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VATICAN PRESS

POPE BENEDICT XVI AND ECUMENISM

June-December, 2009

ADDRESS TO THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE
CZECH REPUBLIC

27 September 2009

On Sunday September 27, after presiding at Holy Mass and praying the Angelus in Brno, the Holy Father visited the Archbishop's Palace of Prague in the afternoon, where he was welcomed by Cardinal Miloslav Vlk, Archbishop of Prague. The Pope was escorted by Cardinal Vlk to the Throne Room where he was awaited by representatives of the Ecumenical Council of the Czech Republic.

We publish here below the address delivered by the Pope at the ecumenical meeting.

*Dear Cardinals,
Your Excellencies,
Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

I am grateful to Almighty God for the opportunity to meet with you who are here representing the various Christian communities of this land. I thank Doctor Černý, President of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Czech Republic, for the kind words of welcome which he has addressed to me on your behalf.

My dear friends, Europe continues to undergo many changes. It is hard to believe that only two decades have passed since the collapse of former regimes gave way to a difficult but productive transition towards more participatory political structures. During this period, Christians joined together with others of good will in helping to rebuild a just political order, and they continue to engage in dialogue today in order to pave new ways towards mutual understanding, cooperation for peace and the advancement of the common good.

Nevertheless, attempts to marginalize the influence of Christianity upon public life — sometimes under the pretext that its teachings are detrimental to the well-being of society — are emerging in new forms. This phenomenon gives us pause to reflect. As I suggested in my Encyclical on Christian hope, the artificial separation of the Gospel from intellectual and public life should prompt us to engage in a mutual “self-critique of modernity” and “self-critique of modern Christianity”, specifically with regard to the hope each of them can offer mankind

(cf. *Spe Salvi*, 22). We may ask ourselves, what does the Gospel have to say to the Czech Republic and indeed all of Europe today in a period marked by proliferating world views?

Christianity has much to offer on the practical and ethical level, for the Gospel never ceases to inspire men and women to place themselves at the service of their brothers and sisters. Few would dispute this. Yet those who fix their gaze upon Jesus of Nazareth with eyes of faith know that God offers a deeper reality which is nonetheless inseparable from the “economy” of charity at work in this world (cf. *Caritas in Veritate*, 2): He offers *salvation*.

The term is replete with connotations, yet it expresses something fundamental and universal about the human yearning for well-being and wholeness. It alludes to the ardent desire for reconciliation and communion that wells up spontaneously in the depths of the human spirit. It is the central truth of the Gospel and the goal to which every effort of evangelization and pastoral care is directed. And it is the criterion to which Christians constantly redirect their focus as they endeavour to heal the wounds of past divisions. To this end — as Doctor Černý has noted — the Holy See was pleased to host an International Symposium in 1999 on Jan Hus to facilitate a discussion of the complex and turbulent religious history in this country and in Europe more generally (cf. Pope John Paul II, *Address to the International Symposium on John Hus*, 1999). I pray that such ecumenical initiatives will yield fruit not only in the pursuit of Christian unity, but for the good of all European society.

We take confidence in knowing that the Church's proclamation of salvation in Christ Jesus is ever ancient and ever new, steeped in the wisdom of the past and brimming with hope for the future. As Europe listens to the story of Christianity, she hears her own. Her notions of justice, freedom and social responsibility, together with the cultural and legal institutions established to preserve these ideas and hand them on to future generations, are shaped by her Christian inheritance. Indeed, her memory of the past animates her aspirations for the future.

This is why, in fact, Christians draw upon the example of figures such as Saint Adalbert and Saint Agnes of Bohemia. Their commitment to spreading the Gospel was motivated by the conviction that Christians should not cower in fear of the world but rather confidently share the treasury of truths entrusted to them. Likewise Christians today, opening themselves to present realities and affirming all that is good in society, must have the courage to invite men and women to the radical conversion that ensues upon an encounter with Christ and ushers in a new life of grace.

* 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 *Osservatore Romano*, this will be noted. When translation is made by the *Information Service* it is indicated by the abbreviation: *IS*.

From this perspective, we understand more clearly why Christians are obliged to join others in reminding Europe of her roots. It is not because these roots have long since withered. On the contrary! It is because they continue — in subtle but nonetheless fruitful ways — to supply the continent with the spiritual and moral sustenance that allows her to enter into meaningful dialogue with people from other cultures and religions. Precisely because the Gospel is not an ideology, it does not presume to lock evolving socio-political realities into rigid schemas. Rather, it transcends the vicissitudes of this world and casts new light on the dignity of the human person in every age. Dear friends, let us ask the Lord to implant within us a spirit of courage to share the timeless saving truths which have shaped, and will continue to shape, the social and cultural progress of this continent.

The salvation wrought by Jesus suffering, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven not only transforms us who believe in him, but urges us to share this Good News with others. Enlightened by the Spirit's gifts of knowledge, wisdom and understanding (cf. *Is* 11:1-2; *Ex* 35:31), may our capacity to grasp the truth taught by Jesus Christ impel us to work tirelessly for the unity he desires for all his children reborn through Baptism, and indeed for the whole human race.

With these sentiments, and with fraternal affection for you and the members of your respective communities, I express my deep thanks to you and commend you to Almighty God, who is our fortress, our stronghold and our deliverer (cf. *Ps* 144:2). Amen.

ORE, 30 September 2009

MESSAGE TO HIS HOLINESS KAREKIN II FOR THE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ELECTION AND ENTHRONEMENT

*To His Holiness Karekin II
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians*

*"Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our
Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal 1:3)*

On the joyful occasion of the tenth anniversary of your election and enthronement as Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, I extend to Your Holiness my warm fraternal greetings.

I give thanks to God for the blessings he has bestowed on the Armenian Apostolic Church through Your Holiness's ministry. I also know of your personal commitment to dialogue, cooperation and friendship between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Catholic Church, clearly expressed by the various meetings that have taken place recently between Your Holiness and the Successor of Peter. I pray that the good relations that have been established between us may continue to grow in the years ahead.

The recovery of freedom for the Church in Armenia towards the end of the last century brought joy to Christians throughout the world. The immense task of rebuilding the ecclesial community fell upon Your Holiness's shoulders. What has already been achieved, in such a short time, is truly remarkable: new initiatives have flourished for the Christian education of the

young, for the training of clergy, the creation of new parishes, the building of new churches and community centres, as well as the promotion of Christian values in the social and cultural life of the nation.

Your Holiness, I implore Almighty God that, through the intercession of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, we may be ever more closely united in a holy bond of Christian faith, hope and love. On this significant anniversary, I pray that the blessings of the Triune God may rest upon Your Holiness: may the love of God the Father enfold you, the wisdom of the Son enlighten you and the fire of the Holy Spirit inspire you.

With sentiments of esteem, I assure you of my fraternal affection in the Lord.

From the Vatican, 27 October 2009

BENEDICT XVI

ORE, 28 October 2009

ANGELUS

1 November 2009

On Sunday November 1st, the Holy Father introduced the recitation of the Angelus with the faithful gathered in St Peter's Square for the Solemnity of All Saints.

After the Angelus, the Pope recalled the Signing of the Joint Declaration between Catholics and Lutherans, in Germany.

Exactly 10 years have passed since high-ranking representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church signed the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, on 31 October 1999, in Augsburg. That statement was also adhered to in 2006 by the World Methodist Council.

The Document attested to a consensus between Lutherans and Catholics on the fundamental truths of the doctrine of justification, truths which lead us to the heart of the Gospel itself and to the essential questions of our life.

We are accepted and redeemed by God; our existence is inscribed on the horizon of grace; it is guided by a merciful God, who pardons our sins and calls us to new life in the footsteps of his Son; we live by the grace of God and we are called to respond to his gift; all this frees us from fear and instils hope and courage in a world full of uncertainty, uneasiness, and suffering.

On the day that the *Joint Declaration* was signed, the Servant of God John Paul II defined it as "a milestone on the difficult path to re-establishing full unity among Christians" (*Angelus*, 31 October 1999).

Thus, this anniversary is an occasion to remember the truth about the justification of man, to which we bear common witness, reuniting us in ecumenical celebration that we may look more deeply into this doctrine and others that are the object of the ecumenical dialogue.

I hope from my heart that this important anniversary may contribute to further progress on our journey towards the full and visible unity of all the disciples of Christ.

ORE, 4 November 2009

CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF CARDINAL JOHANNES WILLEBRANDS

1909-2009

In commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Cardinal Johannes Willebrands (1909-2009), the second President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, an academic colloquium was organized by the Pontifical Council at the Pontifical Gregorian University on 19 November 2009.

Cardinal Willebrands dedicated more than half a century to promoting ecumenism and interreligious dialogue. In 1952 he established the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions, with the purpose of keeping abreast with the ecumenical discussions at the World Council of Churches in Geneva. During the Second Vatican Council, he was the first Secretary of the Secretariat for the Unity of Christians, of which he became the second President in 1969, succeeding Cardinal Augustin Bea. For almost thirty years Cardinal Willebrands influenced the vision, the spirit and the methodology of Catholic ecumenism in the post-conciliar period. He also made a remarkable contribution to the promotion of Catholic-Jewish relations and was a leading figure in the creation, within the Secretariat, of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, established in 1974.

On the occasion of this centenary, an ecumenical conference was held in Utrecht, from 2 - 5 September 2009. The Conference was organised in a partnership between the Willebrands Archive of Utrecht, the Faculty of Catholic Theology (Utrecht-Tilburg) and the Centre for Ecumenical Research of the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Leuven. The key speaker was Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity, who spoke about the heritage of Cardinal Willebrands and the future of ecumenism. Other prominent speakers were Professor Anton Houtepen, Professor Günther Gassmann, Professor Mauro Velati, Professor Adelbert Denaux and the Metropolitan of Pergamon Ioannis Zizioulas. The Conference concluded with an ecumenical celebration in the Cathedral of Utrecht.

Likewise, an academic colloquium was held in Rome, on 19 November 2009, at the Gregorian University. A range of lectures traced the contributions of Cardinal Willebrands to the ecumenical movement. Father William Henn, OFM, spoke of the commitment of Cardinal Willebrands to relations between Rome and the World Council of Churches. Father Michel Van Parys, OSB, spoke about his relations with Churches of the East. Father James Puglisi, SA spoke about the Churches and Ecclesial Communities in the West. Msgr. Pier Francesco Fumagalli spoke about his relationship with Judaism. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, gave an ecumenical testimony. Professor Jared Wicks, SJ, spoke of Cardinal Willebrands as the guiding inspiration in the development of Catholic ecumenical theology, and lastly Cardinal Walter Kasper spoke about the legacy of Cardinal Willebrands and the future of ecumenism.

We publish below the speeches of Cardinal Kasper and Dr Williams.

THE LEGACY OF CARDINAL JOHANNES WILLEBRANDS AND THE FUTURE OF ECUMENISM

Cardinal Walter Kasper

It is a great joy for me to speak about Cardinal Willebrands in concluding this symposium. Cardinal Johannes Willebrands was one of the important figures in the history of the Church in the last century. He was one of those giants on whose shoulders we stand as far as ecumenism as well as religious relations with the Jews are concerned. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth we remember him with profound gratitude, as a loving man and a distinguished theologian.

My reflection will cover three aspects. First of all I wish to recall Cardinal Willebrands' important contribution during his ecumenical career. I will then focus on the changed situation after Cardinal Willebrands' retirement. I will conclude with a glance at the future, and the following question: How can we make the most of Cardinal Willebrands' rich legacy and inspiration in our current situation?

I. CARDINAL WILLEBRANDS' LIFE AND WORK

Johannes Willebrands embarked on his ecumenical commitment during and (especially) after the second world war. Europe was despirited both from a material and a moral point of view. The era of Eurocentrism was over. The totalitarian ideologies and utopias of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries have failed and have left the world as a field of ruins with millions of dead people. The need for a new direction was strongly felt. The foundations for this new direction were laid in the inter-war period by the liturgical movement, the biblical movement, the new role that lay people had started playing in the Church, the beginning of the ecumenical movement, as well as the new interest in patristic sources. After the war, it was clear that no way forward was possible on the basis of confessional separation and conflict; as well, after the atrocities of the Shoah commitment to dialogue and new relations with Jews became imperative. Christians had to speak with one voice in the process of the reconstruction of a new Europe and in the building of a new worldwide order of peace. Thus they rediscovered the importance of

Jesus' will on the eve of his death: "that they all may be one" (*John* 17:21).

Johannes Willebrands was not the only person — or the first one — to promote the unity and reconciliation of all Christians well before the Second Vatican Council, in a time when ecumenism was still a difficult and thorny question in the Catholic Church. Before him and together with him many shared the same concern in France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United States. Already in 1949 Pope Pius XII referred to the ecumenical movement as an impulse of the Holy Spirit — a concept that was later deepened and developed by the Second Vatican Council, which spoke of the "inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit" (UR 1; 4).

However, through the "Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions" it was Johannes Willebrands who, together with Frans Thijssen, built contacts and networks, travelled throughout Europe, gathering distinguished names in the theological field. He had contacts with the then P. Augustine Bea and the first General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), William Visser't Hooft, with whom a true friendship soon developed. Already before the Council, the "Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions" had actively participated in the work of the WCC; according to Visser't Hooft, this contribution had far-reaching consequences for the ecumenical movement.

Thus Willebrands managed to create a network that proved very useful when in 1960 Pope John XXIII set up the Secretariat for Christian Unity. John XXIII was indeed able to recognise the signs of the time — one can even say, the signs of the Holy Spirit in that time. It was he who decided that the theme of the Council announced on 25th Johannesuary 1959 should be the Unity of all Christians. It was he who, following the suggestion of Archbishop Lorenz Jäger (Paderborn), founded the Secretariat for Christian Unity in 1960, thus giving an institutional channel to the ecumenical movement in the Catholic Church at the level of the universal Church.

As its first Secretary, Willebrands helped shape the newly founded Secretariat which was presided initially by Cardinal Augustin Bea and then by Willebrands himself from 1969 until his retirement in 1989. He had the gift of finding and inspiring the right co-workers. To mention just a few, I recall here Jerome Hamer, Charles Moeller, Pierre Duprey, who worked for the Secretariat — later the Council — for Christian Unity for 36 years, from 1963 till 1999. Co-workers in a wider sense were Yves Congar, Gustave Thils, Balthasar Fisher, Karl Rahner, Johannes Feier, Jean Corbon, Emmanuel Lanne, Raymond Brown and others. Among the women, we should mention Corinna de Martini and Josette Kersters. We are deeply grateful to all the men and women who were there in those early years.

Regular discussions with the ecumenical observers had taken place during the Second Vatican Council at the Foyer Unitas near Piazza Navona under the presidency of the then Bishop Willebrands. These observers were able to play an active role,

which proved extremely fruitful for the Council itself and for its achievements. The scope and amount of work that was accomplished is amazing. It includes not only the Decree on Ecumenism "*Unitatis redintegratio*", but also the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, the Declaration on Judaism and on Religious freedom. These three documents had given rise to rather heated debates and, due to bitter opposition, had been approved only during the last session of the Council. In that context, Willebrands was always capable of finding the right balance between his own ecumenical vision and what was needed in order to achieve a wider consensus within the Council. He had both cardinal virtues: prudence and fortitude.

In this conference, I will focus only on the Decree on Ecumenism "*Unitatis redintegratio*". Its approval on 21st November 1964 by an overwhelming majority with only 11 contrary votes was the result of the decisive role played by Cardinal Bea as well as the work accomplished by Bishop Johannes Willebrands.

After the negative approach of Pope Pius XI's Encyclical Letter "*Mortalium animos*" (1928) and the 1948 Monitum of the then Holy Office, this Decree provided a new direction and represented a true breakthrough for the Church, which is sometimes much too easily taken for granted today. The Decree spoke of the other Christians not in terms of anathema, but in terms of dialogue. Dialogue was not — and is not — intended to be an attempt to reach a diluted diplomatic compromise. "*Unitatis redintegratio*" rightly points out that dialogue presupposes conversion, renewal and reform. Dialogue is always dialogue in truth and in love. Dialogue is therefore a deep process both on a spiritual and an ecclesial level.

