised presence, his being "with us always", as a background for exploring the more specific questions of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the Eucharist as sacrifice, and for exploring those important themes with an eye toward resolving the long-held differences on them.

The insistence on the unity of word and sacrament spoken of in Section 2, also has wider ecclesiological implications. The Reformation heritage in which Disciples share, has often described the church primarily in terms of the Word, as *creatura verbi*, creature of the word. In contrast the Catholic Church has emphasized the sacramental aspect of the Church (*cf. LG 1*). Some dialogues between the Catholic Church and Churches of the Reformation have begun to discover convergences between these two concepts of the Church. While this report does not reflect at length on Word and sacrament in terms of the church, the balance between Word and Sacrament in this report also has ecclesiological implications which are not spelled out here, but could be important for further reflection by Disciples and Catholics in seeking more convergence on the Church.

Section 3: The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist (ns. 26-62)

The longest part of the study is found in Section 3. Three subsections cover three important areas: "The Eucharist, Sacrament of Communion in Christ", "The Eucharist, Sacrament of the Real Presence of Christ", and "The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Sacrifice of Christ."

Several characteristics of this section can be noted. First, each sub-section continues the strong Christological framework found from the beginning of the report. Second, prominent, too, are further references to the urgency of seeking visible unity in Christ. Third, a helpful methodology is used in two parts of Section 3 and continued in Section 4 of first putting the question in historical perspective, including attention of the conflicts on the issue during the Reformation period, and then, against this background, describing contemporary Disciples and Catholic teaching on the subject which have tended to overcome misunderstandings of the past. Fourth, the presentations, concerning the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the Eucharist as sacrifice, illustrate also the convergence and consensus on these issues developing in the larger ecumenical world as a result of

bilateral and multilateral dialogue involving many Churches and Christian World Communions. Both Disciples and Catholics have contributed to this broader consensus/convergence in their other dialogues as well.

Sub-section 3.1, (The Eucharist, Sacrament of Communion in Christ) begins by stating shared convictions. "Disciples and Catholics share the conviction that the Eucharist is at the centre of the Church's life, where we are one in the risen Christ and hear his word together" (no. 26). Both "teach that the Church is communion in Christ and is characterized by visible unity, within which we receive the Eucharist, the sacrament of the Church's unity"(no. 27). They repeat that "the Church's visible unity is so central for both Catholics and Disciples (that) the divisions which keep us from sharing the Eucharist together are especially painful" (no. 28). They point also to important differences between them which require further dialogue, "different ways of understanding the Church and its unity lead us to different practices in offering Eucharistic participation"(no. 28).

Subsection 3.2 (The Eucharist, Sacrament of the Real Presence of Christ) sets the tone of the discussion with further important common statements. "Disciples and Catholics regard the sacrament of the Eucharist as a privileged, unique place of Christ's presence, where his words are spoken in obedience to his command and are made powerful by the Holy Spirit, making effective for those gathered what Christ first promised to his followers at the Last Supper." For both, the Eucharist is "the central and most important prayer of the Church. It is communion in the body and blood of Christ"(no. 29).

A brief review is presented of key historical developments concerning the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist (ns. 30-37) which the dialogue had to take into account. In the first millennium "the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of the Eucharist was affirmed without significant dissent". By the fourth century Eucharistic doctrine on the conversion (*conversio*) of the bread and wine was sufficiently developed and was reflected in some patristic language (no. 31). Controversies developed in the Western Church at the end of the first millennium concerning the nature of the change which took place in the Eucharist, and theologians, synods and popes began to use the term "transubstantiation" to describe the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. This concept entered into official church teaching in 1215 when the Fourth Lateran Council used it in defining the Eucharist. Its meaning was brought to maturity by Aquinas in the thirteenth century, using Aristotelian categories of substance and accident, to affirm the real change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ which takes place, while countering materialistic views of the Eucharist (no.33). Sixteenth century Reformers differed from the established Catholic Church in explaining the presence

of Christ in the Eucharist. While Luther “held to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist ‘under the bread and wine’, and Calvin emphasized that “the truth of this mystery accordingly perishes for us unless the true bread represents the true body of Christ”, both repudiated the term transubstantiation (no. 34). The Council of Trent “defended the ‘true, real, and substantial’ presence of Christ against attempts to understand it ‘as a sign or figure’ or to combine Christ’s presence with a remaining presence of bread and wine....and used the term and concept of ‘transubstantiation’ in order to affirm that the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ ...”(no.35).

Disciples separated from Presbyterian churches in the nineteenth century. They “have continued to resist attempts to explain the mystery of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist too fully, not because they do not believe it, but because they have wished to avoid divisive controversies over a mystery where a variety of understandings had coexisted in the history of the Church”(no. 36). Disciples always saw the Lord’s Supper as being more than a recollection of the Last Supper. They criticized use of the term transubstantiation as invoking an unnecessary metaphysical explanation. In light of the philosophical atmosphere of Scottish common sense realism in which they understood categories of accident and substance used by Aquinas very differently, transubstantiation was taken to mean almost the opposite of what Aquinas intended (no.37).

In light of this history, “Contemporary Catholic and Disciples teaching on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist” (nos. 38-45) begins by paying tribute to the ecumenical era which has offered the opportunity for greater mutual understanding of different approaches to the question of Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist”, but also recognizing that this is a great mystery of our faith with an inexhaustible depth of meaning (no. 38). Furthermore, the Commission acknowledges the importance of bible studies at the sessions which helped them discover the many ways that the presence of God is expressed in the Bible and to relate this to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, texts such as that, in the gospel of John, in which Jesus reveals himself as the bread of life (cf. n. 39).

In this context, each side illustrates some factors which they bring toward seeking common views with the partner on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Contemporary Catholic teaching “broadened its focus when, in discussing the principles of liturgical renewal at Vatican II, it emphasized the many ways that Christ is present in the church’s liturgical celebrations (no.40). At the same time “The meaning of the term ‘transubstantiation’ continues to be normative for Catholic teaching today.” Trent used the term to defend the mystery of Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist by opposing two extreme positions: one in which Christ is present ‘as in a sign or figure’ or along

with the bread and wine which remain, the other, to counteract any materialistic interpretations of Christ’s presence. “This meaning intended by Trent is highlighted when Catholics teach that the bread and wine become the body and blood of the risen, glorified Christ”(no.41).

Early Disciples did not use the language of transubstantiation to describe their belief in Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist, and Disciples today “still find the conceptual framework from which it emerged unfamiliar and therefore would not readily use the term.” But they acknowledge that “later twentieth century work on Aristotle’s understanding of the term ‘substance’ and its use in Aquinas and other scholars of that period has exposed the way in which this terminology has been misunderstood in the past. Furthermore Disciples readily acknowledge that the ultimate significance of the bread and wine is not to be explained by their physical characteristics alone.” Thus “they affirm the mystery of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, which makes receiving the bread and wine a true communion in his body and blood”(No. 42). Besides this, Disciples characteristically “affirm that Christ is the host at the Eucharistic feast, and that his presence is experienced in the communion of the faithful. They also affirm that by the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become for us, through faith, the Body and Blood of Christ’ (no.43). The Disciples make their own the words of the Faith and Order convergence text *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM, 1982)* to emphasize three things: “to confess ‘Christ’s real, living and active presence in the Eucharist’ which is ‘unique’ and ‘does not depend on the faith of the individual’ (E 13), to indicate that in the celebration of the Eucharist, ‘the Spirit makes the crucified and risen Christ really present to us in the Eucharistic meal’ (E14) so that it becomes a ‘foretaste’ of the ‘final renewal of creation’(E 22)”. While these points are made by the Disciples, they represent a certain convergence with Catholic teaching as well.

To complete this subsection, the Commission reflects on the question of the reservation of consecrated elements. Catholics explained its origin in the early church, and clarified its basic meaning, and indicated that Catholic liturgical instructions after Vatican II make clear that even adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament should be understood as an extension of the sacramental action of the Eucharistic celebration and they have the purpose of sacramental and spiritual communion. Disciples welcomed this clarification of a practice which is unfamiliar to them. Though they find this practice open to misunderstanding they do not express rejection of it here. They respect the contemplative and communal traditions of prayer to which it has given rise (no. 44).

This discussion of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist comes to a close with a nuanced and important statement of convergence. “Disciples and Catholics have used different language to describe the

real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and they have emphasized different moments of this mystery. Yet we both affirm the mystery of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, especially in the bread and wine; we both oppose reductionist understandings that see Christ's presence as simply materialist or figurative. The Commission reached some real convergence on this topic through the elimination of mutual misunderstandings, though we also recognize many remaining differences"(no. 45).

The sacrificial understanding of the Eucharist is discussed in sub-section, 3.3, (The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Sacrifice of Christ). A common statement sets a positive tone for discussion on this topic, so controversial among divided Christians. "Both Disciples and Catholics believe that the Eucharist is the sacrament which makes real in a special way the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the entire life, ministry and passion that led to the cross." Furthermore this theme is at the heart of the Church: "The Eucharistic prayer typically recalls not only the passion of Christ, but the whole story of creation and redemption, and it also looks forward to the consummation of the work of Christ in his coming again. In this way the Church fulfils the Pauline injunction 'to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (1 Cor. 11:26)"(no.46).

The brief discussion of some historical aspects of the sacrificial understanding of the Eucharist (nos. 47-51), begins with some New Testament perspectives. Christ's death on the cross "is called an offering, made by Christ the high priest, who instead of offering sacrifices daily, instead 'once for all ... offered himself' for sins (Heb.7:27). The sacrificial understanding of Christ's death is prefigured in the Last Supper where, according to Paul and the gospel writers, Jesus linked the bread and wine to his body, 'given for you' and, and his 'blood, shed for you' — the 'new covenant in his blood' (Mt. 22:26-28, Mk. 14: 22-25, 1 Cor. 11:23-27). Important early Church theologians continued the tradition of sacrificial interpretations of the Eucharist (no. 47), but in medieval Western thought the sacrificial interpretation of the Eucharist received less theological reflection than did the understanding of the real presence of Christ (no. 48).

Patristic teaching which developed on Eucharistic sacrifice during this period included positions that became points of contention and division on Eucharistic theology during the Reformation. These included the view that the mass was a satisfaction for sin, which could be offered daily on behalf of the living and the dead, that Lay participation in the sacrifice was understood primarily in terms of spiritual identification with Christ in his passion. The propitiatory character of the sacrifice also encouraged the belief that particular masses could be directed to specific votive intentions, which led to the endowment of masses for the benefit of the souls of the donors and their family and friends

(no. 48). Luther and other sixteenth century reformers rejected these theological interpretations and practices. Viewing the mass as a sacrifice made it into a 'work' rejected by their theology of God's grace. They emphasized that the Eucharist was a memorial of Christ's sacrifice on the cross which was made once-for-all and sufficient to atone for the sins of humanity. The Reformers differed among themselves about the meaning of 'memorial'(no. 49). The Council of Trent, citing teaching from the early centuries of the church, taught that the mass is a sacrifice in a true and proper sense and not just a 'bare commemoration'. Trent taught that while Christ offered himself once-for-all in a bloody way on the cross, the same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody way in the mass (no.50). In the nineteenth century, the Disciples received and made their own, without much debate, the reformers' rejection of sacrificial interpretations of the Eucharist. They emphasized the character of the Eucharist as a meal where the sacrifice offered is the praise and thanksgiving of the believers.