Understood in this spirit, the Decree on Ecumenism represents the end of the Counter-Reformation and the beginning of a new era in the relations with the divided Churches and Church Communion, an era that has already brought many positive fruits but requires an ongoing renewal, even now, 45 years after the proclamation of "*Unitatis redintegratio*". However, it was not meant as a break with the wider Tradition of the Church. On the contrary, it was based — as especially Cardinal Bea emphasised — on the recognition of the one common baptism (*unum baptisma*) binding all Christians in a deep — though imperfect — communion with Jesus Christ and the Church.

The theological foundations of the Decree on Ecumenism are to be found in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church "*Lumen gentium*" — especially in paragraphs 8 and 15 — which was approved on the same day. Thus "*Unitatis redintegratio*" was based on, developed and brought to concrete fulfilment the content of "*Lumen gentium*". Pope Paul VI, when he solemnly proclaimed the Decree on Ecumenism, explained that it clarified and complemented the Dogmatic Constitution. These words should be remembered by all those who question the binding character of the theological affirmations of "*Unitatis redintegratio*".

When we today reflect on the discussions and

debates of that time, we sense the momentum and the magic of a new beginning. It was a charismatic breakthrough, accompanied by a great hope. One senses the amazement of the secular world and other Christians in the face of what the Holy Spirit had accomplished before their eyes, when a Church, considered to be unyielding in many of its positions, all of a sudden proved fresh and lively. And one senses the joy felt by the Catholics who had rediscovered other Christians as their brothers and sisters.

It is obvious that this breakthrough did not occur overnight. Its way had been paved by the prayer movement which had started in different continents and churches independently in the 18th century and had resulted in the World Day of Prayer for Christian Unity — already at the time of Pope Leo XIII. This breakthrough had also been prepared by important theologians such as Johann Adam Möhler and John Henry Newman, who are seen now as true ecumenical pioneers. Extremely significant for the Second Vatican Council were also the events that had occurred outside the Catholic world after the Conference on Mission held in 1910 in Edinburgh and the creation of the World Council of Churches in 1948. This impetus of the Holy Spirit through the prayer of many faithful and the reflection of individual theologians became finally clear and took concrete shape in the Catholic Church. People like Johannes Willebrands were receptive and long-sighted enough to hear the call of the Spirit and to bravely become its instrument.

One of the first fruits of Willebrands' efforts was his opportunity to publicly present the "Common Declaration" of Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras on the eve of the official conclusion of the Council on 7th December 1965. The reading was accompanied by a long ovation. The Common Declaration expressed regret for the mutual excommunications of 1054, which were to be cancelled from the memory of the Church, and pledged to promote full communion between the two Churches.

After the Council, Willebrands' task was to translate the Council's thought into reality. Again, we can only marvel how much was to be accomplished in only 25 years. The Joint Working Group with the World Council of Churches had already been created during the Council. A series of dialogues with the Christian World Communions was subsequently undertaken: first with the Churches of the Reformed Tradition of the 16th century, namely with the Lutherans and Methodists in 1967, and with the Anglicans and Reformed in 1970, and later with the classical Pentecostals in 1972, with the Evangelicals and Disciples of Christ in 1977 and with the Baptists in 1984. In particular, we can call to mind the moving meeting between Pope Paul VI and the Anglican Primate, Archbishop Ramsey, in 1966 in Rome, when the Pope as an unexpected sign put his own bishop's ring on the Primate's finger.

Contacts with the Orthodox Churches developed initially through a series of visits to Constantinople,

Greece, Romania and Russia leading to the start of the official dialogue in Patmos and Rhodes in 1980, with Willebrands as Co-President on the Catholic side. Important contacts were also established with the Eastern Orthodox Churches: with the Patriarch/Pope Shenouda of the Coptic Church, with Catholicos Karekin II of the Armenian Church, and with Patriarch Ignatius Zakka II of the Syrian Orthodox Church. Also thanks to the work of "Pro-Oriente", the institution founded in Vienna by Cardinal Franz König, these contacts led to the Christological declarations which resolved a 1500 year old problem underlying church division. Finally, it is worth mentioning the Catholic participation in the "Faith and Order" Commission whose most important document remains the Lima Declaration on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" (1982).

Johannes Willebrands was not only the organiser and moderator of these initiatives: he gave his personal imprint to all of them. Our current symposium has already highlighted his invaluable commitment and contribution. This is why I will mention only briefly two points.

My first reflection: God is at work through people also in the ecumenical field. Johannes Willebrands' personality was crucial especially in that initial phase. He had many qualities: sensitivity and discernment in judging people and situations; great capacity to communicate; the gift of nurturing true friendships. All this is fundamental for ecumenical dialogue since ecumenism means overcoming suspicion and building trust; it also means creating friendships. I have already mentioned Johannes Willebrands' capacity for both prudence and courage, namely the gift to sensitively evaluate a situation. In Willebrands we also find the right balance between loyalty and flexibility, between passionate eagerness for unity and patience, which does not try to force things but let them grow and mature. Not least, Johannes Willebrands had an exceptionally fine sense of humour. Humour is often the only way of facing small-minded and sheepish attitudes. Humour is a form of sovereignty that is ultimately founded on prayer. In the end, the question is not "my" church, "my" ecumenism, but the Church of Christ and the ecumenism that is desired by God, who sometimes is probably smiling with irony at our small human dealings.

I wish to add a second point. Cardinal Willebrands based his ecumenical work also on theological reflection, which was shaped by John Henry Newman's concrete analysis of faith. In April 1990, a few months after leaving the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, he gave an address in Toronto entitled "The Place of Theology in the Ecumenical Movement: Its Contribution and its Limits". He said: "most of the great architects of ecumenism have been theologians". Willebrands' fundamental themes include: the interesting theses of the different typoi of the Church, communion as the main and central idea of the ecumenical movement, the importance of reception for the Church and for ecumenism, the correct interpretation of the expression

“subsistit in” which contains *in nuce* the whole ecumenical problem, and the fundamental importance of spiritual ecumenism. All these questions still have a deep impact on our work today and will mark it also in the future.

Thus Cardinal Willebrands has left us a great legacy; he has also set tasks for us that need to be carried out with renewed energy. We thank God for having given us, in a decisive time of the history of our Church, the theologian, Bishop and Cardinal Johannes Willebrands with all his personal and spiritual gifts. We will be always deeply grateful.

II. THE CHANGES OF THE LAST 20 YEARS

It suffices to mention the atmosphere and the achievements of the work accomplished in those golden years of the Secretariat for Christian Unity to realize immediately how much the world as well as the situation in the Church and ecumenism have deeply changed since the day — in 1989 — when the 80 year old Cardinal Willebrands went into a much deserved retirement from the presidency of the Council for Christian Unity.

1989 is the year of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the division of the world into two cold war blocs. Ecumenism was experiencing a new situation too: it was in expectation of a great new hope, a hope that unfortunately has not yet been fulfilled. 1989 marks the year of freedom for the Churches in Eastern Europe after a long period (40 or even 70 years) of severe repression and persecution. One would assume that this would have made the dialogue easier. But things did not go that way. The freshly regained freedom in the East meant freedom also for the Catholic Eastern Churches. They had much suffered under communist rule and could now resurface from illegality to public life. However, on the Orthodox side this led to the reappearance of the old deep-rooted fears and prejudices concerning proselytism and uniatism.

During the first session of the Joint Commission after the fall of the Berlin Wall that took place in Freising in June 1990, the new President of the Council for Christian Unity, Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, had a difficult “baptism of fire”. In 1993 in Balamand it was possible to find a practical solution to the problem of so-called uniatism. However, there was no unanimous agreement among the Orthodox. When in 2000 in Baltimore the Commission tried to deal with this thorny issue again, this led to a fiasco and a *de facto* failure of the dialogue. Thus the Jubilee of the year 2000 which, according to the aspirations of Pope John Paul II, should have brought decisive positive developments especially with the Eastern Churches, was marked on the contrary by crisis and division in ecumenical relations.

A new start was possible only after many patient discussions, with the meetings of Belgrade in 2006 and Ravenna in 2007, also thanks to the strong support of the Ecumenical Patriarch. On the Orthodox side, Metropolitan John Zizioulas played a crucial

role. It is interesting to note that already Cardinal Willebrands had stressed the importance of the famous canon 34 of the Apostolic Constitution, the same canon that became fundamental for the discussions in Ravenna. This canon proved to be the best instrument for making progress on the question of the close relation between synodality and primacy also on the universal level. However the discussions during the last meeting of the session held in Cyprus last October — this time again with the participation of the delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church — showed that further progress in this crucial matter no doubt is possible but only in small and patient steps.

Similarly, it was possible to resume the dialogue with the Eastern Orthodox Churches in 2003. This dialogue had come to a standstill after its encouraging initial phase in the 80s and 90s. As far as ecclesiology is concerned, it was for me personally almost a miracle that in a common document last year we were able to state that we have been able to preserve the common apostolic structure despite 1500 years of division.

However, despite this gratifying progress, the current situation is clearly very different from the initial phase of dialogue, for which Cardinal Willebrands was responsible. The initial enthusiasm has disappeared, the atmosphere has become more sober. Even if we do not doubt the power of the Holy Spirit, it is realistic to expect that the way ahead remains long. It will take some time in the Eastern Churches to overcome more intractable prejudices and fears and to achieve a wider reception of the ecumenical idea and its results. But efforts should be made not only by the Orthodox Churches. Conversion, renewal and reform are needed on all sides. Concerning the question of primacy and synodality, the Catholic Church should reflect further and define in more concrete terms the shape of full communion with the Petrine ministry, in such a way that it does not entail mutual absorption or fusion (Enc. *Slavorum apostoli*, 1985, 27).

The dialogues with the Churches of the Reformed tradition were also influenced by the changes that occurred after 1989. In 1999 we experienced an unprecedented success in our bilateral dialogues with the signing of the *Common Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* with the Lutheran World Federation. This was a true milestone. In the meantime, also the Methodist World Alliance joined this Declaration in 2005 in Seoul. Only some weeks ago we celebrated in Augsburg the 10th anniversary of this important achievement, which is also part of Cardinal Willebrands’ legacy.

However, the Jubilee of the year 2000 marked paradoxically a difficult time also for the relations with the Churches of the Reformed tradition. In that year, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith published texts, among which the well-known Declaration “*Dominus Iesus*” which provided an interpretation of the “subsistit in” present in “*Lumen gentium*” 8 and “*Unitatis reintegratio*”. Already the main author of “*Lumen gentium*”, the Belgian the-

ologian Gérald Philips, had reflected that this “substitutit in” contained *in nuce* the whole ecumenical problem and that much ink would flow about it in the future.

Undoubtedly, the Declaration “Dominus Jesus” correctly explains Catholic doctrine and ecclesiology, because as a matter of fact, the different sides do not mean exactly the same thing when they speak of Church. But unfortunately the correct content of “Dominus Jesus” under the ecumenical aspect was expressed in a less sensitive form. This caused tensions that are still present today and that have made our relations much colder. Many question whether the bilateral dialogues are facing now a crisis or even a dead end.

There have been developments also on the Protestant side that have not made dialogues easier. The post-modern mentality, which spread quickly after 1989 especially in Western Europe and is often characterised by phenomena such as relativism and pluralism, has had a clear impact also on ecumenism. The fundamental problem within the new post-modern context became the loss of a common goal of the ecumenical movement. The idea of visible unity faded and people became sceptical towards the so-called “ecumenism of consensus”. Some want to declare its end; some blame it for blurring identities. The search for unity and communion in truth was often substituted by preservation of one’s own confessional and cultural identity and its mutual recognition. So Protestants often revert to an “ecumenism of profile” or “ecumenism of difference”. Others consider theological ecumenism irrelevant, since it focuses on questions that seem to be uninteresting for the so-called basis.

Within the new context, where we are confronted with a loss of the idea of unity in truth, the Churches in the tradition of the Reformation themselves have become more pluralistic in many cases. This tendency concerns Church doctrine and ministry, as well as — increasingly — ethical questions. As we sadly see in the Anglican Communion and, more recently, in some Lutheran Churches, this can easily lead to an inner pluralism and even divisions. This is why we are facing today, on the one hand, some philo-catholic groups within these Churches and, on the other, more and more splinter groups and confessional alliances, so-called United Churches, in which the confessional identity of each member Church is not clear any more, so that we often deal with dialogue partners whose confessional identity is not easily recognisable.

At the same time the Evangelicals have grown worldwide, as well as the Charismatic and Pentecostal movements together with the so-called Independent Churches. This often is called the third wave in the history of Christianity, after the Churches of the first millennium and the Church Communions born from the Reformation of the 16th century. This third wave does not yet have clear contours, and its lack of clear self-definition represents for us a new difficult challenge.

So the great enthusiastic common vision of the past is now absent: this is a lack under which the World Council of Churches suffers as well. Public opinion has started speaking of a stagnation in ecumenism or of an ecumenical winter. Cardinal Willebrands was long-sighted enough to predict some disenchantment after the initial enthusiasm. He warned against believing that Christian unity was achievable in only a few years. Such expectations would inevitably lead to disappointment.

In this difficult situation, the Catholic Church cannot simply stop and wait. It has a special responsibility. Its unique ecumenical responsibility comes paradoxically from the Petrine Ministry, which often is seen as the main obstacle for unity but which understands itself as ministry of unity. It is precisely in this situation particularly the Church of Rome has to take responsibility as the “See which presides in love” (Ignatius of Antioch). Let us focus then on these questions: What is our vision for the future of ecumenism? What is our task at the beginning of this new century and new millennium? How can we make the most of the legacy of the Second Vatican Council and of Cardinal Willebrands today and tomorrow?

III. THE FUTURE OF ECUMENISM

It is clear that I am not a prophet and cannot play such a role when I try to identify the way forward for ecumenism. The Holy Spirit has its own plans and will always surprise us. But one thing is certain: the Holy Spirit is loyal. It has given the impulse and we can be sure that it will fulfil what it has begun. Therefore pondering about the future of ecumenism in our current situation, which is much changed since the past and keeps changing very quickly, does not mean reshaping ecumenism completely anew. Ecumenism is founded on the task that was entrusted to us by Jesus himself. It is rooted in the mandate of the Second Vatican Council, that considered the unity of all Christians as one of its priorities. As Pope John Paul II rightly stated and Pope Benedict XVI repeated with different words, ecumenism is an irreversible process. Ecumenism has a future, not because we want it, but because Jesus Christ wants it and because his Spirit helps us in our commitment.

Ecumenism in truth and love is not just an option that the Church can take or leave; it is our sacred duty. Nor is ecumenism an appendix to our common pastoral tasks or a “luxury article” of our pastoral activity: it is “the” perspective of the entire life of the Church. The Catholic principles of ecumenism, as they were expressed by the Council in the Decree “Unitatis redintegratio”, i.e., ecumenism in truth and love, are valid also for the future. This Decree remains the Magna Charta in our ecumenical journey ahead. Cardinal Willebrands’ legacy will be for us a good guide on this way.

This is true also regarding the recent developments where individual persons or groups of persons

from other Churches, especially from the Anglican Communion, by the grace of God and by reasons of their conscience, want to join the Catholic Church preserving the legitimate elements of their liturgical and spiritual tradition. If this comes to a good end, it will not at all be a new ecumenism, as one has read in the last weeks in some newspapers, also in newspapers which should know things better. On the contrary, this has happened exactly in conformity with the Decree on Ecumenism (no. 4), which clearly distinguishes between conversion of individual persons or groups of persons on the one hand and, on the other, ecumenism as dialogue with the other Churches with the goal of full communion. For we cannot close our doors when others knock at them, but this does not exonerate us from the mandate of our Lord to open in love our hearts to all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

I repeat: There is no new ecumenism and not the end of the old; on the contrary, what happens is *one* fruit of the ecumenical dialogues in the last decades, and it is therefore a strong impulse to go on in our ecumenical commitment, also in the dialogue with the Anglican Communion that has been so fruitful to date. But both together, individual or corporative conversion and ecumenical dialogue, should be undertaken in the greatest possible transparency, tactfulness and mutual esteem in order not to entail meaningless tensions with our ecumenical partners.

So nothing fundamental has changed with regard to the fundamental orientation of “Unitatis redintegratio”. Nevertheless, there are also new aspects. First I want to mention a fundamental theological aspect. With his first Encyclical Letter “Deus caritas est” (2005), Pope Benedict XVI has focussed on the theological foundations of ecumenism in a deeper way and within a wider theological context. The Encyclical Letter does not speak explicitly of ecumenism. However, in his message at the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Johannesuary 2006, the Pope underlined that this Encyclical is important also from an ecumenical perspective. He added that love is the true motor of ecumenism. Love is founded on the self-revelation and self-communication of God in Jesus Christ. The fundamental task of the Church is to convey and to communicate this love to the world.

This applies both for ecumenism and for mission. Ecumenism is the twin of mission. Since the 1910 Conference on Mission in Edinburg, the 100th anniversary of which we will be celebrating next year, we know that the divisions among Christians are the greatest obstacle to Church mission in the world. Thus ecumenism has a particular urgency also from the point of view of mission and of new evangelization, so much needed here in overly secularised Europe.

As an expression of self-giving love, ecumenical dialogue is a type of witness. Witnesses act and speak not only with their mouths, but with their whole existence. But unlike proselytism, ecumenism does not want to force somebody into something. Love

respects the freedom of the other and even respects them in their otherness. So as an expression of self-giving love, ecumenism is closely bound to mutual respect and esteem, friendship and fraternity, encounter and cooperation. But finally, love wants unity. This is why the final objective of ecumenism can only be the full communion of faith, sacraments, apostolic ministry and mission. In this sense, ecumenism will be an ecumenism of consensus also in the future. At the same time, love makes room for the legitimate differences and for the charisma of the other Churches. In this context, Cardinal Willebrands idea of different typoi of Church within the one Church is still up-to-date.

Stressing that ecumenism is based on love clearly shows that ecumenism is not a political programme which tends to an enlargement of the Church’s empire, as some ridiculously think, neither it is a diplomatic compromise of the Church based on the lowest common denominator. Love is selfless and yearns to communicate its own richness to the other. Ecumenical dialogue in truth is therefore — as Pope John Paul II taught us — an exchange not simply of ideas but of gifts. Ecumenical dialogue does not deprive each other from our respective richnesses, but wants to enrich each other. Through ecumenical dialogue we can learn from the other and be guided by the Spirit in the whole truth (*John* 16:13) so that we can share more and more in the fullness of Christ (*Eph* 4:13).

After this more fundamental reflection let us ask now more concretely: How can we make some concrete progress on this deepened theological basis? One thing is clear from the very beginning: Even when we are and have to be fully committed in our ecumenical work, we know that we cannot “make” or organise the unity of the Church. The unity for which we search will not come about by theological debates in an ecumenical commission, as helpful and also necessary this approach may be. Unity is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore spiritual ecumenism is the very heart of ecumenism (UR 8) and has become much more relevant in the last decade. It is in train to be discovered more and more in all parts of the ecumenical world. It presupposes a renewal of mentalities, an inner conversion and the willingness to reform. The prayer for Christian unity is the heart of this spiritual ecumenism. In this sense, we have rediscovered the teaching of Abbé Paul Couturier (+1953). According to him, ecumenism means bearing witness to Jesus’ prayer, to join him in his prayer, to make his prayer our own with him and in him. Paul Couturier spoke of an invisible cloister, namely a community spread throughout the world in which all individuals nevertheless are bound together by Jesus’ prayer that all may be one.

This invisible community in our days is growing and becoming more visible in different places. Religious communities and spiritual movements belonging to different Churches around the world meet regularly, engage in spiritual exchanges and pray for one another. Immediately after the signing of the Joint

Declaration on Justification in 1999 they met in Ottmaring near Augsburg and decided to embark together on such a movement. Under the title “Together for Europe”, they gathered in Stuttgart twice for two important international congresses. Their work now goes on at the level of regional and national associations. What belongs together, grows together. This represents for me the greatest ecumenical hope.

It is still to be seen whether this phenomenon will result — in the foreseeable or distant future — in the creation of a corporative unity, namely a unity preserving legitimate confessional diversity, with such groups that are close to us. This kind of unity would not be the kind of unity envisaged in the first phase after the Council, where we hoped for a corporative union with one or another Church, which at this moment is not in sight. But we all are left in the hands of Providence and must trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who will decide when, where and how he will fulfil this or another form of unity.

Let me make a further third and last point. If we further consider the results accomplished so far, we become aware that there is no reason for resignation. Our ecumenism of consensus, that recently has often been so wrongly criticized, has managed to achieve much more in the last decades than we could have ever imagined 40 years ago. I am referring here to the situation of goodwill, cooperation, common witness and often friendship that we have managed to create. There has been a reception of spiritual hymns and liturgical forms and symbols belonging to other Churches. And we have learned much from one another also in terms of biblical exegesis, in which today the lines no longer run along confessional borders but across them. Thanks to God, a new situation has been given to us.

Also the theological achievements are much greater than many think. After two years of work, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has finally summarised — in the so-called Harvest Project — the results of 40 years of bilateral dialogues with the Churches belonging to the classical Reformation tradition (Anglicans, Lutherans, Reformed and Methodists). We summarised all under four headlines: Jesus Christ and Trinity, justification and sanctification, Church and both the major sacraments Baptism and Eucharist. In every part of “Harvesting the Fruits” much more has been achieved than I personally could have imagined in my most optimistic expectations.

Of course we were not blind to the remaining open questions. We have clearly presented also the issues: there are fundamental questions of hermeneutics, of anthropology, of ecclesiology, and of sacra-

mental theology that still need to be resolved. However, a problem that has been clearly identified already represents half of the solution.

We started this project with two precise intentions: We are of the opinion that the time had come to facilitate the reception of the results of our dialogues. So we wanted to start a reception process in our Churches in order that the fruits of forty years would not get dusty on some bookshelves but become a living reality in the body of our Churches. Second: A new generation of ecumenists is growing up with new and fresh ideas but which does not and cannot know what already has been achieved so far, and what open question we have to hand down to them. With this book we “oldies” hand the torch down to a new generation. We hope and trust that it will offer inspiring encouragement to them to make further progress in the ecumenical journey, that has been so fruitful so far.

On the basis of “Harvesting the Fruits” we plan to hold a consultation in the form of a symposium at the beginning of 2010. Together with our ecumenical partners, we want to discuss the results and decide the way forward. After that, there will be a series of other ecumenical events: the 50th anniversary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; the 100th anniversary of the Edinburgh Conference; the Ecumenical *Kirchentag* in Munich; the Plenary Session of the Lutheran World Federation in Stuttgart; the ongoing Luther-Decade that should last till 2017. Therefore the year 2010 will be a fully ecumenical year. This proves that ecumenism is not over: it is facing a new beginning.

This is why we should make the steps that are possible to make here and now with the same trust and the same balance of courage and realism, of patience and impatience, that Cardinal Willebrands successfully achieved in the first phase of the ecumenical dialogue. We can make these steps trusting in the Holy Spirit and in the prayer of so many Christians of all the Churches all over the world. These are the true players in the ecumenical movement and our most important co-workers. We have been assured that when we pray in Jesus’ name our prayers will be fulfilled (*John 14:13*). And which prayer in Jesus’ name can be better heard than the prayer of Jesus himself that all may be one (*John 17:21*)?

The prayer of many and the promise of Jesus himself can give us courage and trust in the accomplishment of our work undertaken as his instruments. One thing is sure: ecumenism will be one of the building sites for the future of the Church. Cardinal Willebrands has shown us that it has been worth it to commit ourselves fully to ecumenism. His legacy calls us to do the same also in the future.

ECCLESIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS AND
THE ECUMENICAL AGENDA SINCE
CARDINAL JOHANNES WILLEBRANDS

Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

This text includes in brackets passages that because of the constraints of time it was not possible to deliver in the symposium at the Gregorian University.

Since the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, the Roman Catholic Church has been involved in a number of dialogues with other churches — including with the Anglican Communion — which have produced a very considerable number of agreed statements. This legacy has been brought together in a recent publication by the Vatican Council for promoting Christian Unity, whose President during and after Vatican II, Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, is justly and happily celebrated in today's centenary conference.

Let me give an outline of what I want to say in the half an hour or so available. The strong convergence in these agreements about *what* the Church of God really is, is very striking. The various agreed statements of the churches stress that the Church is a community, in which human beings are made sons and daughters of God, and reconciled both with God and one another. The Church celebrates this through the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion in which God acts upon us to transform us 'in communion'. More detailed questions about ordained ministry and other issues have been framed in this context.

Therefore the major question that remains is whether in the light of that depth of agreement the issues that still divide us have the same weight — issues about authority in the Church, about primacy (especially the unique position of the pope), and the relations between the local churches and the universal church in making decisions (about matters like the ordination of women, for instance). Are they *theological* questions in the same sense as the bigger issues on which there is already clear agreement? And if they are, how exactly is it that they make a difference to our basic understanding of salvation and communion? But if they are not, why do they still stand in the way of fuller visible unity? Can there, for example, be a model of unity as a communion of churches which have different attitudes to how the papal primacy is expressed?

The central question is whether and how we can properly tell the difference between 'second order' and 'first order' issues. When so very much agreement has been firmly established in first-order matters about the identity and mission of the Church, is it really justifiable to treat other issues as equally vital for its health and integrity?

1. One of the most fascinating aspects of the journals written during the Second Vatican Council by figures like Willebrands and Congar is the record of a struggle for what I shall call a genuinely theologi-

cal doctrine of the Church. Part of what Vatican II turned away from is a way of talking about the Church as primarily an institution existing because of divine decree, governed by prescription from the Lord, faithfully administering the sacraments ordained by him for the salvation of souls — 'an external, visible society, whose members, under a hierarchical authority headed by the pope, constitute with him one visible body, tending to the same spiritual and supernatural end, i.e., sanctification of souls and their eternal happiness' (Pietro Palazzini, s.v. 'Church (Society)' in the *Dictionary of Moral Theology*, ed. F. Roberti and P. Palazzini, originally published in 1957). But what is missing from this account is any real explication of how the nature and character and even polity of the Church are grounded in and shaped by the nature of God and of God's incarnation in history. A *theological* understanding of the Church would be one that makes this connection.

[De Lubac's outstanding work in the first half of the twentieth century had laid the foundations — or, better, had excavated foundations long obscured; and the much-maligned Pope Pius XII had helped to bring some of these insights into the mainstream of Catholic thinking. But Vatican II pressed further, absorbing silently but effectively some of the critiques of ecumenical observers at the Council: Congar's journal for the 1 October 1963, gives a good example of what was finding its way unobtrusively into the Council's work by way of the observers (Yves Congar, *Mon journal du Concile*, vol. 1, pp. 415-418), summarising contributions from various ecumenical interlocutors around the themes of the Holy Spirit in the Church, the Church as sacrament of God's presence in the midst of humanity, the prophetic vocation of the people of God and so forth. And the general ethos and idiom of ecumenical dialogues since the Council illustrate the longer-term results of this 're-theologising' of the Church (it is no accident that the late Jean Tillard, OP, very much a disciple of Congar, played a major role in all these encounters.) A striking feature of the current *Harvesting the Fruits* document from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity under the name of our greatly loved and respected friend Walter Kasper, is the integral connection between what is said about the nature of God and what is said about the Church, its mission and its ministry. All these dialogues, it appears, have been deeply influenced by the new style in ecclesiology rooted in Vatican II and the work of Willebrands and his colleagues — and it is worth mentioning the way in which this new style is paralleled in other ecumenical dialogues, notably the Anglican-Orthodox document on *The Church of the Triune God*.

In broad outline, the picture is something like this. God is eternally a life of threefold communion; and if human persons are to be reconciled to God and restored to the capacity for which they were made, they must be included in that life of communion. The incarnation of God the Son recreates in human persons the possibility of filial relation with

the Father, standing in the place of Christ and praying his prayer; and only the Holy Spirit, which animates and directs the entire human identity of the Incarnate Word, can create that filial reality in us. To be restored to life with God is to be incorporated into Jesus Christ by the Spirit; but because the gift of the Spirit is what takes away mutual fear and hostility and the shutting-up of human selves against each other, it is inseparably and necessarily a gift of mutual human communion also. The sacramental life and the communal disciplines of the Church exist to serve and witness to this dual fact of communion, with the Father and with all believers. To take only one of the countless formulations referred to in the *Harvesting* document, in this case from the 1993 Lutheran-Catholic statement on *Church and Justification* (§6), 'According to the witness of the New Testament, our salvation, the justification of sinners and the existence of the church are indissolubly linked with the triune God and are founded in him alone.' [What is more, there is a clear recognition that the Church's *mission* is to be conceived in the same way, as the mission 'of the Son and the Spirit', communicating to all places and all ages the divine invitation to communion (see the 2007 IARCCUM document, *Growing Together in Mission and Unity*, §27).]

So there is a clear line of connection between fundamental doctrinal commitments (the doctrines of the creed concerning the Trinity and the Incarnation) and issues around the shape and mission of the Church. The former lead into the latter; the latter only make sense against the background of the former. But what are the implications of this for our continuing ecumenical engagement? In what follows, I shall suggest some possible lines of further enquiry. But I also want to put a bit of a challenge to some trends across the board in current thinking, trends that might encourage us to adjust our expectations downwards in ecumenical dialogue, given the apparent lack of progress towards institutional or organisational unity. I do so in the hope that if we can recognise the remarkable degree to which what we could call Willebrands' legacy in ecclesiology has triumphed in the life of the dialogues, this may yet stir us to new insights and possibilities.

2. If the *Harvesting* document is to be taken seriously, the issues between Christians in the historic churches are *not* about the essential shape of our language concerning God and God's action in Christ. [Whatever shaky theologies may be advanced by individuals in this or that particular pulpit, divinity school or seminary (Catholic *and* otherwise, be it said), the self-definitions of the churches remain solidly anchored in the Nicene faith, understood precisely as the faith that makes sense of the experienced reality of communion in Christ.] The common centre is a twofold vision: filial relation with God the Father as the realisation of the human vocation; and, as an immediate corollary of this, communion with other believers, offered to the whole world as promise and hope, a model for human life together in accord with the creator's loving purpose. As the

ecumenical statements in varying words agree, the ongoing debate is not about these fundamentals, but about where the fullest realisation of communion is to be found.

Even in discussion over sacramental forms and doctrines, a powerful convergence is evident that takes us well beyond any tired polarities. [We cannot any longer assume that there is a fundamental disagreement between Catholics who think of the sacraments objectively and Protestants who think of them only in functional or 'memorialist' ways.] The links from trinitarian doctrine straight through to the meaning of the Lord's Supper are strongly affirmed on all sides. The whole discussion of sacramental life is centred upon how the believer is established in filial communion through the act of the triune God; there is little to suggest that outside the Roman fold there is any ambiguity over this priority of the divine act, or any separation between the act of God in salvation and a purely or predominantly human activity of recalling or expressing that act through human practices.

And this is where the difficult questions begin to gather. If the picture just sketched is true, what exactly are the points that still divide us? *Harvesting* returns several times to a few key matters: I want to pick out three for further reflection. There is an issue over *authority*: in several places, continuing disagreement is noted over the nature or indeed the very possibility of the magisterium. Is there a mechanism in the Church that has the clear right to determine for all where the limits of Christian identity might be found? Then there is an issue, naturally connected with the first, about the nature of *primacy*. Is the integrity of the Church ultimately dependent on a single identifiable ministry of unity to which all local ministries are accountable? And this relates immediately to a third set of questions about the way in which we think of the universal Church itself. Is it an entity from which local churches derive their life, or is it the perfect mutuality of relationship between local churches — or indeed as the mysterious presence of the whole *in* each specific community? I want to propose that we now need urgent clarification of whether these continuing points of tension or difference imply in any way that the substantive theological convergence is less solid than it appears, so that we must still hold back from fuller levels of recognition of ministries or fuller sacramental fellowship.