Against this background, the report presents (3.3.2) (Contemporary Catholic and Disciples Teaching on the Sacrificial Understanding of the Eucharist) (ns.52-57). Contemporary ecumenical developments, including convergences found in other dialogues, contribute significantly as Catholics and Disciples illustrate their convergence on this issue which has divided them in the past. They start immediately by saying that they have both "benefited from the twentieth century recovery of the biblical understanding of memorial (*anamnesis*) whereby what is remembered is re-presented or re-enacted by the worshipping community". In fact, this recovery of the biblical understanding of memorial has also been a key factor in ecumenical dialogue. In this dialogue, the report states that for Catholics this concept of *anamnesis* was the conceptual tool to explain, in faithfulness to Trent, how the once – for –all oblation of the cross could be held together with its perpetual presence in sacramental form. It helps to correct some theological misinterpretations of the teaching of Trent. For Disciples, the recovery of the biblical meaning of memorial helps to prevent the misunderstanding of memorial as simply mental recall (no. 52).

As already suggested, a significant characteristic of this report is that it engages the emerging consensus on the Eucharist found in the wider ecumenical movement. For here again the report makes reference to *BEM* (ns 53-54), in the drafting of which both Catholics and Disciples (and many other traditions) participated, and finds it particularly helpful in the discussion on memorial (*anamnesis*). The report refers also to the Roman Catholic Church's formal response to *BEM* (1987), one of almost 200 formal responses of various churches and communions.

At one point, illustrating the convergence taking place, the Disciples make affirmations which suggest more convergence with the formal Roman Catholic

response to *BEM*, when that response is offering a critique of *BEM*, than to the *BEM* text itself. This happens in the following way. *BEM* (*Eucharist* 8) says, “The Eucharist is the sacrament of the unique sacrifice of Christ, whoever lives to make intercession for us”, and the accompanying commentary to *Eucharist* 8 continues: “it is in the light of the significance of the Eucharist as intercession that references to the Eucharist in Catholic theology as ‘propitiatory sacrifice’ may be understood. The understanding is that there is only one expiation, that of the unique sacrifice of the cross, made actual in the Eucharist and presented before the Father in the intercession of Christ and of the church for all humanity.” The Commission continues: “The Eucharist is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered by the worshippers in union with Christ; and by being joined to Christ they are also drawn into the self-offering which constitutes Christ’s sacrifice to the Father. The Eucharist hence re-presents to those sharing in it the sacrifice of the cross; and communion in the body and blood of Christ is both based upon and results in a call to discipleship” (no.53). This was helpful in bringing some understanding to a Catholic perspective on the Eucharist as sacrifice (propitiatory sacrifice) which was unfamiliar to others and even rejected by the sixteenth century Reformers.

On the other hand, while “the Commission has found the perspective of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* helpful to understand sacrificial interpretations of the Eucharist” (no.54), it notes that the formal Catholic response to *BEM* (1987), which offers, in general, a positive evaluation of *BEM*, on this particular point offered a criticism “that the notion of intercession does not seem sufficient for explaining the Catholic sense of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist. The response noted that Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice is not repeated, but since the high priest is the crucified and risen Lord, this sacrifice can be said to be ‘made eternal’, an idea not fully captured by the simple term ‘intercession.’ The response says that Catholic faith ‘links the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist to the body and blood [of Christ] more closely than is done in the text’ (no.54).

Having made this point, the report goes on to say that “the Commission discovered more convergence than it had earlier recognized on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. Both of our traditions teach that the sacrifice of Christ has occurred once for all and can never be repeated. Yet in the celebration of the Eucharist, the Church remembers by re-presenting the sacrifice of Christ in a sacramental way.” The Commission illustrates the convergence by citing texts from Disciples literature from 1937 and 1998, which have striking similarities to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It is also said that the Disciples affirmations on the sacrifice of Christ and the Eucharist “may suggest more convergence with the Roman Catholic Response to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* than the text of *BEM* itself” (no. 55).

Furthermore, Disciples and Catholics agree that the Eucharist is the sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ. Although the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross cannot be repeated, Christians in the celebration of the Eucharist are drawn into the movement of Christ’s self-offering. Here again authoritative sources of Disciples (*The Church for Disciples of Christ* 145) and Catholics (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1368) are cited to verify this agreement. (no. 56)

The report completes this treatment of the Eucharist as sacrifice with this brief summary, “Disciples and Catholics both understand the Eucharist as the sacrament which makes present the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. The Commission has been surprised by the amount of convergence that it discovered, even though we recognize that we have different emphases and different doctrinal understandings (no. 57).

Reflection on Section 3

The exploration in Section 3 of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, is important, first of all, because of the many significant convergences and agreements found, as well as remaining differences stated on these important questions. On some issues, such as the reservation of the sacrament, the clarifications given help to put aside misunderstandings, even if the position taken by one side would not be shared by the other.

The presentation has shown the complexity of the divisions that have to be dealt with. While there are theological issues to be treated, and various historical factors in the background, this treatment has also highlighted the way philosophical differences have made their impact and were a factor leading to long held misunderstandings which needed to be clarified. A clear example is given in Section 3. “The earliest Disciples were reared in the philosophical atmosphere of Scottish common sense realism in which what Aquinas described as “accidents” were understood to constitute the real, and what he described as “substance” was seen as an unnecessary abstraction. In this different philosophical framework ... transubstantiation was taken to mean almost the opposite of what Aquinas had intended”(no. 37). The complexity involved in the divisions we face show the challenge of dialogue, and the patience required to clarify the issues that need to be faced, and resolved.

Important, too, is the fact that the treatment of the Eucharist by this dialogue has obviously benefited from the results of the broader achievements of ecumenical dialogue on these same issues, and in some way has contributed to growing common understanding of them in the Christian world. For example, Section 3 has explicitly benefitted from the Faith and Order text *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (*BEM*, 1982), which has been cited in other dialogues as well. In many ways what has been achieved in *BEM*

is representative, if not completely, of the advances of ecumenical movement on the questions of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the Eucharist as sacrifice. Their treatment in this dialogue also affirms the advances made in other dialogues, which are important, even though it is clear that much more has to be done to find more consensus on some points. In that sense, the achievements in this dialogue also underscore the importance of the ecumenical movement, and the role of dialogue in that movement.

While Faith and Order and *BEM* illustrate the importance of the multilateral dialogue on these questions, this and other bilateral dialogues show the importance of a bilateral approach. International Dialogue must take into account the views of specific Churches and Christian World Communions in order to heal the wounds that exist, or the misunderstandings, or the strong differences between specific groups. This is something multilateral dialogue may not be able to do. In this dialogue one sees how two world communions are dealing with specific differences between them, and discovering, in this case, significant areas of agreement between them. This is not only a contribution to their specific reconciliation, but a contribution to the wider ecumenical movement as well.

Section 4: The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers

The report then turns in Section 4, (The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers) to the different ways that sacrificial language has been applied to those who preside at the Eucharist.

Some historical perspectives on this topic (ns. 58-62) begin with the New Testament which does not use any one word to describe those presiding over the communal Eucharist. But as parallels between the Last Supper and the Eucharist developed during the patristic period, using the language of Hebrews 10:10 and the Old Testament, in the liturgical and theological imagery during the patristic period, the presider at the Eucharist was seen to stand in a sacramental relation to the sacrificial self-giving of Christ the high Priest and came to be called a 'priest'"(No. 58). In the early patristic period, in both East and West, theology and practice affirmed the sacramental nature of ordination to the priesthood in its various orders: bishop, priest, deacon (no. 59).

In the sixteenth century, the Council of Trent, "in line with that long standing tradition, reaffirmed this doctrinal teaching about ordination, centering its attention more specifically on ordination to the priesthood. At the Last Supper, Christ had made the apostles priests and entrusted to them the memorial of the sacrifice of his body and blood"(no. 59). Trent emphasized these elements to counter those points which the Reformers had denied, in particular the

sacrificial interpretation of the Eucharist, the priestly understanding of the ordained ministry, and the sacramental character of ordination. The Reformers emphasized the importance of ordained ministry for the church, but underlined its tasks of preaching, teaching and pastoral care. In addition, Lutheran, Reformed and Anabaptist reformers of Europe felt forced to choose between continuity in episcopal office and continuity in teaching. They discontinued or deemphasized the office of bishop and taught that apostolic succession came primarily through continuity in teaching. They also ceased to refer to ordained presbyters as 'priests' and spoke of the 'priesthood of the faithful'. Disciples inherited this Reformation legacy. (no. 60)

Clarifications of Catholic teaching in Vatican II in some ways also had the effect of helping to promote important convergences with Disciples' views, but in other ways accentuate important differences. On the one hand, The Council spoke of the 'common priesthood' of all the faithful, who 'by virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist' as well exercising their priesthood through the reception of the sacraments, prayers and thanksgiving, and lives of holiness, self-denial and charity(no.61). Disciples and Catholics can both appreciate this (no. 64). On the other hand Vatican II explained that the ministerial priesthood of the ordained ministry differs 'in essence and not simply in degree' because it 'forms and governs the priestly people' and brings about the Eucharistic sacrifice' (*LG* 10) (no. 61). Such difference, however, is "a conception foreign to the Disciples tradition which rather speaks of the ordained calling the whole community to its identity in Christ, or representing Christ to the community"(no. 71). Furthermore Vatican II, following ancient tradition affirmed the episcopate rather than the presbyterate as the fundamental category for understanding ordained ministry, and emphasized the sacramentality of the episcopal ministry and the collegiality of the bishops acting together as successors of the apostles, while the bishop's ministry continues to be understood as a participation in Christ's priesthood(no. 62). This constitutes an important difference from the Disciples who have inherited the Reformation legacy which discontinued or deemphasized the office of bishop (no.60). Vatican II, however, emphasized the importance of preaching in the ministry of bishops and clergy (no. 62) which is also primary for ministers standing in the Reformation heritage (no. 60).

Treatment of "Contemporary Catholic and Disciples teaching concerning the priestly understanding of the ordained ministry" (Sub-section 4.2, ns. 63-72) offers other important agreements, and differences, discovered in dialogue. To mention briefly some agreements: "Both Disciples and Catholics agree that the measure and norm of all priesthood is Christ's unique priesthood ... Through his death and resurrection, constituting his unique and abiding high

priestly role, he established a new relationship between God and humankind (*Jn. 17:21*)” (no. 63). They agree “that Christ has made of the baptized a priestly people, bound to Christ and hence to each other as his body’ ... and to offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving (*Heb. 13:15, Ps. 116*), to present their bodies ‘as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God ... (*Rom. 12:1*)” (no. 64); “that the ordained ministry is to be seen in the context of the apostolicity of the church”(no. 65); “that the Holy Spirit gives a variety of gifts or *charisms* which enable the church as a whole to receive and hand on the Apostolic Tradition. At the heart of these are gifts appropriate to worship, particularly in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper” (*CCIC* no. 41). But within the multiplicity of gifts given to the Church, there is a particular charisma given to the ordained ministry to maintain the community in the memory of the Apostolic Tradition. Both Disciples and Roman Catholics affirm that the Christian ministry exists to actualize, transmit, and, interpret with fidelity the Apostolic Tradition which has its origin in the first generation (*CCIC*, no. 45) (no. 66).