3. As to authority: the summary on pp. 137-8 of *Harvesting* puts it very well in describing convergence around the belief that 'the ministry and the ministries in the Church are not an end in themselves'; the Church is called to obedience, and thus to the discerning conservation of the authentic gospel in its teaching and preaching. But is that obedience, discernment and conservation in some sense the task of the entire body of the baptised or essentially that of a group designated as having binding power?

A properly *theological* answer to this would challenge the premise of the question as expressed in those terms. It should rather come from a clear sense

that responsibility, the 'authority to become children of God' (*Jn* 1.12) given to all those who belong in the communion of the baptised, is something allocated and distributed in the Church by the leading of the Spirit. If we are not just going to reaffirm the language of rule and hierarchy established by decree, with fixed divisions between teachers and taught, rulers and ruled, then we must approach the question as one that has to do with the way in which the gifts of the Spirit are properly distributed. In the light of the ecumenical ecclesiology we have been outlining, what is the status of differences over how responsibilities are allocated in the Church? How practically deep and non-negotiable are the divisions if what is at stake is not the basic reality of filial holiness? If the issues are *less* basic than the agreement over the Church's central character, then the future ought to be one in which there is a search for practical convergence in administrative responsibility and visible structures of governance, while allowing a significant mutual recognition of sacramental authenticity in the meantime — perhaps including some sacramental fellowship, as hinted at in §8 of *Unitatis Redintegratio*).

[I suspect that what makes this unattractive from the Roman Catholic side is the wariness of lapsing back into another kind of non-theological ecclesiology, allowing decision-making in the Church to become no more than a 'democratic' process in which the search for corporate discernment became no more than campaigning for majority votes. Those of us with synodical styles of governance influenced by parliamentary procedure may well understand the anxiety. Yet, understandable as this anxiety is, it would be a mistake to say that anything other than a clear commitment to a centralised magisterium would be bound to be a secularised democratism. It is never a good idea to take the worst risks and distortions of a system as normative. It would be as pessimistic as the reaction of a reformed Christian convinced that any ordained magisterium would be bound to be an unaccountable tyranny. If we really do agree about what the Church is for, then we ought to be able to see in one another the desire to be obedient — *and* to recognise that inevitably any particular embodiment of that desire will need to be scrutinised theologically and is likely to be historically variable, vulnerable and in some way inadequate.]

The question becomes whether we can find ways of creating structures in which ordained authority and conciliar collaboration are properly accountable to each other and to the whole Body. It is about how we look — at the very least — for joint means of decision-making between churches differently ordered in their systems of authority, as several ecumenical texts propose (not least the IARCCUM documents); and at most for a means of making possible exchange of ministries and sacramental provision (with all that this might entail in terms of requirements for simple canonical recognition and incorporation).

4. As to primacy: convergence is probably less clear here, but there is a quite widespread recogni-

tion that, just as local ministry serves coherence and mutual openness within a congregation, so there is a powerful theological case for a ministry of universal focusing and gathering cast in the same terms. To put it like this is, once again, to see it in relation to the Church's purpose overall: this is a ministry existing for the sake of filial and communal holiness held in a universal pattern of mutual service — a point worth taking very seriously in the context of a globalised culture.

The disagreement comes over whether existing forms of primacy are — on the one hand — despite all their historic ups and downs, fundamentally unavoidable embodiments of the agreed principle or — on the other — so allied to juridical privilege and the patterns of rule and control I have referred to earlier that they simply fail to do what they say they are there for. This is to put the difference quite sharply, I know, in a way that ignores the fluidity of recent debate and the remarkable initiative represented by *Ut Unum Sint* and what has flowed from it. But once again, the ecumenical issue for those outside the Roman Catholic fold is whether the necessity of the existing form of primatial ministry is so *theologically* crucial a matter that the Church's integrity, its faithfulness to its essential purpose, is wholly compromised by a diversity of understanding about primacy. Is there a level of mutual recognition which allows a shared theological understanding of primacy alongside a diversity of canonical or juridical arrangements? The slightly sensitive discussion of the nature of papal jurisdiction outside the historic Western Patriarchate might be a door-opener here. But it is surprising to find support in another quarter, in the shape of a bald statement (quoted in *Harvesting*) from the Lutheran-Catholic Report of 1972 'that the question of altar fellowship and of mutual recognition of ministerial offices should not be unconditionally dependent on a consensus on the question of primacy' (§66).

To present the question in these terms is in fact to look back to Cardinal Willebrands' celebrated sermon in Cambridge in 1970 which spoke (using the language of Dom Emmanuel Lanne) of a diversity of *types* of communion, each one defined not so much juridically or institutionally as in terms of lasting loyalty, shared theological method and devotional ethos. The underlying idea seems to be that a restored universal communion would be genuinely a 'community of communities' and a 'communion of communions' — not necessarily a single juridically united body — and therefore one which did indeed assume that, while there was a recognition of a primatial ministry, this was not absolutely bound to a view of primacy as a centralized juridical office.

It is of course impossible to open up these issues without some brief reference to issues of very immediate interest in the lives of the Anglican and Roman Catholic communions. The current proposals for a Covenant between Anglican provinces represent an effort to create not a centralised decision-making executive but a 'community of communities' that can manage to sustain a mutually nourishing and mutu-

ally critical life, with all consenting to certain protocols of decision-making together. As *Harvesting* notes, Anglicans have been challenged to flesh out their rhetoric about communion through the crises and controversies of recent years, and this is simply part of a variegated response that will, no doubt, continue for a good while yet to be refined and formulated.

The recent announcement of an Apostolic Constitution making provision for former Anglicans shows some marks of the recognition that diversity of ethos does not in itself compromise the unity of the Catholic Church, even within the bounds of the historic Western patriarchate. But it should be obvious that it does not seek to do what we have been sketching: it does not build in any formal recognition of existing ministries or units of oversight or methods of independent decision-making, but remains at the level of spiritual and liturgical culture, as we might say. As such, it is an imaginative *pastoral* response to the needs of some; but it does not break any fresh *ecclesiological* ground. It remains to be seen whether the flexibility suggested in the Constitution might ever lead to something less like a 'chaplaincy' and more like a church gathered around a bishop.

5. As to the broad issue of local and universal Christian identity, much that has emerged in discussion involving Roman Catholics, Anglican and Orthodox has had the effect of challenging simplistic opposition between the two poles, as if the choice were between a conglomerate of local and almost randomly diverse communities vaguely federated together, and a monolithic global corporation. The re-theologising of ecclesiology, especially in dialogue with the Christian East, has meant that we are now better able to see the local community gathered around the bishop or his representative for eucharistic worship not as a portion of some greater whole but as itself the whole, the *qualitative* presence, as we might put it, of the Catholic reality of filial holiness and Trinitarian mutuality here and now. In one sense, it needs no supplement or validation from a wider institutional reality; in another sense, of course, it is itself only as related with other communities doing the same thing in all times and places. To quote from the Roman Catholic-Reformed dialogue, 'It is only by participating in the local community that we share in the life of the universal Church, but the local community without universality...runs the risk of becoming a ghetto or of being arbitrarily dominated by individuals' (*The Presence of Christ in Church and World*, §62). Or, in the words of the ARCIC statement on *The Gift of Authority*, 'No local church that participates in the living Tradition can regard itself as self-sufficient' (§37).

So the question here becomes one about what criteria help us establish that the *same* Catholic life is going on in diverse communities. The facts of corporate reading of Scripture, obedience to the Lord's commands to baptise and make eucharist, shared understanding of the shape and the disciplines of what we have called filial holiness — can these be

utilised as they stand or do we need a further test — visible communion, say, with a universal primate? And if that further step is necessary, can it be shown to be theological in exactly the same sense as the rest of the discourse? If not, once again, is it a ground for maintaining the level of non-recognition currently in practice? [To revert to a rather old-fashioned idiom, while we might recognise universal structural isomorphism or a universal canonical system as something belonging to the *bene esse*, the good order or well-being of the Church, is it so much a part of the *esse* as to preclude shared practice?].

An answer to this would have to look at some of the complex and neuralgic issues that arise around local decision-making. To take the most obvious instance in the relations between the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches at present, the local decision to ordain women as priests — and as bishops in some contexts — is presented by Roman Catholic theologians as one that in effect makes the Anglican Communion simply less recognisably a body 'doing the same Catholic thing'.

Harvesting records the substance of the early consensus in ARCIC on the nature of ordained ministry and also the acknowledgement that there had as yet been no consideration of *who* could be ordained (the 1973 *Ministry and Ordination* text, §17). Since then, this latter issue has been defined by the highest authority in the Roman Catholic Church as one in which the Church does not have the liberty or the competence to license change as regards the historic prohibition against women in holy orders. This is now presented as a clear obstacle to any further recognition of Anglican orders.

I don't want here to rehearse the arguments for and against the ordination of women, only to ask how recent determinations on the Roman Catholic side fit with the general pattern of theological convergence outlined. The claim of certain Anglican provinces is that the ordination of women explicitly looks to an agreed historic theology of ordained ministry as set out in the ARCIC report and other sources. Beyond that, many Anglicans have been wary of accepting a determination of who can be ordained that might appear to compromise some of the agreed principles about how ordination relates to the whole body of the baptised. This, by way, would hold for at least some who believe that a decision within a divided Church about a matter affecting the universal ministry should not be taken by a single province or group of provinces. But for many Anglicans, *not* ordaining women has a possible unwelcome implication about the difference between baptised men and baptised women, which in their view threatens to undermine the coherence of the ecclesiology in question.

And the challenge to recent Roman Catholic thinking on this would have to be: in what way does the prohibition against ordaining women so 'enhance the life of communion', reinforcing the essential character of filial and communal holiness as set out in Scripture and tradition and ecumenical agreement, that its breach would compromise the pur-

poses of the Church as so defined? And do the arguments advanced about the “essence” of male and female vocations and capacities stand on the same level as a theology derived more directly from scripture and the common theological heritage such as we find in these ecumenical texts?

Let us take this a stage further. All ordained ministers are ordained into the shared richness of the apostolic ministerial order — or perhaps we could say ministerial ‘communion’ yet again. None ministers as a solitary individual. Thus if the ministerial collective is understood strictly in terms of the ecclesiology we have been considering, as serving the goal of filial and communal holiness as the character of restored humanity, how much is that undermined if individuals within the ministerial communion are of different genders? Even if there remains uncertainty in the minds of some about the rightness of ordaining women, is there a way of recognising that somehow the *corporate* exercise of a Catholic and evangelical ministry remains intact even when there is dispute about the standing of female individuals? In terms of the relation of local to universal, what we are saying here is that a degree of recognizability of ‘the same Catholic thing’ has survived: Anglican provinces ordaining women to some or all of the three orders have not become so obviously diverse in their understanding of filial holiness and sacramental transformation that they cannot act together, serve one another and allow some real collaboration.

It is this sort of thinking that has allowed Anglicans until recently to maintain a degree of undoubtedly impaired communion among themselves, despite the sharpness of the division over this matter. It is part of the rationale of supplementary episcopal oversight as practised in the English provinces, and it may yet be of help in securing the place of those who will not be able to accept the episcopal ministry of women. There can be no doubt, though, that the situation of damaged communion will become more acute with the inability of bishops within the same college to recognise one another’s ministry in the full sense. Yet, in what is still formally acknowledged to be a time of discernment and reception, is it nonsense to think that holding on to a limited but real common life and mutual acknowledgement of integrity might be worth working for within the Anglican family? And if it can be managed within the Anglican family, is this a possible model for the wider ecumenical scene? At least, by means of some of the carefully crafted institutional ways of continuing to work together, there remains an embodied trust in the possibility of discovering a shared ministry of the gospel; and who knows what more, ultimately, in terms of restored communion?

6. Once again, I am asking how far continuing disunion and non-recognition are justified, theologically justified in the context of the overall ecclesial vision, when there are signs that some degree of diversity in practice need not, after all, prescribe an indefinite separation. I do not pretend to be offering a new paradigm of ecumenical encounter, far from it. But the very quality of the theological convergence recorded, and very expertly and lucidly conveyed, in *Harvesting* prompts the sort of question I have been raising. At what point do we have to recognise that surviving institutional and even canonical separations or incompatibilities are overtaken by the authoritative direction of genuinely theological consensus, so that they can survive only by appealing to the ghost of ecclesiological positivism? The three issues I have commented on may all seem, to the eyes of a non-Roman Catholic, to belong in a somewhat different frame of reference from the governing themes of the ecumenical ecclesiology expressed in the texts under review. If the non-Roman Catholic is wrong about this, we need to have spelled out exactly why; we need to understand either that there are issues about the filial/communal calling clearly at stake in surviving disagreements; or to be shown that another theological ‘register’ is the right thing to use in certain areas, a different register which will qualify in some ways the language that has so far shaped ecumenical convergence.

Cardinal Willebrands would, I suspect, have been uncomfortable with the latter option and would have wanted (if he had agreed that these issues were critical, unresolved, and in need of resolution) to keep our attention fixed on the former, so that our language and thinking about the Church remained theological in a sense recognised by all involved in the discussion. To say this is not to foreclose consideration of these and other outstanding areas of diversity, let alone to say that they are ‘political’ matters and that there is no point in approaching them theologically, or that they are ‘second-order’ questions. But it is important to be clear about just how much convergence there is, as witnessed in the survey offered in *Harvesting*.

All I have been attempting to say here is that the ecumenical glass is genuinely half-full — and then to ask about the character of the unfinished business between us. For many of us who are not Roman Catholics, the question we want to put, in a grateful and fraternal spirit, is whether this unfinished business is as fundamentally church-dividing as our Roman Catholic friends generally assume and maintain. And if it isn’t, can we all allow ourselves to be challenged to address the outstanding issues with the same methodological assumptions and the same overall spiritual and sacramental vision that has brought us thus far?

www.archbishopofcanterbury.org

VISIT TO THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE BY A DELEGATION OF THE HOLY SEE FOR THE FEAST OF ST ANDREW

29 November – 1 December 2009

On November 30, Feast of St Andrew Patron of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, His Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch celebrated a solemn divine liturgy at the Patriarchal Church of Saint George in Phanar, Constantinople.

Following a decadal custom, the Holy Father sends a delegation to join in the celebrations. This year it was led by His Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, accompanied by Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Council and two officials, Fr Andrea Palmieri and Fr Vladimiro Caroli, OP.

At the conclusion of the divine liturgy, the Ecumenical Patriarch greeted the Vatican representatives, underlining the common inheritance of Catholics and Orthodox and recalling that they share the Fathers of the Church and the doctrine left by them.

Cardinal Kasper read the message of Pope Benedict XVI, conveying the Holy Father's fraternal greetings to the Church of Constantinople, the Patriarch, the Holy Synod, the clergy and to all the gathered faithful.

In the message the Holy Father referred to the recent Plenary Session of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue. With regard to the Petrine Ministry which is being currently discussed by the Commission, Pope Benedict XVI recalled that "The Catholic Church understands the Petrine ministry as a gift of the Lord to His Church. This ministry should not be interpreted in the perspective of power, but within an ecclesiology of communion, as a service to unity in truth and charity".

We publish here below the message of the Holy Father followed by the discourse of the Patriarch in its English version prepared by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

MESSAGE OF THE POPE

To His Holiness BARTHOLOMAIOS I
Archbishop of Constantinople
Ecumenical Patriarch

Your Holiness,

It is with great joy that I address Your Holiness on the occasion of the visit of the delegation guided by my Venerable Brother Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, to whom I have entrusted the task of conveying to you my warmest fraternal greetings on the Feast of Saint Andrew, the brother of Saint Peter and the protector of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

On this joyful occasion commemorating the birth into eternal life of the Apostle Andrew, whose witness of faith in the Lord culminated in his martyrdom, I express also my respectful remembrance to the Holy Synod, the clergy and all the faithful, who under your pastoral care and guidance continue even in difficult circumstances to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The memory of the holy martyrs compels all Christians to bear witness to their faith before the world. There is an urgency in this call especially in our own day, in which Christianity is faced with increasingly complex challenges. The witness of Christians will surely be all the more credible if all believers in Christ are "of one heart and soul" (Acts 4:32).

Our Churches have committed themselves sincerely over the last decades to pursuing the path towards the re-establishment of full communion, and although we have not yet reached our goal, many steps have been taken that have enabled us to deepen the bonds between us. Our growing friendship and mutual respect, and our willingness to encounter one another and to recognize one another as brothers in Christ should not be hindered by those who remain bound to the remembrance of historical differences, which impedes their openness to the Holy Spirit who guides the Church and is able to transform all human failings into opportunities for good.

This openness has guided the work of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue, which held its eleventh plenary session in Cyprus last month. The meeting was marked by a spirit of solemn purpose and a warm sentiment of closeness. I extend once again my heartfelt gratitude to the Church of Cyprus for its most generous welcome and hospitality. It is a source of great encouragement that despite some difficulties and misunderstandings all the Churches involved in the International Commission have expressed their intention to continue the dialogue.

The theme of the plenary session, *The Role of the Bishop of Rome in the Communion of the Church in the First Millennium*, is certainly complex, and will require extensive study and patient dialogue if we are to aspire to a shared integration of the traditions of East and West. The Catholic Church understands the Petrine ministry as a gift of the Lord to His Church.

This ministry should not be interpreted in the perspective of power, but within an ecclesiology of communion, as a service to unity in truth and charity. The Bishop of the Church of Rome, which presides in charity (Saint Ignatius of Antioch), is understood to be the *Servus Servorum Dei* (Saint Gregory the Great). Thus, as my venerable predecessor the Servant of God Pope John Paul II wrote and I reiterated on the occasion of my visit to the Phanar in November 2006, it is a question of seeking together, inspired by the model of the first millennium, the forms in which the ministry of the Bishop of Rome may accomplish a service of love recognized by one and all (cf. *Ut Unum Sint*, 95). Let us therefore ask God to bless us and may the Holy Spirit guide us along this difficult yet promising path.

Yet even as we make this journey towards full communion, we should already offer common witness by working together in the service of humanity, especially in defending the dignity of the human person, in affirming fundamental ethical values, in promoting justice and peace, and in responding to the suffering that continues to afflict our world, particularly hunger, poverty, illiteracy, and the inequitable distribution of resources.

Furthermore, our Churches can work together in drawing attention to humanity's responsibility for the safeguarding of creation. In this regard, I express once again my appreciation for the many valuable initiatives supported and encouraged by Your Holiness which have borne witness to the gift of creation. The recent international symposium on *Religion, Science and the Environment* dedicated to the Mississippi River, and your encounters in the United States with distinguished figures from the political, cultural and religious spheres, have exemplified your commitment.

Your Holiness, on the solemn Feast of the great Apostle Andrew, I express my respectful esteem and spiritual closeness to Your Holiness and to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and I pray that the Triune God may bestow abundant blessings of grace and light on your lofty ministry for the good of the Church.

It is with these sentiments that I extend to you a fraternal embrace in the name of our one Lord Jesus Christ, and I renew my prayer that the peace and grace of our Lord may be with Your Holiness and with all those entrusted to your eminent pastoral leadership.

From the Vatican, 25 November 2009

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

ORE, 2 December 2009

HOMILY OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH

November 30, 2009

Your Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper
Representative of His Holiness the Pope
Bishop of Rome, Benedict XVI
and Your honorable entourage,

it is with great joy that we welcome you once again to the courtyard of the Church of New Rome in order to concelebrate the sacred memory of its founder and protector Saint Andrew the First-Called of the Apostles. We express our heartfelt gratitude to our beloved brother in the Lord, His Holiness Pope Benedict of Old Rome, who deigned to delegate his representatives to the Thronal feast of our Church, following the custom established decades ago for an exchange of visitations during the patronal feasts of our two ancient and apostolic Churches as confirmation of their desire to lift the impediments, accumulated over a millennium and preventing the fullness of communion among them. We attribute great symbolical significance to your presence here inasmuch as it also reveals — in a deeply formal manner — the desire of the most holy Church of Rome to do whatever it can on its part, so that we may rediscover our unity in the same faith and sacramental communion according to the will of Him who has called us to unity “so that the world may believe” (*Jn* 17.21).

As is known, St. Andrew the First-Called of the apostles, whom we celebrate today, was the brother of St. Peter the chief among the apostles; together, they knew Christ and believed in Him. The two brothers held this faith in common; the two Churches, which they founded and sanctified by means of their preaching and martyrdom, held this faith in common. This same faith was proclaimed as doctrine by our common Church Fathers, who gathered from east and west in ecumenical councils, where they transmitted it as an invaluable treasure to our Churches in order that we might build upon this faith our unity in Christ. It is this same faith, preserved intact for an entire millennium both in the east and the west, which we are again called to establish as the basis of our unity, cleansing it from any chance addition or alteration, so that “with one soul and one mind” (*Phil* 2.2) we may proceed to communion in the divine Eucharist, wherein lies the fullness of the unity of the Church of Christ.

This journey toward achieving full communion, as enjoyed by our Churches in common during the first millennium, has already commenced with the dialogue of love and truth, and continues by God's grace despite occasional difficulties. It is with vigilant concern and unceasing prayer that we follow the process of the ongoing official Theological Dialogue between our two Churches, co-chaired by Your Eminence, and now embarking upon the examination of critical ecclesiological issues, such as the question of primacy in general and that of the bishop of Rome in particular. Everyone is aware that this thorny issue proved a scandalous contention in the course of relations between our two Churches, which is why the eradication of this impediment from among us will surely greatly facilitate our journey toward unity. We are, therefore, convinced that the study of Church history during the first millennium, at least with regard to this matter, will also provide the touchstone for the further evaluation of later developments during the second millennium, which unfortunately

led our Churches to greater estrangement and intensified our division.

In a world shattered by contrasts and conflicts, the exchange of peaceful and constructive dialogue constitutes the only way of achieving reconciliation and unity. In the apostolic passage read during this morning's Divine Liturgy, the Apostles are promoted as an example of utter humility in imitation of the crucified Lord: "When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day" (*1 Cor* 4. 12-13). If this ethos of humility must prevail in the relations of the faithful toward the persecutors of the Church, how much more so should it prevail in the relations among Christians themselves! The peaceful resolution of existing differences in inter-Christian relations by no means implies estrangement from truth. For truth does not fear dialogue; on the contrary, truth employs dialogue as a means of becoming acceptable even to those who for various reasons reject it. Hatred and fanaticism provoke the defensive entrenchment of each side in the blind persistence on its own positions and opinions, while consolidating differences and obliterating all hope of reconciliation. Such an attitude is absolutely unrelated to the spirit of the Christ's Gospel and the apostolic example. For only by "speaking the truth in love" (*Eph* 4.15) do we truly speak the truth, just as only by loving truthfully (*2 Jn* 1) do we truly love. A dialogue imbued by a sincere spirit of humility guarantees this blessed combination, which comprises the only divinely-inspired way for all those who wish to be imitators of the Apostles (*1 Cor* 4.16).

It is this spirit of sincere and loving dialogue that the Church of Christ itself is today called to implement in its relations among divided Christians, while at the same time proclaiming it to all persons of good will, wherever they happen to be. We know from bitter experience that religion can easily be misused as a banner of fanaticism and conflict among people. We have personally emphasized on numerous occasions that war in the name of religion is war against reli-

gion. This is why interfaith dialogue is particularly mandatory in our age, without entailing any compromise in one's religious convictions. It is this dialogue that is encouraged and cultivated by our Ecumenical Patriarchate, which contributes in this way to the consolidation of peace in our contemporary world.

Your Eminence Cardinal Kasper and your honorable entourage,

through the order established by the holy Ecumenical Councils, Divine Providence has assigned to the Church of this City the ministry of serving as the first-throne of the Orthodox Church, bearing the responsibility of coordinating and expressing the unanimity of the local holy Orthodox Churches. With this responsibility, then, we are now working diligently in preparation for the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, by activating the appropriate preconciliar instruments. Thus, only last June, we successfully convened the 4th Preconciliar Panorthodox Consultation, which dealt with the question of the Orthodox Diaspora; soon, we shall convene the Preparatory Commission for the study and preparation of other issues for the Great Council. The purpose of this entire endeavor is to forge the unity of the Orthodox Church, so that "with one mind and one heart" it may contribute to the witness of the Gospel in our modern world. In this effort and overall variously difficult service, the Church of Constantinople always considers the support of the Old Church of Rome as invaluable, and so with great love we also direct our thought there at this moment.

Greeting you — and through you, him who sent you here, namely our beloved brother in the Lord — with a sacred embrace, we pray that the Lord our God, through the intercessions of the Holy glorious and First-Called Apostle Andrew, will protect His Church from all evil, guiding it to the fulfillment of His divine will.

Welcome here among us, beloved brothers!

<http://www.ec-patr.org/docdisplay.ph>

MESSAGE OF THE POPE ON THE DEATH OF SERBIAN ORTHODOX PATRIARCH PAVLE

16 November 2009

On learning of the death of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Pavle on 15 November, the Holy Father addressed a Message of condolences to Metropolitan Archbishop Amfilohije of Montenegro, which was delivered to him on 18 November by a Holy See delegation led by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, together with Archbishop Orlando Antonini, Apostolic Nuncio in Serbia and Fr Milan Žust, sj of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The following is a translation of the Pope's Message which was originally written in Italian.

To His Eminence Amfilohije
Archbishop of Cetinje
Metropolitan of Montenegro
Locum Tenens
of the Patriarchal Throne
Holy Synod of the
Serbian Orthodox Church

I received the sorrowful news that the Lord has called to himself His Holiness Pavle, Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church. I would like to offer to you, to the Holy Synod and to all the Members of the Church my profound condolences, assuring you of my union in prayer with all who are mourning their Father and Pastor.

In his long life at the service of the Gospel, the late Patriarch bore a witness of faith and spiritual fortitude also in particularly difficult moments, marked by conflicts and wars.

I ask the Lord to obtain that his example may be of comfort to the hearts of his faithful and to so many other people of good will who, encouraged by his perseverance, strive to live the Christian faith to the full and to serve zealously the great cause of reconciliation and peace.

I recall with gratitude the generous and warm

welcome that His Holiness Pavle gave the Members of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church as a whole during the plenary meeting in September 2006 in Belgrade. There were also many other fraternal gestures to the Catholic Church and meetings of Catholics and Orthodox that took place with his Blessing.

May the sorrow at Patriarch Pavle's passing be transformed into sure hope in his "birth in Heaven", and may his memory continue to inspire vigorous spiritual growth in the people whom he served with dedication and generosity.

May his memory also be an invitation to all to continue on the way of dialogue and the search for full communion among all Christ's disciples.

I would like further to express the wish that the Lord may accompany the Holy Synod's action in this period of transition.

With affection in the Lord,

From the Vatican, 16 November 2009

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

ORE, 25 November 2009

VISIT TO BELARUS OF CARDINAL WALTER KASPER

8-10 November 2009

At the invitation of His Eminence Philaret, Exarch of Belarus of the Moscow Patriarchate and Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, went to Minsk to take part in an International conference on Christian-Jewish dialogue. During the visit, 8-10 November 2009, Cardinal Kasper also met with civil and religious authorities.

The theme of the Conference was “Christian-Jewish dialogue: Religious values as the Basis for respect in the civil society amid the global economic crisis”. It was organized by the Institute for interreligious dialogue and interconfessional relations of the Synod of the Orthodox Church of Belarus and the Christian Educational Centre of Saints Methodius and Cyril, in collaboration with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

We publish here below the presentation made by Cardinal Walter Kasper on the morning of 9 November.

CHRISTIAN – JEWISH RELATIONS – AN OVERVIEW FROM A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

It gives me pleasure to reflect on a theme that has been over the last ten years an important part of my commitment in Rome: relations between Christians and Jews. This is a vast and complex issue, with biblical, historical, doctrinal and practical aspects. In our context I must necessarily limit myself to offering only a short overview of the developments over the last decades from the Catholic perspective.

I. THE PRE-HISTORY

The theme ‘Christians and Jews’ is not at all a new one; it is as old as the Church herself and it is therefore already present in the New Testament, which almost on every page makes reference to the Old Testament and considers itself as the fulfilment of the covenant with the Jewish people through Abraham our common father in faith. Jesus himself in his human nature was a Jew, his mother Mary was a Jewish woman, all the apostles and the first followers of Jesus were Jews. The first Christians enjoyed the favor of all the people (*Acts 2:47*). Also the apostle Paul, the apostle of the pagans, on his missionary journeys went always first to the Jews and only afterwards to the pagans. For him the Church as a branch is grafted on to the Jewish root; she is supported and nourished by that root (*Rom 11:17-19*). She is by her very nature Church of Jews and pagans (*Eph 2:11-19*).

But when the Jewish authorities condemned Jesus and when the majority of the Jews did not believe in him as the promised Messiah and the Son of God, then a rift and — as especially the Gospel of John shows — also hostility between Jews and Christians arose and a difficult and complex history between them began. The Fathers of the Church wrote essays and books “*Contra Judaeis*”. Martin Luther’s harsh judgments against Jews are also well known.

This Christian anti-Judaism had theological roots and has therefore to be clearly distinguished from later xenophobic anti-Jewish prejudices and pogroms. In particular, anti-Judaism has to be distinguished from anti-Semitism, which is not theological but a primitive neo-pagan racial theory from the 19th century. This neo-pagan theory became the foundation of the anti-human and anti-Christian Nazi ideology, which was anti-Jewish and anti-Christian at the same time and culminated in the horrors of the Holocaust, where about six million innocent people were murdered. That was a tragedy and a monstrosity of unprecedented proportions, a genocide in the heart of Europe with its centuries-old culture cast in a Christian mould.

When this unprecedented crime became known in all its dimensions after the Second World War, many questions arose, which ultimately somehow render us speechless. How could such a terrible thing happen in the midst of Europe? Why was there so little resistance and so little help from the Christian side? Such questions stimulated a Christian examination of conscience and also an acknowledgment of guilt and responsibility. Many questioned: Had not a one-sided anti-Judaism to some degree prepared the way for such widespread anti-Semitism?

All this gave rise to new reflections on the relations between Christians and Jews and to a renewed theology of Jewish-Christian relations. The most prominent theologians of the era, both Catholic and Protestant, were involved in this rethinking of Christian-Jewish relations. On the Catholic side, I would mention Jacques Maritain in France, Hans Urs von Balthasar and Gertrud Luckner in Germany, Johannes Österreicher in the USA; on the Protestant side, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth. There were also Jewish scholars who became good dialogue partners like Martin Buber, Jules Isaak, Schalom Ben-Chorim, David Flussner and many others. A new era in Christian-Jewish relations began, where treatises “*Contra Judaeis*” were increasingly substituted by treatises “*Pro Judaeis*”.

II. "NOSTRA AETATE" AND THE HERITAGE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

Pope John XXIII had an instinctive sense for what was in ferment in the Church, and he had the courage to authoritatively address these concerns to achieve a breakthrough. Already as Nuncio in Turkey during the war he had personal experience of the fate of the Jews; it was a matter of heart and conscience for him, a personal commitment, to save the lives of many Jews from death in National-Socialist extermination camps. Soon after his elevation to the See of Rome in 1959 he removed from the Good Friday liturgy the expression which speaks of the "faithless Jews". In October 1960 he greeted a group of American Jews with the words "I am Joseph, your brother". Joseph was his baptismal name. After the many centuries in which relations with the Jews were anything but fraternal, this greeting was not in the least a matter of course. After the visit of the distinguished Jewish scholar Jules Isaak, who lost his wife and his daughter in Auschwitz, he decided that the Second Vatican Council was to issue a declaration on Judaism. Cardinal Augustine Bea, a highly respected biblical scholar and former Rector of the Bible Institute in Rome, was entrusted with its preparation.