They speak also of differences. “While agreeing about the relationship between the ordained ministry and continuity with the apostolic tradition, Disciples and Catholics understand and articulate this relationship differently.” As already seen, a basic difference concerns episcopacy. Disciples come from Reformation traditions “which rejected episcopacy as they knew it in the sixteenth century.” Furthermore Disciples focus more on the local Church having always recognised “that the work of the ministry, shared in the local congregation by ordained ministers and ordained elders, is essential to the being of the Church and is a sign of continuity with the Apostolic Tradition” (*CCIC* 45). Catholics focus more clearly on the relationship of the universal church with the local church in saying that, “the bishop in collaboration with presbyters, deacons and the whole community in the local church, and in communion with the whole college of bishops throughout the world united with the Bishop of Rome as its head, keeps alive the apostolic faith in the local church so that it may remain faithful to the Gospel’ *CCIC* 45) (no. 67).

Despite such differences, the Commission has agreed that, for both communions the “ordained ministers have a unique role in maintaining the whole community in the apostolic tradition,” claiming that the reasons they give to support this, found already in a previous phase (*CCIC* no. 45) “represents a significant agreement on the apostolic nature of our ordained ministries and on the issue of apostolic succession, although with different understandings and expressions contained within it”(no. 67).

The Commission judges that on the issue of the *representation of Christ by the ordained*, they agree and disagree. Disciples and Catholics *agree* that ordained ministers represent Christ, the head of the Church.

They *disagree* about the nature and source in apostolic succession of this representation of Christ, and secondly about the relationship between the ordained ministry and the priesthood of the faithful (no. 68). The description of these differences in some cases also suggests areas of convergence.

They disagree, first, about the representation of Christ by the ordained. Catholics hold that “the priesthood of the baptized and the ministerial priesthood are two connected but distinct participations in the priesthood and person of Christ, differing ‘in kind and not only degree’ (*LG* 10). On the one hand, all the faithful participate in the priesthood of Christ through baptism, and their participation in Christ’s priesthood finds its consummation in the Eucharist. On the other hand, by the intention and command of the Lord, sacramental life requires a ministerial priesthood, ordained in a sacrament distinct from baptism, and so configured to Christ the priest that they can act in the person of Christ the Head. Catholics believe that ordained ministers exercise this function in a special way at the Eucharist (no. 69). Disciples, however, understand ordination to be not a sacrament distinct from baptism, but sacramental in the wider sense. The foundation of the ordained ministry is Jesus Christ the high Priest, the head of the Church which is his body. The whole community (the priesthood of all believers) shares in the continuing ministry of Christ as members of his body. But the ordained have a distinctive role. “An ordained minister, as representative of Christ presiding at the Lord’s Supper, serves in Christ’s place as host at the Table.” “The ordained serve in the priestly role by leading the offering of sacrifices of praise and worship”(no. 70).

Second, since they understand the relationship of the ordained to Christ’s priesthood differently, they therefore differ in the way they see and articulate the relationship of the ordained to the whole Church. Catholics describe the participation in Christ’s priesthood of the baptized and the ministerial priesthood as differing in kind and not only in degree, a conception foreign to the Disciples tradition which rather “speaks of the ordained calling the whole community to its identity in Christ or representing Christ to the community.” Catholics also teach that the two, although differing in essence, are also interrelated, and that the ordained ministry exists for the sake of the Church and not apart from the Church. Disciples find such clarifications helpful, but also want to emphasize the values of gifts given to all the baptized, and fear any description of the ordained ministry that seems to undermine those gifts (no.71). In a concluding paragraph to Section 4, they present a brief and helpful summary of the agreements and disagreements discovered on the issues therein (no. 72).

Reflection on *Section 4*

Questions related to ministry are some of the most difficult areas of ecumenical dialogue. At the root of the differences on ministry between different families of Christians, are different views of the nature of the Church. This is one of the reasons why the convergences on the church seen earlier, and building toward a common understanding of the Church, are important for the other significant topics discussed in this report.

Despite the difficult challenge this question of ministry presents, this dialogue has achieved a surprising and extensive amount of convergence on this question in *Section 4*, which has already been outlined. This forms a good basis for continuing the dialogue, and facing the difficult issues still needing resolution. Though there are differences, for example, on the question of priesthood as sacrament, there are also convergences between Disciples and Catholics on many related questions of ministry that provide hope that the dialogue can build on what has been done here, as it continues to face the ongoing differences on this question.

An important difference is that Catholics understand ordination to ministerial priesthood as a sacrament distinct from baptism (no. 69) whereas Disciples understand ordination to be, not a sacrament distinct from baptism, but sacramental in a wider sense (no.70). One can also perceive a difference when Disciples say that “an ordained minister or elder is the *normal presider* (emphasis added) at the sacraments of both Eucharist and Baptism“ (no. 60). For Catholics an ordained priest (or bishop) would be the *required* presider at the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Another key difference concerns episcopacy. Disciples inherited the reformation legacy in which major Reformers in Europe felt themselves forced to choose between continuity in episcopal office and continuity in teaching. They therefore discontinued or deemphasized the office of the bishop and taught that apostolic succession came primarily through continuity in teaching”(no. 60). The origin of the Disciples in the nineteenth century, removed them from the direct bitter clashes over episcopacy of the sixteenth century, and this is important for future dialogue. The commission may not have considered a more detailed discussion of episcopacy within its scope during this phase. Nonetheless, since the report refers to *BEM* in regard to the Eucharist, this observer would have liked to see how this dialogue might have considered the convergences on episcopacy and apostolic succession found in *BEM*'s treatment on Ministry (*Ministry*, ns. 19-25, 34-38) and whether this could have been useful for discussion on similar issues here. While respecting various forms of ministry, *BEM* suggests that, although “other forms of ordained ministry have been blessed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit,” the threefold ministry

of bishop, presbyter and deacon, which became established during the second and third centuries throughout the Church, “may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it” (*BEM*, Ministry, no.22, cf. no.19). This proposal is controversial, but is still valid as a starting point for discussion on this question. Not only in this dialogue, but in the USA the Disciples have also participated in the *Consultation on Church Unity* and its successor body *Churches Uniting in Christ* in which resolving this issue of episcopacy, though of great difficulty, is required for full success, and has not yet been achieved. *BEM* Ministry's proposal mentioned above is still valid as a starting point for discussion in this dialogue and in others.

These two issues, ordination as sacrament, and episcopacy are also issues between Catholics and other communions which share the legacy of the Reformation. The convergences found together by Catholics and Disciples in *Section 4* offer a contribution also to the wider ecumenical movement.

Section 5, Conclusion (73-80)

The report ends with an excellent conclusion which summarizes the work of this phase in a very concise way. It indicates the goal of the dialogue, the method of work undertaken, the main areas treated. It shows the interrelation of the various major themes discussed. The conclusion points to misunderstandings which have been overcome. It recalls some of the major agreements expressed, and as well as to continuing differences which must be treated in continuing dialogue.

The report states that this statement is not an exhaustive account of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Rather it is a promising beginning – a ‘communion in via’, and points to specific areas where further work needs to be done to attain full communion. It ends by saying “we have discovered that by careful mutual explanation and listening to each other misunderstandings have been overcome. The extent of agreement is significant and offers hope to Disciples and Catholics for our greater unity. We present it as a contribution to the one ecumenical movement”.

Some Final Reflections

Catholics and Disciples continue to seek mutual reconciliation. This report reflects the careful work Disciples and Catholics are doing to reach the goal of visible unity. I believe that the convergences and agreements discovered in this phase of dialogue are very significant and contribute to its goal of seeking visible unity between Catholics and Disciples.

One can see, that they have achieved much, and recognize that there is still much to achieve. In the discussion of each major topic in this report, Disciples and Catholics point to areas of agreement, and also acknowledge limits to agreement and continuing areas of disagreement which need to be resolved. In the Introduction they speak of “areas of convergence and agreement” that have emerged, but also that “We are not in full communion and therefore cannot share the Eucharist together” (no. 2). In Section I, while speaking of areas of agreement concerning the union of Christ with the church (ns. 5-8), and areas of agreement on the apostolic faith and of one baptism (ns. 9-10), they make clear that “our communion at present is imperfect ... While there is an apparent lack of agreement on substantial questions of faith, we need to identify and explore these questions more precisely than we have done so far”(no. 11). In Section 3 they note that divisions keep them from sharing the Eucharist, and “different ways of understanding the church and its unity lead us to different practices in offering Eucharistic participation.”(no. 28). Concluding their discussion of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, they say that the “Commission reached some real convergence on this topic ... though we also recognize many remaining differences (no. 45). They finish discussion of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist stating that “The Commission has been surprised by the amount of convergence that it discovered, even though we recognize that we have different emphases and different doctrinal understandings (no. 57). In their discussion of the priesthood of Christ and his ministers, many significant agreements were stated, as in ns. 63-67 and elsewhere, as well as important differences on significant issues, as seen in ns. 68-72. As with many other bi-laterals, the partners in this dialogue have taken important steps forward toward unity and reconciliation. The dialogue shows that this relationship of Disciples and Catholics has reached what has been called an intermediate

period on the way to unity. A good relationship has developed. And the dialogue must continue.

A need for a common history

A major factor in the background of many of the differences on the Eucharist described here and in other dialogues involving churches of the West, is the fact that, since the breakdown of unity in the West in the sixteenth century, separated Christians have separate histories which reflect theological conflicts which have existed over centuries. This is reflected especially in the historical parts of Sections 3 and 4. The partners had conflicting views, or were often “unfamiliar” with the thought or practice of the other. All the more impressive is that Disciples and Catholics have found significant degrees of convergence in dialogue on issues long considered divisive between them. This underscores the challenge, within the ecumenical movement, of continuing to seek a common understanding of history to replace the divided shreds of history which is the legacy of centuries of division, and which we bring to the dialogue. At the same time, discovering the convergences documented here by Disciples and Catholics, on issues over which there has been great disagreement for centuries, contributes a step toward creating a common narrative of Christian history with which all Christians can identify.

The impact of the broader ecumenical movement was felt in this dialogue, as illustrated by the use of *BEM*. The results of this dialogue illustrate that the ecumenical movement goes on, and in many ways continues to flourish.