The way ahead was to become a thorny one. After the document had made its passage through the Council, Cardinal Bea told a friend: "If I had known all the difficulties before, I do not know whether I would have had the courage to take this way". There was vehement opposition both from outside and from within. From inside, the old well-known patterns of traditional anti-Judaism emerged; from outside, there was a storm of protest especially from Muslim countries, with serious threats against the Christians living there as small minorities. In order to save the furniture from the burning house it was decided to integrate the envisaged Declaration as one chapter in the "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions", to be known later as "Nostra aetate".

The Declaration contained two epoch-making resolutions by the Council. Firstly, the theological aspect: following Chapters 9-11 of the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the Council called to mind the Jewish roots of Christianity, our shared heritage as sons of Abraham, and the fact that Jesus, his mother Mary, and the Apostles were Jews. The Declaration establishes expressly, with reference to the Epistle to the Romans, that God's gifts of grace and his calling are irrevocable (cf. *Rom* 11:28-29). Therefore the Declaration prohibits any representation of the Jews as rejected or cursed by God. Secondly, the Council deplored all pogroms, outbreaks of hatred, and manifestations of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at any time and by anyone. Thus "Nostra aetate" thoroughly turned over the ground of history and prepared it for a new sowing and for a fruitful new development.

Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II, had always had good personal Jewish friends from his youth. As Pope he pursued the two insights of "Nos-

tra aetate". Anti-Semitism was for him a fierce violation of human rights, standing against the dignity of every human person, which is not contingent on descent, culture, religion or sex, and therefore in strict contradiction of what is expounded on the very first page of the Bible, that God created the human person, and this means: created every single human person, in his own image and likeness, so that therefore every human person possesses an infinite dignity which deserves absolute respect from his/her neighbor. Anti-Semitism is sin.

John Paul II repeated again and again in many circumstances throughout his long pontificate that the Jewish people are the chosen and beloved people of God, the people of God's covenant which by virtue of God's faithfulness is never broken and is still alive. When he visited the Great Synagogue of Rome he called the Jews "our elder brothers in the faith of Abraham". On the first Sunday of Lent 2000 and in the moving scene on the Western Wall in Jerusalem he prayed for forgiveness for all the sins Christians had committed against Jews, he called the Shoah the Calvary of the 20th century.

Thus both pontificates, that of John XXIII and of John Paul II, have initiated a new historical period of partnership between Jews and Christians in the new 21st century and in the new third millennium. The present Pope Benedict XVI has taken up the legacy of his predecessors. Already as the outstanding theologian he is and as Cardinal he had published important theological articles about the relation of Christians and Jews. As Pope he reaffirmed not only the positions of "Nostra aetate" but offered also fresh deeper theological insights. Thus all the post-Conciliar Popes have strived to prove that conversion, reconciliation and a new beginning are possible even after a difficult, complex and mostly troubled history.

III. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PAST FORTY YEARS

The tasks and the challenges by no means came to an end when the Second Vatican Council concluded in 1965. With the Council's Declaration a firm foundation had been laid, but a good Council Declaration is one thing, its communication and reception within the body and life of the worldwide Church quite another — not to mention its practical implementation at the grass roots level of the Church.

So the years after the Council were characterized by lively debates regarding the correct interpretation and appropriate implementation of the Council, especially of Chapter 4 of "Nostra aetate". As it turned out, the Council Declaration was only the beginning of a new beginning. It was necessary to continue building upon the foundation laid by the Council, and to translate the Council's Declaration not only into the language but also into the different, rapidly changing contexts. All of that forms the background for the action of Pope Paul VI in establishing on 22 October 1974 the *Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews* as a separate organization but

still connected with the *Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity*.

The Commission has been able to publish a series of helpful documents: *Guidelines and Suggestions for the Implementation of the Conciliar Declaration "Nostra Aetate" Article 4* (1974); *Notes on the correct way to present Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church* (1985); *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah* (1998). We will return to the latter document later.

Documents are important, but they are not everything. Documents can become dead letters if they are not translated into personal face to face encounters. So for our Commission from the beginning the publication of papers did not occupy the foreground but the encounter with living people. It organized many personal encounters with individual Jewish representatives, rabbis, theologians, diplomats, politicians, as well as regular institutional meetings with Jewish organizations. I will mention here only the *International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations* (IJCIC), which together with our Commission forms the *International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee* (ILC).

On his pastoral journeys Pope John Paul II met Jewish representatives quite regularly. The most important encounters took place in the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau (1979), in Mainz during his first visit to Germany (1980), in Rome during his visit to the Great Synagogue (1986), at a concert in memory of the Shoah (1994), in the Memorial Centre Yad Wa-Shem in Jerusalem (2000) and at the Babi Yar Memorial near Kiev (2001). Pope Benedict XVI has followed this with his visit to the Synagogues of Cologne (2005) and New York (2008), his visit to the concentration and extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau (2006), at Yad Wa-Shem and at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem (2009).

Of the many events I would like to single out two above all. I have to mention the visits by Pope Paul VI (1964), Pope John Paul II (2000) and Pope Benedict XVI (2009) to the Holy Land. It is also important to mention the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel (1993/94), which was preceded by a "Fundamental Agreement". Over the past decades this relationship has proved to be robust enough to withstand the pressures created by the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Regarding this tragic conflict we hold the conviction that the conflict cannot be solved by force of arms alone, which can instead lead to a vicious spiral of violence; there is no alternative to a dialogue process which respects the legitimate interests of both sides and has as its goal reconciliation and lasting peace.

It would of course be an illusion and totally impossible to think that everything could be done from Rome and at the highest level. The Catholic Church exists "in and of local churches" (*Lumen gentium* 23) which bear their own responsibility. Following the Council many Episcopal Conferences established individual commissions for dialogue with Judaism and published important declarations. Of

particular significance are the North American, French and German Episcopal Conferences. On the part of the Protestants, particularly at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, similar groups and documents can be found. The collection of all these texts up until 2000 encompasses two thick volumes.

For a time the dialogue took place primarily in Europe and North America, where we find a gratifying number of organizations and institutions dedicated to Jewish-Christian dialogue; more recently Latin America has become another focus. In 2001 the conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) took place in Montevideo (Uruguay); the meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee (ILC) in 2004 took place in Buenos Aires (Argentina), followed in 2006 in Cape Town (South Africa) and the last one in 2008 in Budapest (Hungary). All these meetings were conducted at a high academic level and were characterized by the growing trust and friendship in our relationship.

Besides the contacts and meetings at the universal level we were able to form in 2002 an official dialogue group in Israel itself, consisting of rabbis appointed by the Chief Rabbinate on the one hand and representatives of the Holy See on the other. The conversations take place alternately in Jerusalem and Rome, in an excellent atmosphere. So it has been possible to issue a series of joint declarations on the sanctity of life, family values, the significance of the shared holy scriptures for contemporary society and the education of the coming generation, as well as on social justice and ethical conduct.

The most difficult task and challenge was the dialogue about the Shoah. After various Episcopal Conferences had already published declarations, our Commission seized the initiative and published what must be its most significant document *We Remember. A Reflection on the Shoah* (1998). The murder of millions of men, women, and children was unambiguously designated as a crime and an inexpressible tragedy, which Christians did not oppose with the resistance which one should have been able to expect from the followers of Christ. The declaration expresses its regret at the failure of the sons and daughters of the church. The document distinguishes between anti-Semitism, as a typically modern neo-pagan ideology, and anti-Judaism and the feelings of distrust and hostility which it aroused, but this distinction does not prevent it from unequivocally condemning both attitudes. Finally, remorse over the past merges into the commitment to construct a new future together.

The text received recognition but also a good deal of criticism on the part of the Jewish world, for whom some statements did not go far enough. It is not my intention to enter into the arguments pro and contra again here. I would like to simply repeat the words of my predecessor Cardinal Edward Cassidy who said: "This is a first word, but not the last". Indeed, who would wish to speak the last word here? In the end we must remain silent out of respect for the victims and the inexpressible mystery of the hidden God. God alone can utter the last word, and he will utter it at the end of time.

But that does not relieve us of the responsibility to do what we can within history. For we are obliged to do whatever is within our power to prevent such monstrous crimes recurring in the future. We must preserve the memory of the past out of respect for the victims and as a lesson for the future. Our concern is, as far as it is humanly possible, to keep the past alive in order to learn from it and to make use of what has been learned for the construction of a better and hopefully shared future. It is a matter of *memoria futuri*.

IV. RECENT AND FUTURE TASKS AND CHALLENGES

Coming to the future tasks and challenges I would like to start with some historical problems. Again and again we discover that we know too little of one another and our history. Such ignorance is the breeding ground of many prejudices, which often do not stand the test of closer historical scrutiny. Here there is still a good deal of research work to be done. The influence and significance of Judaism for Christianity, its history, its liturgy, for biblical studies but also for literature and philosophy are more or less well known. Less well known is the reverse influence which Christianity has exercised over Judaism. Later again Judaism was influenced by Christianity above all in its liturgy, as we now know. Here there is much which awaits historical research.

The Shoah has rightly been the subject of a great deal of historical attention, but there is still much archival material to be worked through. The Vatican Archives at this moment are accessible only till 1939, i.e., the Pontificate of Pope Pius XI. The archives on the Pontificate of Pope Pius XII have still to be registered and prepared for use in about six years time. This Pontificate and the alleged silence of Pope Pius XII on the Shoah is still a matter of controversy between a good deal of Jewish and Catholic scholars. Most Catholic scholars are of the opinion that a so-called prophetic critique, to which many Jews refer, would have provoked probably even more violent reactions from that brutal Nazi system; therefore the Pope decided to speak only in a clear but also prudent way and to help practically as much as he could in this dark and difficult situation. Thus the Vatican, the Lateran and all the religious convents in Rome became an asylum for many thousands of Jewish people, whose lives thereby could be saved. After the war and after his death high-ranking Jewish personalities, such as Golda Meir and the then Chief Rabbi of Israel, praised Pius XII and thanked him for his commitment.

The second challenge involves the fundamental theological problems. Jews and Christians have many essentials in common: Jesus, his mother Mary, the Apostles were all Jews. We share almost all of the Old Testament writings. We also share the belief in the One God, the understanding of the world as God's creation, the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person, the Ten Commandments, the Messianic hope and much else besides. Christianity has

therefore a unique relationship with Judaism which it has with no other religion, and it is absolutely in the interest of Christianity to rediscover its Jewish roots which bear and nourish it (cf. *Rom* 11:17).

This has absolutely nothing to do with ignoring or downplaying differences in belief. There are differences which are constitutive for both Jewish and Christian existence and which neither of us can or will relinquish. In the doctrine of the Trinity and in Christology we can with goodwill overcome gross misunderstandings and polemics, but we can hardly eliminate the fundamental difference itself. Even though many Jewish exegetes today show an interest in the person and message of Jesus, an irreconcilable difference remains in the New Testament message of Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God. So Jews and Christians are different. That is not only to be tolerated but also to be respected. Differences in beliefs are not to be misused as pretexts for hostility; we must acknowledge and esteem one another in our diversity.

Today there are new burning issues in addition to the traditional problems. Since the Second Vatican Council we have abandoned the old substitution theory, which held that Judaism had become a superseded religion with the emergence of Christianity and that the Jewish people had become a people rejected and condemned by God; now with the apostle Paul we hold fast that God did not reject his people (*Rom* 11:2) for God's promises are irrevocable (*Rom* 11:29). So we emphasize the continuing validity of God's covenant with the Jewish people. But now the question has become inevitable regarding the relationship of the old and the new covenant. The question now is how the universal salvatory significance of Jesus Christ and his death on the Cross, which is fundamental to the new covenant, can be reconciled with the continued validity of the old covenant. These questions ultimately lead to the question: What does the Conciliar position mean for the salvation of the Jews and for Christian mission, which by its very nature is universal? Can there be or must there be also mission toward Jews?

It is evident that these questions touch on the respective very identity of Jewish and Christian belief. Therefore easy answers are not at all possible. Over the last years these questions have provoked hard and harsh debates and controversies, sometimes also among Christian theologians themselves. In this context and in the short time available I cannot deal with these questions in detail. Let me therefore give as an answer only one small insight. On the one hand, it seems to me evident that we as Christians have to give witness (*martyria*) to our faith in Jesus Christ by word and deed. Yet on the other hand, it should be borne in mind that an organized and aimed missionary activity towards Jews has never existed in Church history. There can be and there are single conversions of Jews to Christianity, but according to Paul the people of Israel will exist till the end of times. Then, when Jesus comes again, Israel will recognize him as the awaited Messiah. Then the whole of Israel shall be saved (*Rom* 11:26).

To sum up, we are only at the beginning and still far away from a generally satisfactory Christian theology of Judaism. Thus the Jewish-Christian dialogue, if it is conducted seriously, is a difficult one and will remain so. We dare not therefore approach Jewish-Christian dialogue with naïve expectations unilaterally oriented towards harmony. The important thing is to acknowledge the other in his otherness. Only if we recognize one another in our otherness can we be honest dialogue partners, only then can we also learn from one another.

As the third and last point on our future relations, I would like to cite practical co-operation. This opens up a broad area, and in this regard we made a significant advance in Buenos Aires 2004, when we were confronted with the enormous social problems of Latin America. We became acquainted with recently initiated cooperative practical social and charitable undertakings between Jews and Christians working together professionally and effectively in order to help children suffering in the then economic crisis in Argentina. In Cape Town 2006 we initiated co-operation in helping HIV infected children and adults. In Budapest 2008 we spoke about dignifying the human person by health-care. All this is not a matter of utopian 'do-gooder' programs. The rabbinical tradition has expressed the issue thus: "Whoever saves one human life saves the whole world".

So our dialogue should not just be backward-looking, nor should it involve only questions of principle, it should also face up to contemporary and future practical tasks and challenges. Jews and Christians, who have for so long remained hostile or indifferent to one another, can become allies in social and charitable cooperation for the benefit of humanity as a whole. We need one another and the world needs us.

For that reason too we should overcome old prej-

udices, both anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism, which has been called the last permissible prejudice. Overcoming anti-Semitism and developing cordial relations between the religious communities is not possible at one stroke, but remains a permanent educational task overlapping successive generations. Alarming signs of a new upsurge of anti-Semitism have shown that great efforts are still necessary to enable the Council's visions to become reality.

We have a great shared heritage to maintain, our shared image of human beings, their unique worth and their responsibility before God, our understanding of the world as God's creation, our concepts of justice and peace, family values and the hope of an ultimate salvation and consummation. That is a rich heritage which humanity in its present crisis of orientation urgently needs. And it is one that can be all the more convincingly and powerfully effective if we work together. Our shared heritage should be an obligation to give shared answers to contemporary challenges. If cooperation between Jews and Christians is successful, then the promise made to Abraham, our common forefather in faith, will in part be realized: "You will become famous and be a blessing to others"; "Everyone on earth will be blessed because of you" (*Gen 12:2-3*).

Let me conclude. Despite all our differences Jews and Christians share Messianic hope. In a world which is wracked by so many problems and is often afraid of the future, Jews and Christians can hold hope aloft together. On the basis of bitter and painful historical experience we can testify that despite otherness and alienness, in spite of historical failures and guilt, repentance, reconciliation, peace and friendship are possible. So by our fraternity, when we walk shoulder to shoulder we can become a blessing to our world and witnesses to shalom, peace.

“YOUTH AGAINST WAR” CONCERT
ON THE 70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE START OF WORLD WAR II

8 October 2009

On Thursday evening, 8 October, the Holy Father attended a concert in the Auditorium on Via della Conciliazione, entitled “Youth against war”.

The musical event was organized jointly by the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany and Jewish organizations, in remembrance of the need to foster harmony and dialogue, to promote reconciliation and peace and to banish forever the spectre of the horrors of war. Conducting the German Inter-Regional Youth Symphony Orchestra were Jochem Hochstenbach and Wolfgang Gönnerwein. The programme included two Lieder by Mahler, the fourth movement of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony and Mendelssohn’s Fourth Symphony. Music by these composers was chosen because both were Jewish by birth and subsequently baptized: Mahler Catholic, Mendelssohn Lutheran. Moreover, both were victimized by discrimination and anti-Semitism.

The following is a translation of the Pope’s words given in Italian and German at the end of the performance.