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

LETTER OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY TO THE ECUMENICAL COMMISSIONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES AND OF THE SYNODS OF THE ORIENTAL CATHOLIC CHURCHES

On behalf of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, I am pleased to send you the enclosed resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014. These materials have been prepared by an international committee comprising representatives from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, working from material provided by an ecumenical group representing Christians in Canada.

Living amid a great diversity, but being faithful to Christ's desire for the unity of his disciples, has led the Canadian group to a reflection on Paul's provocative question in 1 Corinthians: "Has Christ been divided?" which will be the biblical theme for the year 2014. This passage also invites us to reflect on the gifts we can receive from others even now in the midst of our divisions, and is an encouragement to us in our work for unity.

The material includes an introduction to the theme, an ecumenical worship service, a selection of readings and reflections for the eight days of the Week of Prayer octave, and an account of the ecumenical context in Canada. This year the Canadian group has prepared an internet page featuring hymns and music specially composed for the Week of Prayer 2014 (<http://ecumenism.net/music/>).

The resources can be drawn upon in many ways, and are intended for use not only during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, but throughout the year 2014. For particular groups who might have need of texts in other languages, the website of the Holy See will shortly have the materials available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, with other languages available later. Please visit :

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_weeks-prayer.html.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity requests that you bring these resources to the attention of those responsible for coordinating Prayer for Christian Unity events. We strongly encourage the regional or local adaptation of the material, so that it may effectively address the particular religious, social and cultural context. It is also hoped that the material will be adapted and made available to young people, youth groups and associations. This process will provide a further valuable opportunity for collaboration between Christians at a local level.

With every good wish, and in appreciation of your efforts for the cause of Christian Unity, I remain

Yours sincerely in Christ

✠ Brian Farrell
Secretary

IMPORTANT

This is the **international** version of the text
of the Week of Prayer 2014

Kindly contact your local Bishops' Conference or Synod of your Church
to obtain an adaptation of this text for your local context

Resources for

THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
and throughout the year 2014

Has Christ been divided?
(1 Cor 1:13)

Jointly prepared and published by

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches

TO THOSE ORGANIZING THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

THE SEARCH FOR UNITY: THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The traditional period in the northern hemisphere for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is 18-25 January. Those dates were proposed in 1908 by Paul Wattson to cover the days between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul, and therefore have a symbolic significance. In the southern hemisphere where January is a vacation time churches often find other days to celebrate the week of prayer, for example around Pentecost (suggested by the Faith and Order movement in 1926), which is also a symbolic date for the unity of the Church.

Mindful of the need for flexibility, we invite you to use this material throughout the whole year to express the degree of communion which the churches have already reached, and to pray together for that full unity which is Christ's will.

ADAPTING THE TEXT

This material is offered with the understanding that, whenever possible, it will be adapted for use in local situations. Account should be taken of local liturgical and devotional practice, and of the whole social and cultural context. Such adaptation should ideally take place ecumenically. In some places ecumenical structures are already set up for adapting the material; in other places, we hope that the need to adapt it will be a stimulus to creating such structures.

USING THE WEEK OF PRAYER MATERIAL

- For churches and Christian communities which observe the week of prayer together through a single common service, an order for an ecumenical worship service is provided.
- Churches and Christian communities may also incorporate material from the week of prayer into their own services. Prayers from the ecumenical worship service, the 'eight days', and the selection of additional prayers can be used as appropriate in their own setting.
- Communities which observe the week of prayer in their worship for each day during the week may draw material for these services from the 'eight days'.
- Those wishing to do bible studies on the week of prayer theme can use as a basis the biblical

texts and reflections given in the eight days. Each day the discussions can lead to a closing period of intercessory prayer.

- Those who wish to pray privately may find the material helpful for focusing their prayer intentions. They can be mindful that they are in communion with others praying all around the world for the greater visible unity of Christ's Church.

BIBLICAL TEXT FOR 2014*

1 Corinthians 1: 1-17

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind — just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you — so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you should be in agreement and that there should be no divisions among you, but that you should be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas', or 'I belong to Christ.' Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so

* Scripture quotations: The scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989, 1995, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and are used with permission. All rights reserved.

that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else). For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME FOR THE YEAR 2014

Has Christ been divided?

(cf. 1 Cor 1:1-17)

1. Canadians live in a country that is marked by diversity in language, culture, and even climate, and we also embody diversity in our expressions of Christian faith. Living with this diversity, but being faithful to Christ's desire for the unity of his disciples, has led us to a reflection on Paul's provocative question in 1 Corinthians: "Has Christ been Divided?" In faith we respond, "No!" yet our church communities continue to embody scandalous divisions. 1 Corinthians also points us to a way in which we can value and receive the gifts of others even now in the midst of our divisions, and that is an encouragement to us in our work for unity.

2. Canada is known for its natural splendour: its mountains, forests, lakes and rivers, seas of wheat and three ocean shorelines. Our land stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the U.S. border to the north pole. This is a land rich in agriculture and natural resources. Canada is also a land of diverse peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis,¹ and many people who came to settle here from around the world. We have two official languages, French and English, yet many Canadians celebrate the cultural and linguistic heritage from their ancestral homelands. Our social and political divisions frequently hinge upon linguistic, cultural, and regional distinctions, yet we are learning to understand how these national identities contribute to a healthy Canadian diversity. Within this multicultural milieu, many Christians have brought their particular ways of worship and ministry. Paul's letter addresses us within our diversity and invites

1. First Nations is a term used in Canada to acknowledge the presence of the indigenous peoples before the arrival of Europeans. The indigenous people in the Arctic call themselves Inuit. Métis is a term used to refer to people of both indigenous and French ancestry.

us to recognize that as church in our particular places we are not to be isolated or to act over against each other, but rather to recognize our interconnectedness with all who call on the name of the Lord.

3. In the Scripture passage chosen for our reflection this year, Paul begins his letters to the Corinthians with a powerful opening. Like an overture to an opera or the opening movement to a symphony, this passage touches on themes that certainly prepare us for what is to come in these letters. There are three movements in this text. All three lay a solid but challenging foundation for our reflections as Christians living and working together in churches and society today.

4. In the first movement (1:1-3), Paul, along with his fellow Christian Sosthenes – as a small but authentic community of two – addresses another larger and very active community, the Corinthian Christians. He addresses the Corinthians as the "Church of God," not just as a local chapter, but as a full expression of the Church in their part of the world. Paul reminds them that they are a "called" people: "called to be saints," not isolated and on their own, but "together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours." This last expression could also be translated as "both in their place and in ours." So, they are authentically God's Church but very much connected to everyone else who calls on the Lord, both in their confession and their place. Then Paul, as in all his letters, extends his usual and powerful greeting of God's grace and peace. In Paul's language, "grace" indicates God's goodness and gifts to us in Christ, and is meant to draw out our gratitude to God and our graciousness to others. His "peace" for us in all its fullness and mutuality is communion (*koinonia*) in God.

5. *Where do you see God's grace and peace in your local church, in your larger community, and in your country? How can you move beyond a preoccupation with your immediate community and attend to the community of all Christians and the world?*

6. While Paul is about to call the Corinthian community to task, he begins the next movement in our text (1:4-9) by giving thanks for "the grace of God that has been given" to the Corinthians "in Christ Jesus." This is not just a formality, but a genuine rejoicing in the gifts God has bestowed on this community. He proceeds to build them up: "For in every way you have been enriched in him..., so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift." They are assured that they will be strengthened to the end, and that "God is faithful." God calls us into the fellowship (*koinonia*) of his Son with all its

social and spiritual implications for our churches and peoples.

7. As Canadian Christians we are mindful that we have not always been ready to rejoice in the gifts of God present in other Christian communities. Reading Paul's text in an ecumenical spirit, we become more conscious of being invited to rejoice sincerely in how God has blessed other Christians and other peoples. Those who first brought the Christian faith to Canada were often dismissive of the gifts and insights of the indigenous peoples, and failed to see the blessings God bestowed through them.

We have much to be grateful for in the diversity of peoples and expressions of faith in our country. Although our history has many examples of how we have not lived in mutual respect for and support of each other, we know that our country was built upon co-operation and seeking ways for peace at home and in the world. Our enjoyment of the blessings of the natural world as God-given gifts are too often taken for granted and we struggle to balance prosperity and the stewardship of these physical blessings. We struggle too to enact the values we all say we hold as Canadians. As Christians and as churches, we feel called to a receptive gratitude towards the gifts of God in the other, and to embody thankfulness and caring for the whole country and the world.

8. What do you give thanks for in your church, in your community and in your country? How have you experienced the spiritual and/or material gifts of God among other Christians or others of your community?

9. In the third movement (1:10-17), Paul addresses hard words to the Corinthians because of the ways that they have distorted the Christian gospel and broken the unity of the community: "I belong to Paul, I belong to Apollos, I belong to Cephas." Even those who claimed Christ as their leader were not applauded by Paul, for they used the name of Christ to separate themselves from others in the Christian community. We cannot invoke Christ's name to build walls around us, because his name creates fellowship and unity, not divisions. "Has Christ been divided?" Paul does not object to forming communities around strong leadership, but the community is to find its fundamental identity in Christ: "Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?" Chloe's people have seen this development among them and have brought it to light.

10. Into this state of division comes Paul's appeal to come together and "be united in the same mind and the same purpose." He exhorts his readers and those in Corinth "to be in agreement." Does Paul think they should all worship and do

things in the same way? We think not. These verses are not a call to leave aside the leadership of Paul, Apollos, or Cephas. Rooted in Christ, we are called to give thanks for the gifts of God that others outside our group bring to the common mission of the Church. Honouring the gifts of God in others draws us closer in faith and mission, and leads us towards that unity for which Christ prayed, with respect for authentic diversity in worship and life.

11. Paul highlights two central elements of Christian discipleship in which we are fundamentally bound to Christ: baptism and the cross of Christ. We were not baptized into Paul and he was not crucified for us; our unity is in Christ and our life and salvation come from him. At the same time, we all participate in one group or another, and our local churches nurture us in faith and help us to walk as disciples of Jesus. The conclusion of the matter, both for Paul and for us, is not only our sense of belonging to a particular church. Rather, our purpose is the proclamation of the good news, the very gospel to which we have responded in faith and joy. Now we must share this message with the world. Paul's conclusion challenges us to ask ourselves if we have good news in Christ for each other, or if we carry division even in the name of Christ, thus, in Paul's words, emptying the Cross of its power.

12. As Canadian Christians, we have a strong history of co-operation and mutual support. Our history includes examples of common efforts, shared ministries, and even the union of several churches. Where organic unity of churches has not been possible, we have often achieved common agreements and shared ministries that witness to our growing unity in Christ. Our churches have acted together on issues related to poverty and social justice, and together many of our churches are beginning to take responsibility for our un-Christ-like attitudes towards indigenous peoples in our country. And yet, despite these encouraging movements towards the unity that Christ desires for us, we maintain the divisions and disunity that distort our proclamation of the gospel.

13. We also hear of Chloe's people. It is under Chloe's leadership that this group identifies and names the conflicts and divisions in the Corinthian church. We continue to need such witnesses, both women and men, from all of our churches, and their ministry of reconciliation and unity. Giving voice to such witness will draw us closer to realizing Paul's vision of a community having "the same purpose and mind in Christ."

14. How will you and your church discern the same purpose and mind in Christ with other churches? How will your appreciation and experience of the different approaches

and forms of worship among the churches in your community or country bear fruit in efforts towards visible Christian unity? What common mission will you share with other Christians to help make the world a better place for others?

15. To conclude, when we consider the many blessings and gifts of God made manifest in our country and peoples, we begin to recognize that we must treat one another, and the very land from which we derive our living, with dignity and respect. This recognition has called us to confession and repentance, and to the seeking of new and sustainable ways of living on the earth. It has raised our consciousness about how God has blessed us all, and that no one group can decide how to use the country's resources without hearing and including the voices of our fellow Canadians.

THE PREPARATION OF THE MATERIAL FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2014

The initial work on the theme for this year's week of prayer material was prepared by a group of representatives from different parts of Canada, brought together at the invitation of the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism.

We particularly wish to thank:

- Ms. Bernice Baranowski (Roman Catholic), Centre canadien d'œcuménisme, Montréal ;
- Rev. Dr. Sandra Beardsall (United Church of Canada), Professor of Church History and Ecumenics, St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon;
- Rev. Michel Belzile (Baptist), Greenborough Community Church, Toronto;
- Most Rev. Donald Bolen, bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon;
- Rev. Amanda Currie, minister and clerk of the Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Saskatoon;
- Nicholas Jesson, ecumenical officer, Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon;
- Norman Lévesque (Roman Catholic), executive director (interim), Centre canadien d'œcuménisme and director of the Green Church program;
- Rev. Deacon Anthony Mansour (Orthodox Church in America), executive director (2006-2012), Centre canadien d'œcuménisme, Montréal

- Rev. Dr. David MacLachlan (United Church of Canada), professor of New Testament studies, Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax;
- Rev. John Wilson (United Church of Canada), Summerside, Prince Edward Island;
- And with draft texts and thoughtful proposals from:
- Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton (United Church of Canada), general secretary, Canadian Council of Churches;
- Rev. Dr. Gilles Routhier (Roman Catholic), Dean, Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses, Université Laval, Québec.

We are also grateful to Bishop Donald Bolen of Saskatoon for initiating the preparatory group, and to all those who assisted the work of the International Committee.

The texts proposed here were finalized during a meeting of the International Committee nominated by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The Committee met with the Canadian representatives in September 2012 at the Villa Saint Martin, a Jesuit retreat centre at Pierrefonds, on the northwest of the island of Montreal. We are particularly grateful to the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism for generously hosting the meeting, and for arranging a visit to the Oratoire Saint Joseph in Montreal. We also wish to express thanks to the Faculty of McGill University, Montreal, for organizing an ecumenical symposium during our stay in Canada.

ECUMENICAL WORSHIP SERVICE

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORSHIP SERVICE

Has Christ been divided?

(cf. 1 Cor 1:1-17)

As we gather for worship during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we respond to God's call to us and we seek to be renewed and to build up our mutual relationship in Christ through song, word and gesture. This celebration may also serve as an invitation to explore or recall the eight days of reflection, which are linked textually to 1 Corinthians 1:1-17. We recognize Paul's provocative question: "Has Christ been divided?" as a joyful challenge to prayer and to self-examination as

persons and as Christian communities. This biblical text and worship outline is an opportunity to consider that challenge anew in your context.

Here are some of the distinctive features of this year's service that may require some advance preparation:

The **Gathering of the community** includes an invitation to pray while turning to face different directions, in the tradition of some of the indigenous people of Canada. You will need to be aware of where the compass points lie for the worshipping congregation, so that they can turn clockwise as the prayer unfolds. They will need to return to the front of the worship space for the "upward" and "downward" directions, as noted. You may need to alter the prayers to reflect your own geographical context.

The **"Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts"** is a way of responding to Paul's concern that the Corinthians have divided into factions, and his challenge: "Has Christ been divided?" We cannot live in the solitudes of our individual Christian communities and assume that we have unity. We must be willing and able to receive each other's gifts. This is a step beyond naming a gift we have to give. It asks us to consider others, and to see in them charisms that enrich the whole body of Christ. The "Exchange" is explained in detail below. It requires some advance planning. We suggest the following:

1. Invite representatives of the different churches in your local area to reflect together on what "gift" all *receive* from each. The goal is to identify together one gift from each community that the others can agree to "receive."
2. Ideally, you will also obtain a symbolic representation of each gift to be brought forward during the "Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts".
3. As the gifts are brought forward they are announced using this or a similar form of words: "From the _____ church, we gratefully receive the gift of _____ represented here by _____".

This "Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts" can of course be adapted as befits each local situation.

The **Intercessory Prayers** lift up the "Eight Millennium Goals" of the United Nations. We encourage you to print these prayers for the worshipping congregation so that they can see the specific goals embedded in the prayers.

You may wish to note for worshippers that the eight responses in the **Commitment to Unity**

match the themes of the resource materials for the "eight days of prayer for unity" included in this package.

Those who sing "pray twice". We have offered some suitable **hymns and sacred songs** from the repertoire of Canadian hymn writers and composers, commissioned especially for this 2014 Week of Prayer. These can be found at www.ecumenism.net/music/. We hope you will strive to include as much music as you can in this time of ecumenical worship!

L: Leader(s)

C: Congregation

ORDER OF SERVICE

I. WE GATHER IN HOPE AND UNITY

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

The worship leaders and others may enter in procession.

GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

L: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (*1 Cor.* 1:3).

L: This worship service was prepared in Canada. The word, "Canada," in the language of some of the country's first people, the Iroquois,² means "village". As members of the household of God Christians around the world indeed inhabit one "village." When Christians worship, they link themselves to this vast global village, so full of beauty, of struggle and of hope. Dear friends, we welcome you to join together in prayer through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen**

L: Loving God, you call all of us: from our homes and from our offices, from our mines and from our factories, from our fields and from our shops, from our fishing boats and from our herds, from our schools and from our hospitals, from our prisons and from our detention centres, to be one in fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: **Make us one in Christ.**

L: The indigenous peoples of Canada honour an ancient ritual of praying while facing in different

2. Pronounced: ear-uh-kwa.

directions. With them, let us unite in prayer, facing each of the directions as indicated:

Facing East

L: From the East, the direction of the rising sun, we receive peace and light and wisdom and knowledge.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing South

L: From the South comes warmth, guidance, and the beginning and the end of life.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing West

L: From the West comes the rain, purifying waters, to sustain all living things.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing North

L: From the North comes the cold and mighty wind and the white snows, giving us strength and endurance.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Turning towards the front, and facing upward

L: From the heavens we receive darkness and light and the air of your breath.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing downward

L: From the earth we come and to the earth we will return.

C: We are grateful, O God, for your good creation, our earthly home.

L: May we walk good paths, blessed God, living on this earth as brothers and sisters should; rejoicing in one another's blessing, sympathizing in one another's sorrows, and together with you, in the name of Jesus, and with the Spirit's awakening breath, renewing the face of the earth.

C: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

PRAYERS OF REPENTANCE

L: Inspired by Paul's appeal to the community of Corinth, let us confess our sins.

L: Gracious God, through our union with Christ Jesus you have made us rich in speech and in knowledge of every kind. In our pride, we attribute these gifts to ourselves and do not recognize their true source. Forgive us, Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy or Kyrie eleison (may be sung).

L: Gracious God, in Christ we are not lacking in any spiritual gift. Yet, often we are too timid or too self-absorbed to share the marvels of this life-giving message with those around us. Forgive us, Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Gracious God, you call us to fellowship in your Son, Jesus Christ. For our lack of enthusiasm to be united in one mind and one purpose; for too readily allowing divisions and quarrels to persist among us, forgive us, Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Gracious God, you remain faithful even while seeing our weakness. Forgive our sins of mediocrity and our too easy acceptance of divisions among us. By the grace of your Holy Spirit, rekindle our zeal to take concrete steps to honour our covenant of unity with you, with one another, and with all of creation.

C: Amen.

II. WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 57:14-19; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 1:1-17; Mark 9:33-41

HOMILY

III. WE RESPOND IN FAITH AND UNITY

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Apostles' Creed or another affirmation of faith may be used.)

HYMN OF FAITH AND COMMITMENT

ECUMENICAL EXCHANGE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Those preparing the service have gathered beforehand to reflect on the various gifts of the churches in the community. Either local gifts or gifts of their wider tradition may be selected. Representatives of the different churches bring objects representing the gifts that their tradition brings to the whole Christian community. The gifts are brought forward and then placed on a table. A leader may announce the gifts using this or a similar format:

L: From the _____ church, we gratefully receive the gift of _____ represented here by _____.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

COLLECT

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you". Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly city, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever. Amen.

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

Together, Canadian churches have embraced the United Nations' "Eight Millennium Goals." The following prayers lift up these goals.

L: We pray for all people who suffer day to day in *poverty and hunger*. Their precarious state often causes divisions; may Christ's love restore justice and peace. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for all those striving for *universal education*. May their thirst for knowledge build bridges between our churches and restore respect in our differences. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those striving for *equal dignity and rights of man and woman*. May the image of God be honoured in all women and men. We remember especially the need for equal access to jobs, goods and services. As we become one in Christ Jesus, may we fully receive the gifts of both men and women. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for the young who are sick and those who seek to improve *child health*. As we take care of children, may we welcome Jesus himself. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for women who bear children, and for their *maternal health*. May we take care of these mothers who carry new life and whose love for their children reminds us of God's uniting love for us. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those who "*combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases*". May we hear the voices of those denied a life of dignity, and work to create a world in which all people are respected and cared for, and where no one is excluded. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for all who suffer the consequences of the poor stewardship of creation, and for all endangered species. Guide us to "*environmental*

sustainability" so we can be reconciled with creation. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those who practice international solidarity and *global partnership*. As we favour a fair trade of goods and we cancel debt in the poorest countries, may we also strive for justice. Gracious God, hear our prayer.

C: And in your love, answer.

L: As we strive to realize these goals, may we discern your voice, O Lord, and journey together towards the Kingdom for which you prayed. And so we pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*said or sung*)

SIGN OF PEACE

L: When the French came to Canada in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they found a land rich in resources, and were helped by its first Peoples. Their sense of gratitude led to the ship that brought the founder of Québec City being named "*Don de Dieu*", which means "Gift of God".

In many of the Eucharistic rites used in Canada, people are invited to holy communion with the words "The Gifts of God for the People of God." The unity for which we pray is restored ecclesial communion with one another, and will be marked by receiving the Eucharistic gifts together. Yet even on the journey to visible unity, we give and receive other gifts from one another, gifts of God for the people of God.

In the French-speaking Province of Québec today, the expression *don de Dieu* – "gift of God" – has a fresh vitality in the Christian community and in popular culture. It recalls a sense of gratitude for the gifts of God which comes from a time when their ancestors were able to share in thanksgiving with the First Nations of Canada. As a sign of our peace and a way to recognise the gifts we receive from one another, let us say to each other with French-Canadians, "*Don de Dieu*".