*Mr President of the Italian Republic,
Your Eminences, Venerable Synod Fathers,
Mr Ambassadors, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I accepted with pleasure your invitation to the concert: “*Youth against war concert 70 years from the beginning of the Second World War*”, sponsored jointly by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, the Embassy of Germany to the Holy See and the *Europäisches KulturForum Mainau*, with the patronage of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations. My heartfelt gratitude goes to all the sponsors and organizers; I thank in particular Cardinal Walter Kasper for interpreting your common sentiments. Grateful for their presence, I address a respectful thought to the President of the Italian Republic and to his distinguished wife. By using the universal language of music, this initiative intends to encourage young people to build the future of the world together, inspired by the values of peace and human brotherhood. I greet the Cardinals, the Synod Fathers, the distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, the sponsors and everyone present.

I warmly thank the young musicians from 15 regions who play in the *Inter-Regionalen Jugend-Sinfonieorchester*, with their Conductors Prof. Wolfgang Gönnerwein and Jochem Hochstenbach for their exceptional performance. Likewise, I thank the soloist Michelle Breedt for her expressive singing and Prof. Klaus Maria Brandauer for his lively interpretation of the texts. My gratitude extends to all those who made this evening possible: the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) as a sponsor of the concert and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the German Embassy to the Holy See and the *Europäische KulturForum Mainau* as organizers.

Dear friends, this evening the tragedy of the Second World War returns to our minds, that inhuman page of history of combined violence and brutality which caused the death of millions, leaving the winners divided and Europe to be rebuilt. The war,

desired by National Socialism, involved many innocent peoples of Europe and on other continents, while with the tragedy of the Shoah it targeted in particular the Jewish people who were the object of programmed extermination. Yet invitations to reasonableness and peace were extended on many sides. Here in Rome, the distressed voice of my venerable Predecessor Pius XII still echoes. In his Radio Message of 24 August 1939 just before the outbreak of the war he proclaimed with determination: “Nothing is lost with peace. All can be lost with war” (cf. AAS XXXI, 1939, p. 334). Unfortunately no one succeeded in preventing that terrible catastrophe; the logic of egoism and violence inexorably prevailed. May the remembrance of those grievous events be a warning, especially to the new generations, never again to give in to the temptation of war.

As Cardinal Kasper recalled, this year we are commemorating another important anniversary: the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, an eloquent symbol of the end of the totalitarian Communist regimes of Eastern Europe. “The collapse of the wall” John Paul II wrote, “and the fall of dangerous idols and of ideologies which enslave people have shown that basic freedoms which give meaning to human life cannot be suffocated or repressed for long” (Message for *Katholikentag*, 23 May 1990; *L’Osservatore Romano* English edition, [ORE], 11 June 1990, p. 10). Europe and the whole world are thirsting for freedom and peace! It is necessary to build together a true civilization which is not based on force but is “the fruit of a victory over ourselves, over the powers of injustice, selfishness and hatred which can go so far as to disfigure man himself!” (John Paul II, “Apostolic Letter on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War”, n. 12; ORE, 4 September 1989, p. 3). The ecumenical movement which found a catalyser in the Second World War, as Cardinal Kasper appropriately emphasized, can contribute to building this true civilization, working together with Jews and all believers. May God bless us and grant to humanity the gift of his peace. Dear friends, thank you again for coming.

ORE, 14 October 2009

SECOND ORDINARY SPECIAL ASSEMBLY FOR AFRICA OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

4-25 October 2009

INTERVENTION OF CARDINAL WALTER KASPER

*President of the Pontifical Council
for Promoting Christian Unity*

Fourth General Congregation, 6 October 2009

In the initial days of the Synod, Cardinal Walter Kasper delivered an intervention outlining the ecumenical situation and the “challenges” which are emerging in the African continent, in relation to Christian unity. The following is the text of his intervention.

From the very beginning of his pontificate and following in the footsteps of his predecessors, the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI has on several occasions intensely affirmed the irreversible commitment of the Catholic Church to ecumenism initiated by the Second Vatican Council. This commitment derives from our fidelity to Christ. On the eve of his passion and death he prayed that His disciples be one, just as He is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The ecumenical commitment stands also at the very heart of Christ’s mission and our mission to the world: “That they all may be one, so that the world may believe” (*John 17:21*). This sacred obligation is therefore not something that is added on, but is in its very essence a Gospel imperative with which we are entrusted.

Indeed, the theme of the Synod (*In Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace*) places the whole ecumenical question at its very centre. For the credibility of our witness and mission for reconciliation and peace has been seriously harmed by the divisions within the body of Christ. Christian divisions remain a scandal to the preaching of the Gospel, and therefore ecumenism and its goal of full visible unity cannot be an optional alternative.

While there has been, thank God, a rapid growth of the Church in Africa, there is sadly also an increasingly deeper fragmentation among Christians. Although this situation is not unique to Africa, it is too easy to assume that these divisions are historically entrenched through the legacy of the divided Christianity that Africa received, for there are today also many new divisions in Africa itself, and we need only think of the more recent appearance of Charismatic and Pentecostal communities, the so-called Independent churches and the sects. Their growth worldwide is extensive, and their vitality on the African continent is reflected in the growth of the African Independent Churches, which have now formed an official institution, the OAIC, based in

Nairobi. A certain level of dialogue in this context is currently undertaken through the Global Christian Forum, which recently met in Nairobi.

On other levels a serious dialogue with these groups is not easy, if not in many cases totally impossible, because of their aggressive behaviour and — to say the least — their low theological standard. Yet we need to face this urgent challenge with a self-critical attitude. For it is not enough to question what is wrong with them; we need to ask what is wrong or what is deficient with our own pastoral work. Why do so many Christians leave our Church? What are they missing with us and searching for elsewhere? The PCPCU has made efforts to offer some insight into these issues by organising two symposiums for bishops and theologians, one held in Nairobi and one in Dakar. We are ready to help also in the future. In this context I want to mention only two important points: ecumenical catechetical formation and the building up of small Christian communities within our parishes.

Let me now come to some of the many other challenges and tasks.

1. We now look back on almost fifty years of ecumenical dialogue. Significant ecumenical progress has been made since the Second Vatican Council, but the path to full ecclesial communion probably remains long and arduous due to the difficulties which remain in our theological dialogues. Appropriate steps are now required to engage together with our ecumenical partners in a process of reception of the fruits of the dialogues. The commitment of the Church on the universal level must be translated and received in the local churches. This will need to happen in catechesis and in theological formation, on the diocesan and on the parochial levels.

2. While traditionally the Catholic Church in Africa has maintained ongoing dialogue with the historical and nowadays also with the more recent Protestant traditions, the recent rapid spread of Orthodoxy across the continent makes it essential for the Catholic Church in Africa to engage also in positive dialogue and relationships with our Orthodox brothers and sisters.

3. The Catholic Church in Africa must give impetus to ecumenical relations with the Evangelical, Charismatic and the Pentecostal movements on the African continent also because of the relevance of their indigenous expressions and their affinity with

the traditional African cultural worldview. Such an ecumenical engagement calls for inspired fidelity to the Church's principles on ecumenism on the one hand (*UR*, 2-4), and a specific understanding of African cultural expressions on the other. Dialogue and the pursuit of unity must therefore take seriously the context of African cultural roots. Indeed, the roots of different trees standing apart in the neighbourhood will intertwine, even as they remain distinct in their struggle to access the same life-giving sources of soil and water. This intertwining is emblematic of ecumenical rapprochement, and is linked to the whole question of inculturation and contextual relevance.

4. Our search for unity in truth and love must never lose sight of the understanding that Church unity is the work and gift of God's Holy Spirit, and goes well beyond our own efforts. Therefore spiritual ecumenism, especially prayer, is the very heart of the ecumenical commitment (*UR*, 8). Yet ecumenism will not bear lasting fruits if it is not accompanied by tangible gestures of conversion, which stir the con-

science and foster the healing of memories and relationships. As the Decree on Ecumenism asserts, "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart [...]" (*UR*, 7). Such a *metanoia* (*UR*, 5-8; *UUS*, 15f.; 83f.) would bring us closer to God at the centre of our lives, in such a way that we too come closer to one another.

Thus the theme of the Synod offers a challenge to the Church in Africa to sharpen its ecumenical vision and to offer the pursuit of unity to the people of Africa as an authentic treasure of the Gospel. The Catholic Church in Africa is encouraged to continue building bridges of friendship and, through prayerful spiritual ecumenism and the consequent discernment of the will of God, to engage in "the ministry of reconciliation" (*2 Cor* 5:18), which has been entrusted to us through Christ. That is the underlying basis of our ecumenical commitment. The renewal of the inner life of our hearts and minds is the crux of all dialogue and reconciliation, making ecumenism a mutual commitment of understanding, respect and love, so that the world may believe.

<http://www.vatic.va/>

HIS HOLINESS PATRIARCH ABUNA PAULOS

*Patriarch of the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church Special guest
of the Holy Father to the Synod*

Third General Congregation, 6 October 2009

On Tuesday morning October 6, 2009, in memory of the monk, St Bruno, in the presence of the Holy Father, after the Hour of Terce, the Third General Congregation began to vote on the Commission for the Message and to commence the interventions by the Synodal Fathers in the Hall on the synodal theme "The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace". "You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world" (Mt 5:13,14).

The Pope's special guest to this Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was His Holiness Abuna Paulos, head of one of the most ancient and most representative traditions of African Christianity, the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church.

As a young monk and priest he pursued his studies first in Ethiopia and later in the United States. He personally experienced the painful consequences in Ethiopia following the fall of the emperor and the emergence of Derg revolutionaries in 1974. His episcopal consecration with four other bishops was marked by imprisonment. The five new bishops were arrested because they were ordained without the permission of the Derg and the dismissed Patriarch.

Already at that time Abuna Paulos had become interested in Christian unity, the Patriarch nominated him bishop in charge of ecumenism and he has continued to maintain his involvement in the ecumenical field, being elected in 2006 among the seven Presidents of the World Council of Churches.

We publish here below the introduction of the distinguished guest to the synodal fathers by the acting President-Delegate, His Eminence Cardinal Wilfrid Fox Napier, OFM, Archbishop of Durban (South Africa), followed by the intervention of Abuna Paulos and the words of appreciation of Pope Benedict XVI after Abuna Paulos' presentation.

WELCOME SPEECH BY CARDINAL WILFRID FOX NAPIER

I am certain that I express the sentiments of all of you when I say that we are very grateful to the Holy Father for inviting His Holiness Abuna Paulos, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, to address this Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops.

In His Holiness Abuna Paulos we will hear the voice of a Church that for nearly two thousand years has lived and borne testimony to the Gospel in Africa, giving rise to a Christian civilization of holy men and women, of social and cultural values and institutions that have farmed and informed the people and the nation at their very heart.

Just as the continent of Africa faces enormous

challenges, so too do the Churches in Africa face painful tests and trials. His Holiness has personally experienced the rigours of jail and exile. The rich monastic, spiritual, liturgical and cultural life of the Ethiopian Church is a heritage of the Christian tradition to be cherished and loved by all of us.

Your Holiness, we will listen to your words with appreciation and gratitude.

REFLECTION BY HIS HOLINESS ABUNA PAULOS

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

Dear participants of this great congress of Cardinals and Bishops,

I feel honoured and privileged to be invited to this grand Synod and deliver a brief speech about Africa and Churches in this continent. I am especially grateful to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, who wanted me among you today and who personally witnessed to me his love for Africa and his respect for the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, during our last fraternal meeting here in Rome last June.

Africa is the second largest continent. It is home to all kinds of people with a great variety of colours who live in harmony and equality.

This spectrum of colours is a gift from God to Africa and it adds beauty to the continent. It is furthermore the proof that Africa is a continent where all kinds of people live in equality regardless of difference in colour and race. Anthropologists, philosophers, and academicians confirmed that Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular is indeed the cradle of mankind. And the Holy Bible confirms this profound conviction. History, according to the Ethiopian calendar starts from Adam and Noah. That is to say that for the Ethiopians the beginning of mankind, our present and our future is marked today and for ever by God and His salvation.

Africa, whose people's ancient dignity is written in the stones of the Axum obelisk, Egyptian pyramids, of monuments as well as manuscripts, was not only a source of civilization. According to the Holy Bible, Africa was also a refuge for people who were hit by hunger: this is the case of the Jews at the time of Jacob when they spent seven years in Egypt.

The Holy Bible states that the Jews and the prophet Jeremiah who suffered a lot from the aggression of the Babylonians were saved in Ethiopia and Egypt. People who were living in Middle Eastern parts of the world had been relieved from their hunger in Ethiopia and Egypt.

Jesus Christ Himself and Saint Mary were welcomed in Egypt, while fleeing the cruel threat of Herod. It is clear that Africans do care for humanity!

Africa remains a religious continent whose people have believed in the Almighty God for centuries. Queen Sheba had taught her compatriots about the Old Testament which she learnt from Israel. Since then, The Ark of the Covenant is in Ethiopia, in the city of Axum.

The son of queen Sheba, Manlike I, had followed

her example and managed to bring the Ark of the Covenant of Moses to Africa, Ethiopia.

The history of the Ethiopian eunuch and the strong, well organized Law of Moses, and the religious practices and cultures in depth that exist in Ethiopia indicate that the Law of Moses used to be practiced in Ethiopia better than that of in Israel. Still this can be witnessed by studying culture and living style of Ethiopians.

It is in Alexandria, Egypt, where the Holy Bible was translated into non-Hebrew languages. These African translations are known as the "Translation of the Seventy Scholars" ('Sebeka Likawunt').

Holy Scripture indicates that like the ancient times in the Old Testament, Africans have the custom of worshiping by the law of conscience in the New Testament period.

The then Ethiopian king of kings, emperor Bazen, was one of the kings who went to Bethlehem to worship the child Jesus.

The Gospel tells us that it was an African, a man from Libya, named Simon of Cyrene who took upon himself the Cross of Jesus as He was going to Golgotha.

And behold, an Ethiopian eunuch had come to Jerusalem in 34 AD to worship God in accordance with the Law of Moses. By the order of the Holy Spirit, the eunuch was baptized by Philip. Upon his return to Africa, the eunuch preached Christianity to his nation. Then Ethiopia became the second nation after Israel to believe in Christ; and the Ethiopian Church became the first Church in Africa.

Great stories of faith have marked the first centuries of Christianity in Africa because Africans have always lived a profound charity and a great devotion in the New Testament.

Africa is the region from where celebrated scholars and religious fathers, such as St. Augustinos, St. Tertulianos, St. Siprianos as well as St. Athnasius and St. Kerlos come from. These fathers are celebrated both in the continent and world wide.

St. Yared who has composed beautiful Church hymns and whom the world recognizes for his outstanding creativity, was also originally from Africa. St. Yared is a son of Ethiopia. St. Yared's hymns are among the wonders of the world for which Ethiopia is known to the world. The deeds of all these Fathers characterize Africa.

According to scholars it is in Africa that the first Canon of the Holy Bible was defined. History also reminds us of the martyrdom of Christians in North Africa when, their kind, a non-believer, raised the sword against them in the effort of completely destroy Christianity. At the same time Christians who were mistreated and persecuted in different parts of the world came to Africa, especially to Ethiopia and have lived in peace in the region.

Devoted Ethiopians have also demonstrated their outstanding hospitality to the nine Saints and other tens of thousands of Christians who were persecuted from Eastern Europe and came to Africa in groups. The residences and the tombs of those persecuted Christians have been kept as sacred shrines in various parts of Ethiopia.

In Africa and in Ethiopia we have pieces of the Holy Cross. The right part of the Cross has been kept in Ethiopia, in a place called Goshen Mountain.

The Cross of Christ was carried also by the Christians of Africa. I am thinking about my Church that recently suffered a hard persecution during the communist dictatorship, with many new martyrs among whom the Patriarch Theophilos, and before him, Abuna Petros, during the colonial period. I myself, then a bishop, spent long years in jail before being exiled. When I became Patriarch, after the end of communism, there was much to be rebuilt. This has been our work, through the help of God, the prayer of our monks and the generosity of the faithful.