The worshippers greet one another with an embrace, bow, or handshake as they say:

C: "Don de Dieu"

OFFERING HYMN (*a collection may be taken during this hymn*)

IV. WE GO FORTH INTO THE WORLD

COMMITMENT TO UNITY

L: Paul challenged the Christians in Corinth to know in their hearts and to show in their actions that Christ has not been divided. He challenges us, too, to realise more fully the unity we already have in Christ.

With all those in every place who call on the Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Together, we are called to be saints.

L: Graced by God in every way.

C: Together, we give thanks for one another.

L: Rich in the many blessings God has given us through our union in Christ.

C: Together, we are not lacking in any spiritual gift.

L: Sure in the God who strengthens us for love and service.

C: Together, we affirm that God is faithful.

L: Embraced by Jesus Christ.

C: Together, we are called into fellowship.

L: United in the same mind and the same purpose.

C: Together, we seek to be in agreement.

L: Overcoming our quarrels about the one who was crucified for us.

C: Together, we belong to Christ.

L: Has Christ, then, been divided?

C: No! Together, we go into the world to proclaim his good news!

SENDING HYMN

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

The blessing may be bestowed by several worship leaders in the form below or in another form.

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: May the love of the Lord Jesus draw you to himself.

may the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his service,

may the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your spirit, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen

L: Go in peace, to love and to be loved, to welcome and to belong to serve and to be nourished.

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS FOR THE 'EIGHT DAYS'

DAY 1 TOGETHER ... WE ARE CALLED TO BE SAINTS

Exodus 19: 3-8 You shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation

Psalms 95: 1-7 We are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand

1 Peter 2: 9-10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people

Matthew 12: 46-50 Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

Together, we who call upon the name of the Lord are called to be saints "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (*1 Cor.* 1:2). In Exodus, this gathering together of God's people is described as a treasured possession, a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.

In 1 Peter, our membership in this communion of saints is understood to come as a result of God calling us together as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, God's own people. With this calling comes a shared mandate to proclaim the mighty acts of God that drew us out of darkness and into God's light.

Furthermore, we discover in Matthew that as a communion of saints, our oneness in Jesus is to extend beyond our family, clan, or class as together we pray for unity and seek to do the will of God.

QUESTIONS

- What does the term "communion of saints" mean for you or for your church tradition?
- In what ways does our calling to be a "holy nation" compel us to go beyond our local Christian setting?

PRAYER

Merciful God, together with all those who call on the name of the Lord, in our brokenness we hear your call to be saints. Yet you have made us a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. By the power of your Holy Spirit, draw us together in the communion of saints and strengthen us to do your will and to proclaim the mighty acts of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

DAY 2 TOGETHER ... WE GIVE THANKS FOR GOD'S GRACE IN ONE ANOTHER

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11 The Lord brought us out of Egypt

Psalms 100 Give thanks to God, bless God's name

Philippians 1: 3-11 I thank God every time I remember you

John 1: 1-18 Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

Gratitude, in Deuteronomy, is a way of living life with a deep awareness of God's presence within us and around us. It is the ability to recognize God's grace active and alive in one another and in all people everywhere and to give God thanks. The joy that flows from this grace is so great that it embraces even "the aliens who reside among you".

Gratitude, in the ecumenical context, means being able to rejoice in the gifts of God's grace present in other Christian communities, an attitude that opens the door to ecumenical sharing of gifts and to learning from one another.

All of life is a gift from God: from the moment of creation to the moment God became flesh in the life and work of Jesus, to this moment in which we are living. Let us thank God for the gifts of grace and truth given in Jesus Christ, and manifest in one another and our churches.

QUESTIONS

- What are the gifts of God's grace that we already experience from other church traditions in our own communities?
- In what ways might Christians of different traditions better receive and share the varied gifts that God has given to each of us?

PRAYER

Most loving and gracious God, we give thanks for the gifts of your grace that we experience in our own tradition and in the traditions of other churches. By the grace of your Holy Spirit, may our gratitude continue to grow as we encounter one another and experience your gift of unity in new ways. This we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DAY 3 TOGETHER ... WE ARE NOT LACKING IN ANY SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Job 28: 20-28 Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom

Psalms 145:10-21 You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing

Ephesians 4:7-13 Each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift

Mark 8: 14-21 Why are you talking about having no bread?

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

Job realizes that even though all has been taken away from him, the fear of the Lord remains – that is wisdom. As brothers and sisters in Christ, even though we are impoverished by our divisions, we have all been graced with an abundance of diverse gifts, both spiritual and material to build up his body.

Yet, despite God's promises and Jesus' generous life and love, we, like the disciples in Mark, sometimes forget our true wealth: we divide, we hoard; we speak and act as if we have "no bread".

Christ has not been divided: together we have gifts enough to share with one another and "with every living thing".

QUESTIONS

- In what ways have we forgotten the abundance of God's gifts, proclaiming instead "we have no bread"?
- In what ways can we better share the spiritual and material gifts entrusted to us to share with others?

PRAYER

Faithful, open-handed God, we bless you that you have given us all the spiritual gifts we need to come to the measure of the full stature of Christ: for wisdom, for gifts of service and for bread. Help

us to be signs of your abundance, gathered in unity to bring the gifts of your everlasting kingdom to every place of pain and lack. Filled with the Spirit, we pray in the name of the One whose gift was the bread of his life broken for us, now and forever. Amen.

DAY 4 TOGETHER ... WE AFFIRM THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL

Lamentations 3: 19-26 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases

Psalm 57: 7-11 God's faithfulness extends to the clouds

Hebrews 10: 19-25 He who has promised is faithful

Luke 1: 67-75 He has looked favourably on his people

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

The eternal unity of Father, Son and Spirit draws us closer into the love of God, and calls us to participate in God's work in the world which is love, mercy and justice. Mercy and justice are not divided in God, but rather are joined together in the steadfast love manifested in God's covenant with us and with all of creation.

The new father Zechariah testifies to God's manifestation of mercy in keeping his promises to Abraham and his descendants. God is faithful to his holy covenant.

As we continue to pray for the unity of the church, we must not neglect to meet together and encourage one another, spurring each other on towards love and good deeds, saying: "God is faithful."

QUESTIONS

- In what ways have you discerned God's faithfulness in your life and the life of your community in the past year?
- In what ways does God's faithfulness inspire us to pursue the goal of Christian unity?

PRAYER

Faithful God, we give thanks for your steadfast love and your devotedness that extends to the clouds. As we wait in joyful hope, working and praying together for the full visible unity of your church, fill us with confidence in your promises. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the power of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DAY 5 TOGETHER ... WE ARE CALLED INTO FELLOWSHIP

Isaiah 43: 1-7 I will be with you

Psalm 133 How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

1 John 1: 3-7 We have fellowship with one another

John 15: 12-17 I have called you friends

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

We are called into fellowship with God the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. As we draw closer to the Triune God, we are drawn closer to one another in Christian unity.

Christ has initiated a change in our relationship, calling us friends instead of servants. In response to this relationship of love, we are called out of relationships of power and domination into friendship and love of one another.

Called by Jesus, we witness to the gospel both to those who have not yet heard it and to those who have. This proclamation contains a call into fellowship with God, and establishes fellowship among those who respond.

QUESTIONS

- In what ways do you experience the call into fellowship with God?
- In what ways is God calling you into fellowship with others within your church and beyond?

PRAYER

Father of love, you have called us into the fellowship of your Son and appointed us to bear fruit in our witness to the gospel. By the grace of your Spirit, enable us to love one another and to dwell together in unity so that our joy may be complete. Amen.

DAY 6 TOGETHER ... WE SEEK TO BE IN AGREEMENT

Judges 4: 1-9 If you go with me, I will go

Psalm 34: 1-14 Seek peace, and pursue it

1 Corinthians 1: 10-15 Be united in the same mind and the same purpose

Luke 22: 24-30 A dispute also arose among them

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

The disunity described in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13 reflects a distortion of the gospel, undermining the integrity of the message of Christ. To acknowledge conflict and division, as Chloe's people did, is the first step to establishing unity.

Women like Deborah and Chloe raise a prophetic voice among God's people in times of conflict and division, confronting us with the need to be reconciled. Such prophetic voices may enable people to gather in renewed unity for action.

As we strive to be united in the same mind and the same purpose, we are called to seek the Lord and his peace as the psalmist wrote.

QUESTIONS

- Can you remember an occasion when the prophetic naming of a painful church disagreement was the beginning of a renewed struggle towards greater unity?
- What issues still cause divisions among us as an ecumenical body? What paths do you see towards greater unity?

PRAYER

Loving God, you give us prophetic witnesses in times of conflict and division. When we seek you, Lord, send us your Holy Spirit to make us artisans of reconciliation, united in the same mind and the same purpose. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

DAY 7 TOGETHER ... WE BELONG TO CHRIST

Isaiah 19: 19-25 God will send them a saviour

Psalms 139: 1-12 Where can I go from your spirit?

1 Corinthians 12: 12-26 If one member suffers... If one member is honoured...

Mark 9: 38-41 Whoever is not against us is for us

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

Isaiah envisioned a day when Egyptians and Assyrians would worship together with Israel as God's people. Christian unity belongs to the design of God for the unity of all humanity, and indeed of the cosmos itself. We pray for the day when we will worship together in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship.

We are blessed by the gifts of various church traditions. Recognising those gifts in each other impels us towards visible unity.

Our baptism unites us as one body in Christ. While we value our particular churches, Paul reminds us that all who call on the name of the Lord are with us in Christ for we all belong to the one body. There is no other to whom we can say, "I have no need of you" (*1 Cor.* 12:21).

QUESTIONS

- What are the signs of "belonging to Christ"?
- In what ways can the phrase "I belong to Christ" be used to divide Christians rather than unite them?

PRAYER

We give you thanks, O God, that you bless each and every member of the body of Christ with the gifts of your Spirit. Help us to be supportive of one another, to be respectful of our differences, and to work for the unity of all throughout the world who call upon Jesus as Lord. Amen.

DAY 8 TOGETHER ... WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

Isaiah 61: 1-4 The spirit of the Lord God has sent me to bring good news

Psalms 145: 1-7 One generation shall laud your works to another

1 Corinthians 15: 1-8 For I handed on to you what I in turn had received

Luke 4: 14-21 Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing

THREE POINTS FOR REFLECTION

Together we proclaim anew the good news prophesied in Isaiah, fulfilled in our Lord Jesus, preached by the Apostle Paul, and received by the Church. Facing honestly the differences we have and the labels of denomination we embrace, we must never lose sight of the common mandate we have in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul is sent "to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power" (*1 Cor.* 1:17). The path to unity is to be found in the power of the cross.

The Gospel we proclaim is made tangible and relevant to us as we bear witness to the work of Jesus Christ in our own lives and the life of the Christian community.

QUESTIONS

- In what ways is the “gospel” you have received bound up with its cultural and historic transmission?
- Has that been an obstacle to unity?
- How would our fuller unity in Christ make us better witnesses to the gospel we have received?

PRAYER

Gracious God, you sent your son Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit to redeem your people. Unite us in our diversity, that we might affirm and proclaim together the good news of the life, death and resurrection of Christ for a world in need of his gospel. Amen.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014 are available on the website “Ecumenism in Canada” at the following address:

<http://ecumenism.net/music/>

The files listed there have been submitted in response to an open call to Canadian composers to submit music on the theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014 (Has Christ Been Divided? *1 Cor. 1:1-17*) or on the general theme of prayer for Christian unity.

Please download any or all of these pieces and use them in your prayer for Christian unity.

THE ECUMENICAL CONTEXT IN CANADA*

Among the many factors that influence Canadian religious experience is the sheer size of our country. Canada is the second largest country in the world, 40% of which is in the Arctic, north of

60° latitude. Stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the United States to the North Pole, Canada has ten provinces and three territories. We are surrounded by three oceans: the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic. Our only land border is with the United States and it has experienced almost 200 years of peace. Canada is a confederation of former British colonies, with a parliamentary form of government in a federal system of ten provinces and three territories. The union of the former colonial territories and independence from Britain occurred peacefully, and Canada remains a strong proponent of international engagement and cooperation. The vast distances between our cities have promoted both self-reliance and formation of distinct identities in the regions, but can also engender feelings of alienation or resentment.

Canada is known for its natural splendour: its mountains, forests, lakes and rivers, seas of wheat and three ocean shorelines. This is a land rich in agriculture and natural resources. Canada is also a land of diverse peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis,³ and many people who came to settle here from around the world. We have two official languages, French and English, yet many Canadians also celebrate the cultural and linguistic heritages of their ancestral homelands.

Jacques Cartier, the earliest French explorer to navigate the waters of the St. Lawrence River, was the first European to hear the indigenous people use the word “Canada,” which means “village.” The first settlers from France were mainly Roman Catholic but there were also a good number of Protestants, mainly Huguenot merchants. The religious tensions in France were not felt in New France with groups such as the Jesuits readily cooperating with Protestants. But sadly, the early period of collaboration gave way to discrimination and eventually only Catholics were officially admitted as settlers to New France. The original name of Montréal, “Ville Marie,” proclaimed these Catholic foundations.

In the mid-18th century, New France was ceded to Great Britain and the mainly Catholic French-Canadian families became subjects of the Anglican king of England. At a time when Britain still had laws discriminating against Catholics, religious freedom was granted in Canada by the Crown along with linguistic, educational, and cultural freedoms. Nevertheless, there were alternating periods of

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3. First Nations is a term used in Canada to acknowledge the presence of the indigenous peoples before the arrival of Europeans. The indigenous people in the Arctic call themselves Inuit. Métis is a term used to refer to people of both indigenous and French ancestry.

tolerance and of hardship under this regime. Until the 1950s, Catholic bishops oversaw most of the social institutions in the French communities. Meanwhile, the country grew and integrated waves of immigrants in the succeeding years. English, Scottish and Irish settlers began arriving at the end of the 18th century. Subsequent waves of immigration through the 19th century from Western and Eastern Europe have been joined more recently by large numbers of Latin American, African, Middle Eastern, and Asian peoples. In the 20th century, people from all parts of the world have come to Canada as immigrants and refugees, including significant numbers of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox from Eastern Europe and the Middle East whose Christian traditions enriched the Canadian landscape. Today, Canadian Christians worship in hundreds of languages and dialects and preserve distinctive elements of their cultures within a rich cultural and religious mosaic. Members of other religions have also settled in Canada, including Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Baha'i. Canadian cities rank among the most multicultural and multi-religious in the world. Earlier government policies promoting assimilation have been replaced by official multiculturalism since the 1970s. The country has been enriched by the contributions of citizens from diverse ethnic origins and we rejoice at their visible presence in the political, educational, health, arts, communications, business, and religious arenas.

For over a hundred and fifty years, some of the Christian denominations of Canada worked with the federal government to operate Indian Residential Schools, which took aboriginal children, often against the will of their parents, to be taught and assimilated into European culture. These schools, which sought to eradicate indigenous language and culture, were often sites of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. The largest churches in Canada – Roman Catholic, United, Anglican, and Presbyterian – were complicit and have recently apologized in a variety of ways. These churches now work closely together with aboriginal people in the search for justice, healing, truth, and reconciliation, most recently through a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission⁴, which is part of an overall holistic and comprehensive response to the Indian Residential School legacy.

From our earliest frontier experiences, Canadian churches have developed an instinct for cooperation in pastoral ministry. As early as the 1880s, Presbyterian, Methodist and

Congregationalist missions in Western Canada cooperated in allocating responsibility for mission. These led to union churches, which formed part of the impetus for the founding of the United Church of Canada in 1925, the world's first modern ecumenical church union. Proponents of this union saw it as a way to provide unified Christian leadership in the project of nation-building. Today, cooperation in ministry takes many other forms. Spiritual care ministry is shared through ecumenical chaplaincies in prisons, hospitals, universities, and the military. Most formal theological education across the country occurs in ecumenical schools or consortia. Other forms of cooperation have developed in congregational ministry, such as Ecumenical Shared Ministries where two or more denominations share buildings, clergy, or programs and engage in weekly common worship.

Twenty-four denominations come together in the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), one of the broadest and most inclusive church councils in the world, encompassing Anglican, Catholic, Reformed, Evangelical, Free Church, and Eastern and Oriental Orthodox traditions. The CCC, which uses a consensus model of decision-making, was founded in 1944 and its current denominational membership represents 85% of the Christians in Canada. It is of substantive note that the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is a full member of the CCC as are six Evangelical denominations. The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) brings together denominations, para-church ministries, and local congregations across the Evangelical and Pentecostal spectrum. A number of churches are members or observers in both the CCC and the EFC. These two bodies have been working more closely together in recent years.

Many Canadian churches are engaged in bilateral and multilateral relationships both at national and local levels. The most significant organic union has been the coming together of numerous Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist churches in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada, but many other forms of fellowship and communion have developed, including the Anglican-Lutheran *Waterloo Declaration* on full communion in 2001. The Canadian theological dialogues have contributed to local study and reflection and have shared their insights in the international dialogues.

One of the many innovative aspects of Canadian ecumenism is the formation of more than fifty inter-church coalitions for social justice beginning in the 1960s. Project Ploughshares, the Women's Inter-church Council of Canada, KAIROS-Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, the

4. See <http://trc.ca> for further information on the Indian Residential Schools and the settlement agreement.

Canadian Churches' Forum on Global Ministries, and others have assisted the churches and government in research and engagement with complex social issues.

The Canadian Centre for Ecumenism was founded by Fr. Irénée Beaubien in Montréal in 1963 in a very vibrant French and English milieu. It offers national resources such as *Ecumenism* magazine which is published in French and English editions and sent to subscribers in forty countries. The Centre's ongoing sensitivity to social movements is demonstrated in the new Green Church program which helps churches of all denominations to become better stewards of creation.

The calling of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s positively impacted the growth of ecumenism in Canada. Canadian ecumenical insight and experience are evident in the 1962 pastoral letter of Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger, archbishop of Montréal, titled *Chrétiens désunis (Disunited Christians)*. Léger did not call for the conversion of Protestants to Catholicism, but invited Catholics to pray for unity, particularly through the revival and conversion of the Catholic Church itself. In words that anticipated the Second Vatican Council, the cardinal acknowledged that "the concern for unity is becoming the main focus of contemporary Christianity" and that this important movement was "born under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit." In this reflection on the mystery of the unity and disunity of Christians, he stressed that all validly baptized persons "are inserted into Christ and become one body with him." He also noted that in light of the express will of Christ, disunity is "a scandal" and "evil." Thus, the cardinal urged his flock to pray for unity and to enter into dialogue with their fellow Christians, recognizing that the responsibilities for disunity are shared on both sides.

Having heard of the discrete monthly meetings between Protestant pastors and Catholic priests organized in Montréal by Fr. Beaubien beginning in 1958, the World Council of Churches chose to hold the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order in that city in 1963. This gathering of over 450 theologians from many different denominations and countries, warmly welcomed by a mainly Catholic population, constituted a major ecumenical happening. An evening of Christian fellowship held during the conference at the Université de Montréal brought together 1,500 Christians. At Expo 67, the World's Fair held in Montréal, Canada's main churches and the Vatican put aside the practice of separate kiosks to come together in one common "Christian Pavilion." In the history of World's Fairs,

this was the first time an ecumenical pavilion had been erected.

Other ecumenical groups emerged after the Second Vatican Council and in the decades that followed: the Atlantic Ecumenical Council (1966), the Quebec Ecumenical Network (1982), and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism (1984) are of particular note. The Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, founded in Saskatoon by Fr. Bernard de Margerie, is sponsored by seven denominations and has a focus on ecumenical education and formation, as well as serving as a national resource for Ecumenical Shared Ministries. Across the country, local ecumenism is promoted by ministerial groups in rural communities and urban neighbourhoods as well as by numerous councils of churches. Several ecumenical initiatives flourish throughout the country: shared celebrations of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, common formation in theological faculties, activities for peace and social justice, publications, etc. As an integral part of Church life in Canada, inter-church families live the challenges and blessings of the work for Christian unity and frequently provide leadership in ecumenical ministries.

A highlight of recent ecumenical life has been the growing involvement of Evangelical churches and pastors in local ecumenical gatherings, in ecumenical worship and dialogue, and in community ministries. Following upon a period of internal Evangelical rapprochement, we now see opportunities for new dialogue partnerships between the historic mainline Protestant churches, Evangelicals and Pentecostals, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, and Roman Catholics. Evangelicals in Canada are reaching out to other local churches seeking dialogue, opportunities to worship together, and cooperation in witness to our cities. Churches are facing a common reality in which they no longer have the social influence that they once enjoyed, and for many historic churches membership rolls are dramatically declining.

Differences within the Christian community over the priority or need to evangelize people of other living faiths have continued to be factors inhibiting cooperation. Nevertheless, Christian cooperation in inter-religious dialogue has increased in recent years and is frequently undertaken collaboratively between churches.

Has Christ been divided in Canada? It can certainly be said that there are divisions among Christians in Canada. The Christian community is divided over the role of women in both church and society as well as over ethical issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage. Many of these divisions cut across denominational lines.

However, in the face of new social issues some religious communities have begun to engage with their neighbours in new and positive ways. Indeed, Canadian history has seen periods of tension and rivalry, of life lived in ignorance and indifference to each other. Through it all, we have learned to take into consideration the values of others in order to live peaceably together. We continue to be divided by doctrine, polity, and practice, and to maintain our own religious solitudes, yet our pilgrimage towards unity continues under God's guidance.

The aspirations expressed in this prayer from the 1967 Canadian Centennial celebrations still reflect the modern Canadian character:

“Let us pray and live for a world where people of all nations will be united in thought, word and deed; help us to be transparently honest, pure, and loving in our relations with others in our world and every world. Let us pray for harmony and self-fulfilment for every soul in this nation and every nation; help us to work and live so that hunger, poverty, ignorance, and disease will disappear and thy kingdom will come indeed. Amen.”

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

THEMES 1968-2014

In 1968, materials jointly prepared by the WCC Faith and Order Commission and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity were first used.

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| 1968 | To the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:14)
Pour la louange de sa gloire | 1972 | I give you a new commandment (John 13:34)
Je vous donne un commandement nouveau (Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland) |
| 1969 | Called to freedom (Galatians 5:13)
Appelés à la liberté
(Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy) | 1973 | Lord, teach us to pray (Luke 11:1)
Seigneur, apprends-nous à prier
(Preparatory meeting held at the Abbey of Montserrat, Spain) |
| 1970 | We are fellow workers for God (1 Corinthians 3:9)
Nous sommes les coopérateurs de Dieu
(Preparatory meeting held at the Monastery of Niederaltaich, Federal Republic of Germany) | 1974 | That every tongue confess: Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:1-13)
Que tous confessent : Jésus-Christ est Seigneur
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland) |
| 1971 | ... and the communion of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:13)
... et la communion du Saint-Esprit | 1975 | God's purpose: all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-10)
La volonté du Père : Tout réunir sous un seul chef, le Christ
(Material from an Australian group. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland) |
| | | 1976 | We shall be like him (1 John 3:2) or, Called to become what we are
Appelés à devenir ce que nous sommes
(Material from Caribbean Conference of Churches. Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy) |
| | | 1977 | Enduring together in hope (Romans 5:1-5)
L'espérance ne déçoit pas
(Material from Lebanon, in the midst of a civil war. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland) |
| | | 1978 | No longer strangers (Ephesians 2:13-22)
Vous n'êtes plus des étrangers
(Material from an ecumenical team in Manchester, England) |
| | | 1979 | Serve one another to the glory of God (1 Peter 4:7-11)
Soyez au service les uns des autres pour la gloire de Dieu
(Material from Argentina. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland) |
| | | 1980 | Your kingdom come (Matthew 6:10)
Que ton règne vienne!
(Material from an ecumenical group in Berlin, German Democratic Republic. Preparatory meeting held in Milan) |

- 1981 One Spirit - many gifts - one body (1 Corinthians 12:3b-13)
Un seul esprit - des dons divers - un seul corps
(Material from Graymoor Fathers, USA. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1982 May all find their home in you, O Lord (Psalm 84)
Que tous trouvent leur demeure en Toi, Seigneur
(Material from Kenya. Preparatory meeting held in Milan, Italy)
- 1983 Jesus Christ - the Life of the World (1 John 1:1-4)
Jesus Christ - La Vie du Monde
(Material from an ecumenical group in Ireland. Preparatory meeting held in Céligny, Bossey, Switzerland)
- 1984 Called to be one through the cross of our Lord (1 Cor 2:2 and Col 1:20)
Appelés à l'unité par la croix de notre Seigneur
(Preparatory meeting held in Venice, Italy)
- 1985 From death to life with Christ (Ephesians 2:4-7)
De la mort à la vie avec le Christ
(Material from Jamaica. Preparatory meeting held in Grandchamp, Switzerland)
- 1986 You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:6-8)
Vous serez mes témoins
(Material from Yugoslavia. Preparatory meeting held in Yugoslavia, Slovenia)
- 1987 United in Christ - a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17-6:4a)
Unis dans le Christ - une nouvelle création
(Material from England. Preparatory meeting held in Taizé, France)
- 1988 The love of God casts out fear (1 John 4:18)
L'Amour de Dieu bannit la Crainte
(Material from Italy. Preparatory meeting held in Pinerolo, Italy)
- 1989 Building community: one body in Christ (Romans 12:5-6a)
Bâtir la communauté : Un seul corps en Christ
(Material from Canada. Preparatory meeting held in Whaley Bridge, England)
- 1990 That they all may be one ... That the world may believe (John 17)
Que tous soient un ... Afin que le monde croie
(Material from Spain. Preparatory meeting held in Madrid, Spain)
- 1991 Praise the Lord, all you nations! (Psalm 117 and Romans 15:5-13)
Nations, louez toutes le Seigneur
(Material from Germany. Preparatory meeting held in Rotenburg an der Fulda, Federal Republic of Germany)
- 1992 I am with you always ... Go, therefore (Matthew 28:16-20)
Je suis avec vous ... allez donc
(Material from Belgium. Preparatory meeting held in Bruges, Belgium)
- 1993 Bearing the fruit of the Spirit for Christian unity (Galatians 5:22-23)
Pour l'unité : laisser mûrir en nous les fruits de l'Esprit
(Material from Zaire. Preparatory meeting held near Zurich, Switzerland)
- 1994 The household of God: called to be one in heart and mind (Acts 4:23-37)
La maison de Dieu: Appelés à être un dans le cœur et dans l'Esprit
(Material from Ireland. Preparatory meeting held in Dublin, Republic of Ireland)
- 1995 Koinonia: communion in God and with one another (John 15:1-17)
La koinonia : communion en Dieu et les uns avec les autres
(Material from Faith and Order. Preparatory meeting held in Bristol, England)
- 1996 Behold, I stand at the door and knock (Revelation 3:14-22)
Je me tiens à la porte et je frappe
(Material from Portugal. Preparatory meeting held in Lisbon, Portugal)
- 1997 We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20)
Au nom du Christ, laissez-vous réconcilier avec Dieu
(Material from Nordic Ecumenical Council. Preparatory meeting held in Stockholm, Sweden)
- 1998 The Spirit helps us in our weakness (Romans 8:14-27)

- L'Esprit aussi vient en aide à notre faiblesse
(Material from France. Preparatory meeting held in Paris, France)
- 1999 He will dwell with them as their God, they will be his peoples (Revelation 21:1-7)
Dieu demeurera avec eux. Ils seront ses peuples et lui sera le Dieu qui est avec eux
(Material from Malaysia. Preparatory meeting held in Monastery of Bose, Italy)
- 2000 Blessed be God who has blessed us in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14)
Béni soit Dieu, qui nous a bénis en Christ
(Material from the Middle East Council of Churches. Preparatory meeting held at La Verna, Italy)
- 2001 I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life (John 14:1-6)
Je suis le chemin, et la vérité et la vie
(Material from Romania. Preparatory meeting held at Vulcan, Romania)
- 2002 For with you is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:5-9)
Car chez toi est la fontaine de la vie (Psalm 35, 6-10)
(Material from CEEC and CEC. Preparatory meeting near Augsburg, Germany)
- 2003 We have this treasure in clay jars (2 Corinthians 4:4-18)
Car nous avons ce trésor dans des vases d'argile
(Material from churches in Argentina. Preparatory meeting at Los Rubios, Spain)
- 2004 My peace I give to you (John 14:23-31; John 14:27)
Je vous donne ma paix
(Material from Aleppo, Syria. Preparatory meeting in Palermo, Sicily)
- 2005 Christ, the one foundation of the church (1 Corinthians 3:1-23)
Le Christ, unique fondement de l'Eglise
(Material from Slovakia. Preparatory meeting in Piestaň, Slovakia)
- 2006 Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them (Matthew 18:18-20)
Là où deux ou trois se trouvent réunis en mon nom, je suis au milieu d'eux.
- (Material from Ireland. Preparatory meeting held in Prosperous, Co. Kildare, Ireland)
- 2007 He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak (Mark 7:31-37)
Il fait entendre les sourds et parler les muets
(Material from South Africa. Preparatory meeting held in Faverges, France)
- 2008 Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:(12a) 13b-18)
Priez sans cesse
(Material from USA. Preparatory meeting held in Graymoor, Garrison, USA)
- 2009 That they may become one in your hand (Ezekiel 37:15-28)
Ils seront unis dans ta main
(Material from Korea. Preparatory meeting held in Marseilles, France)
- 2010 You are witnesses of these things (Luke 24:48)
De tout cela, c'est vous qui êtes les témoins
(Material from Scotland. Preparatory meeting held in Glasgow, Scotland)
- 2011 One in the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer (cf. Acts 2:42)
Unis dans l'enseignement des apôtres, la communion fraternelle, la fraction du pain et la prière
(Material from Jerusalem. Preparatory meeting held in Saydnaya, Syria)
- 2012 We will all be Changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-58)
Tous, nous serons transformés par la victoire de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ
(Material from Poland. Preparatory meeting held in Warsaw, Poland)
- 2013 What does God require of us? (Cf. Mi 6, 6-8)
Que nous demande le Seigneur ?
(Material from India. Preparatory meeting held in Bangalore, India)
- 2013 Has Christ been divided ? (1 Corinthians 1:1-17)
Le Christ est-il divisé ?
(Material from Canada. Preparatory meeting held in Montréal, Canada)

KEY DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

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| <p>c. 1740 In Scotland a Pentecostal movement arose, with North American links, whose revivalist message included prayers for and with all churches.</p> <p>1820 The Rev. James Haldane Stewart publishes “Hints for the General Union of Christians for the Outpouring of the Spirit”.</p> <p>1840 The Rev. Ignatius Spencer, a convert to Roman Catholicism, suggests a ‘Union of Prayer for Unity’.</p> <p>1867 The First Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops emphasizes prayer for unity in the Preamble to its Resolutions.</p> <p>1894 Pope Leo XIII encourages the practice of a Prayer Octave for Unity in the context of Pentecost.</p> <p>1908 First observance of the ‘Church Unity Octave’ initiated by the Rev. Paul Wattson.</p> <p>1926 The Faith and Order movement begins publishing “Suggestions for an Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity”.</p> <p>1935 Abbé Paul Couturier of France advocates the ‘Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity’ on the inclusive basis of prayer for “the unity Christ wills by the means he wills”.</p> <p>1958 Unité Chrétienne (Lyons, France) and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches begin co-operative preparation of materials for the Week of Prayer.</p> <p>1964 In Jerusalem, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I prayed together Jesus’ prayer “that they all may be one” (John 17).</p> <p>1964 The Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II emphasizes that prayer is the soul of the ecumenical movement and encourages observance of the Week of Prayer.</p> <p>1966 The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) begin official</p> | <p>joint preparation of the Week of Prayer material.</p> <p>1968 First official use of Week of Prayer material prepared jointly by Faith and Order and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity).</p> <p>1975 First use of Week of Prayer material based on a draft text prepared by a local ecumenical group. An Australian group was the first to take up this plan in preparing the 1975 initial draft.</p> <p>1988 Week of Prayer materials were used in the inaugural worship for The Christian Federation of Malaysia, which links the major Christian groupings in that country.</p> <p>1994 International group preparing text for 1996 included representatives from YMCA and YWCA.</p> <p>2004 Agreement reached that resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity be jointly published and produced in the same format by Faith and Order (WCC) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (Catholic Church).</p> <p>2008 Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. (Its predecessor, the Church Unity Octave, was first observed in 1908).</p> |
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