Africa is a potentially wealthy continent, with fertile soil, natural resources, and a variety of plants and animal species. Africa has a suitable climate and possesses several precious minerals. For it has been a continent with many untapped natural resources, many have still their eyes on it. It is also undeniable that the civilization gains in other parts of the world is the result of labour and resource from Africa.

Africans have done such blessed works for the world. What has the world done for them? Africa had been badly colonized and its resources have been exploited. The rich nations who developed exploiting African resources remember Africa only when they need something from it. They haven't supported the continent in its struggle for the development at all. Each and every nation of the continent have various problems and challenges. The problem could be social, political, economic, as well as spiritual.

While the living standard of the African peoples is lower than that of the rest of the world, there are some reasons why such poor living standards get worse and expand all over the continent. The lack of access to education is the major problem in which the youth as a result fail to get enough education. No country and people do achieve development and prosperity without education and knowledge.

As we all are well aware, the HIV/AIDS pandemic could not be averted despite relentless efforts. However, we should encourage all those experiences that show us how to heal and resist evil, to give hope by creating synergy and by providing to Africa the same treatments Europe itself has received. At the same time other kinds of diseases are currently threatening badly. We call the world to work in harmony in this regard. The Council of All African Churches is exerting efforts to curb the problems being occurred in the continent especially the chaos which extremists are creating. Religious leaders of Christianity and the faithful in general should join hands in this endeavour.

Africa is enchained by heavy global debts that both the current generation nor the future ones can bear. In what way should we condemn the civil war that is usually fought by child soldiers who are also the victims of these tragic violent acts. How to condemn the overtly and covertly displacement and migration of people? The International Human Rights Law clearly states that any person under the age of 18 cannot be a member of any fighting group

because he is a 'child'. However, some countries are currently forcing children under 18 into military service. This is a clear violation of human rights. Therefore, it is mandatory for leaders of African Churches to cry out as one voice that these behaviours have to stop at once.

Therefore, I would like to use the floor to urge all religious leaders to work for peace and protect the natural resources God gave us, and defend the life and innocence of children. In a significant number of African countries, basic necessities such as food and potable water and shelter couldn't be realized. Generally speaking, most Africans live in a situation where there is a shortage of most of the basic human necessities and services. Though Africa declared its freedom from colonialism long ago, there are still many circumstances which make it dependent on the rich countries. The enormous debt, the exploitation of its natural resources by few, the traditional agricultural practice and unsatisfactory introduction of modern agricultural systems, the dependency of its people on rain which impacted negatively in ensuring food security, migration and brain drain of its people greatly affecting the continent. I am hopeful that as their Graces African cardinals and bishops had discussed this issue previously, today this great synod would discuss the issue and propose possible solutions.

I believe that we, religious leaders and Heads of Churches, have a very unique task and responsibility: to acknowledge and sustain, when we deem it necessary, the suggestions that come from the people, as, on the contrary, to reject them when they contradict the respect and love for Man, that has its roots in the Gospel. Christians are expected to be messengers of change in bringing justice, peace, reconciliation and development. It is what I saw pursued with determination and humility by the Community of Sant'Egidio in all of Africa: fruits of peace and healing are possible, and they undermine all forms of violence, with the strength and the Christian intelligence of love. African religious leaders not only have to worry about the social works but also answer to the great spiritual needs of the women and men of Africa. Apostleship and social works cannot be treated separately. Social work is the meaning of apostleship. Every word has to be translated in practice. Hence, after every word and promise, practical actions need to follow. Religious fathers are also expected to enhance the awareness of the public to honour human right, peace and justice. Society needs the teachings of their religious fathers in a bid to help them solve their problems in unity and to free themselves from being the target of a problem.

Thus leaders of African Churches, with the power of the Almighty God and the Holy Spirit, need to voice the language of the Church. It is also necessary to realize when, how and to whom to speak. This should be done for the safety of the Churches. I am really very happy to participate to this Synod of the Catholic Church on Africa. I am an African. My Church is the oldest of Africa: a Church of Martyrs, Saints and monks. I carry my support as a friend and

a brother to this endeavour of the Catholic Church for Africa. I thank His Holiness for the invitation and I wish to him a long life and a fruitful ministry. Let us speak of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the heart of the Africans and Jesus will return to Africa, as he did when he was a child together with the Virgin Mary. And peace, mercy and justice will come together with Jesus!

May God bless the Churches in Africa and their pastors! Amen!

WORDS OF APPRECIATION OF THE POPE

Your Holiness, I thank you wholeheartedly for your thoughtful presentation and for accepting my invitation to take part in the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops. I am sure that my gratitude and appreciation are shared by all the members of the Assembly.

Your presence bears eloquent witness to the antiquity and rich traditions of the Church in Africa. From apostolic times, among the many people yearning to hear Christ's message of salvation were those coming from Ethiopia (cf. *Acts* 8:26-40). Your people's fidelity to the Gospel continues to be shown not only by their obedience to his law of love, but also, as you have reminded us, by perseverance amid perse-

cution and the supreme sacrifice of martyrdom for the name of Christ.

Your Holiness has recalled that the proclamation of the Gospel cannot be separated from the commitment to build a society which conforms to God's will, respects the blessings of his creation and protects the dignity and innocence of all his children. In Christ we know that reconciliation is possible, justice can prevail, peace can endure! This is the message of hope which we are called to proclaim. This is the promise which the people of Africa long to see fulfilled in our day.

Let us pray, then, that our Churches may draw closer in the unity which is the Holy Spirit's gift, and bear common witness to the hope brought by the Gospel. Let us continue to work for the integral development of all Africa's peoples, strengthening the families which are the bulwark of African society, educating the young who are Africa's future, and contributing to the building of societies marked by honesty, integrity and solidarity. May our deliberations during these weeks help Christ's followers throughout the continent to be convincing examples of righteousness, mercy and peace, and a light to guide the path of coming generations.

Your Holiness, once again I thank you for your presence and your valued reflections. May your participation in this Synod be a blessing for our Churches.

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INTERVENTIONS OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES

The Catholic Church continues to foster ecumenical relations with the other Churches and ecclesial communities, as witnessed by the presence at the Synod of fraternal delegates invited by the General Secretariate of the Synod of Bishops in collaboration with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The fraternal delegates present at this special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops represented a range of Christian traditions in the continent: Archbishop Makarios, Metropolitan of Kenya of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria; His Grace Bernhard Ntahoturi, Archbishop of the Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi; His Excellency Barnaba El Soryany, Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Italy; His Grace Michael Kehinde Stephen, Archbishop of the Methodist diocese of Ibadan (Nigeria) and His Grace Owdenburg Moses Mdegella, Bishop of the Lutheran diocese of Iringa (Tanzania).

With the exception of H. E. Makarios, who had to leave urgently the day before his scheduled presentation, all the fraternal delegates intervened at the Synod. We publish here below the text of their speeches.

HIS GRACE BERNHARD NTAHOTURI

*Archbishop of the Province of the Anglican Church
of Burundi*

Eighth General Congregation, 9 October 2009

The theme chosen for this Synod is a subject pertinent for Africa today. And through these meetings, the Catholic Church makes known the extent of her pastoral work for African society. The Church invites all its members and other Christians, as well as other believers and persons of good will, to a dynamism which reveals God the Creator and Savior of humanity; a God of Love and the source of life, to transform the situations Africa is called to live through.

When we look around us, in deepest Africa, we can see several worrisome situations, such as the generalized deterioration of the quality of life, the lack of means for the education of young peoples, the lack of the basic health and social services, dragging with it the persistence of endemic diseases, the terrible AIDS epidemic, the horror of fratricidal wars fed by unscrupulous arms trafficking, the shameful and pitiable spectacles of the refugees and displaced persons, etc...

Africa is undergoing a movement of growth, it is not a static state. Africa moves in all directions: political, economic, social and cultural, and especially spiritual. Africa is a continent of opportunities. The Church-Family of God in Africa must be marked by a

deep sense of fraternity that goes beyond the boundaries of one's family, one's tribe or ethnic group, by the holy way it receives from Christ, fullness of life. Since he is alive, we shall live, and the members of the ecumenical family will answer that they are present at the meeting of fraternity.

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HIS EXCELLENCY BARNABA EL SORYANY

Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Italy

Ninth General Congregation, 9 October 2009

We have cherished memories of Africa, from the moment our father Abraham arrived and when Jacob and his sons came to live in Egypt, the land where Moses grew up and from which, by the hand of God, freed the people of Israel. The dear land which welcomed the Holy Family fleeing from persecution. The Egypt of Saint Mark and his evangelization of the peoples. The country where the monasticism of Saint Anthony Abbot was born. Saint Athanasius and Saint Cyril the Great and many Saints and Martyrs who sacrificed their lives to defend our Christian faith.

We all know that this continent has suffered greatly from colonialism which exploited its natural resources and was not concerned with its populations, who were left in poverty, illness, hunger, complete abandonment. Not to mention the wars which have stained our beloved Africa with blood and still continue to devastate; the exploitation of child soldiers, persecutions and day-to-day violence of Christians in the social sphere, the destruction of family values.

Here lies the Church's duty in evangelization through the culture of charity, the promotion of peace and love which is concretized in healing the sick, helping the poor, defending the oppressed, in short, raising up the human being. Of fundamental importance is the care of worship, catechesis for children and their families, to make them feel welcomed in the one family of Christ.

Brothers, let us go! Let us complete the path of the apostles, those who set forth into the world to evangelize without owning anything yet full of faith in the work of the Holy Spirit. Let us bring the living message of Jesus to all these countries who live in need and poverty but which are spiritually rich with the grace of Jesus.

Let us join in prayer for the accomplishment of the work of God in service to these countries, strong in patience and in the hope that tomorrow will be better than today and that the world might hear the voice of those who suffer so that Divine Providence may extend them a hand.

Let us go! Let us leave the many difficulties aside and look at the most important thing which is the building of the Kingdom of God in this continent, to bring the Word of God to each and every one, this is our goal.

My wish is for a good conclusion to this Holy

Synod, that it may echo greatly in the world, so that the works it produces may be achieved.

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HIS GRACE MICHAEL KEHINDE STEPHEN

Archbishop of the Methodist diocese of Ibadan, Nigeria

Thirteenth General Congregation, 13 October 2009

Let me express my gratitude and that of the Church I represent, Methodist Church Nigeria, for the invitation extended to me to participate at this Special Episcopal Synod with this all important theme *The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace...*

I bring you greetings from the World Methodist Council which just concluded its Executive Committee meeting in Santiago, Chile. The Council wants me to use the opportunity of this gathering to further appreciate the monumental event of the signing of the Document on Justification by faith of the last World Methodist Conference in Seoul, South Korea in July 2006. The Council looks forward to faster movement on other issues and sincerely hopes the conversations can also begin at bilateral levels in Africa.

Let me also bring greetings from the World Council of Churches especially from the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century on which I serve as its Moderator, and to thank the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity for its services to this Committee and the commitment to host this meeting in Rome in January 2010.

The Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st century has as its responsibility the task of articulating more clearly the common vision of the Church towards unity and to ensure greater coherence of the ecumenical movement in response to the changing global realities. The Committee is composed of representatives of different constituencies, including member churches of the World Council of Churches (WCC) the Roman Catholic Church, Pentecostal Churches, ecumenical youth organizations, regional ecumenical organizations, Christian world communions, national council of churches, specialized ministries, international ecumenical organizations and ecumenical renewal communities. We hope we can count on your continued support as we move to the next stage of deepening theological reflections on vision and values and develop concrete recommendations for action by churches and ecumenical partners.

The issues highlighted in the document *Instrumentum laboris* captures in a comprehensive way most of the challenges facing the Church in Africa today. However for me when the issues of Reconciliation Justice and Peace are addressed with all sincerity of purpose, as it appears to be the purpose for this gathering then the Church exemplifies itself as a living body in service to all of humanity and the entire creation. The issue of Justice is of particular interest. I believe true justice is demonstrated when Ministers

and leaders speak out against evil, without regard to personal gain or loss. Shepherds both Clergy and laity are responsible for exercising justice in the Church. This is particularly needed in Africa today. Where there is Justice, Peace is possible and this allows for the fullness of the image of God to be revealed through the Holy Spirit's on going work of sanctification.

Let me conclude by reminding us of the wish of the entire ecumenical community that it is always good and pleasant when kindred live together in unity.

May the outcome of this deliberation draw us together in service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace in Africa and the entire world.

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HIS GRACE OWDENBURG MOSES MDEGELLA

Bishop of the Lutheran diocese of Iringa, Tanzania

Fifteenth General Congregation, 15 October 2009

My intervention is from *Instrumentum Laboris*, chapter 1 section 11 p. 5, last sentence. However, much of it has been overtaken by the synod summary of 13th October. I will briefly speak on three areas namely repentance, resistance and collaboration.

I quote, "Basically what blackens (the) African society comes from the heart (cf. *Mt* 15:18-19; *Mk* 7:15; see also *Gen* 4)". A special focus is given to *Gen* 4.

Forces that have depleted Africa have been both internal and external. Much has been spoken about external forces in this synod and over the years. I will concentrate on the internal forces.

Repentance: for true reconciliation, justice and peace to take place in Africa and to have viable metanoia, African leaders in all spheres of influence and in all walks of life must be transformed and be agents of transformation. While faith is probably feasible, repentance is not. The universal Church has to call African national leaders to repentance concerning atrocities, brutality, blood shedding, violence, deceit, misuse of natural resources, excessive use of power, abuse, rape, vote rigging, manipulation and corruption and many more others.

Resistance: the universal church has to resist and desist from leaders who do not fear God. Instead they should lead them to fear God, exercise truthfulness, respect freedom, justice and human rights and dignity of all people and seek peace and reconciliation.

Collaboration: With reverence and humility, I suppose, no one church denomination should stand alone in inculcating reconciliation, peace and justice. No one single church can shine alone and cause global palatability alone. Being the light of the world and the salt of the earth, the universal church has to foster the spirit of ecumenism amongst other denominations and be in dialogue with other faiths.

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TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF “THE JOINT DECLARATION ON THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION” BETWEEN THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION, THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE SUBSEQUENT ADHESION OF THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

31 October 2009

On 31 October 1999, in Augsburg (Germany) the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification” was signed by Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy and Bishop Walter Kasper on behalf of the Catholic Church and Bishop Christian Krause and Reverend Dr Ishmael Noko on the part of the Lutheran World Federation.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary, several commemorative events were organized on 30 and 31 of October 2009. In the late afternoon of October 30 a ceremony was held at the Golden Hall of the ‘Rathaus’ in Augsburg. Among the participants were Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and Reverend Dr Noko, General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation. Professor Eberhard Jüngel of Tuebingen pronounced a lecture on the theme: “What does our Happiness have to do with our Blessedness?”.

On the morning of October 31, celebrations continued at the Golden Hall with other presentations by Bishop Martin Klaiber of Tuebingen representing the Evangelical Methodist Church in Germany and Cardinal Karl Lehmann, former president of the German Episcopal Conference. At the end Cardinal Kasper and Reverend Dr Noko offered some concluding observations.

At the closing of the celebration, an ecumenical worship service was celebrated at the Cathedral of Augsburg. We publish here below the homily of Cardinal Kasper during that significant moment of prayer and his closing words at the ceremony.

ECUMENICAL VESPER IN THE HIGH CATHEDRAL
OF AUGSBURG

31 October 2009

CARDINAL WALTER KASPER

Ezekiel 11:17-20

“*Gott ruft sein Volk zusammen*” [God calls his people together] is a line from one of our hymns. This call to gather and to unite, which we have just heard in the reading from the prophet Ezekiel, is already heard in the Old Testament; in the New Testament it rings out even louder. Jesus has come to gather the scattered sheep of Israel. He has prayed that they all may be one. He wanted one Church — one faith, one baptism, because there is only one God, only one Lord Jesus Christ and only one Holy Spirit, in whom and through whom God wants to be all in all.

God is and wants unity; he wants one church as an instrument and symbol of the unity of humankind. But sin scatters, it sows strife, it separates and splits. The divisions in our churches and the many ever new divisions that we have experienced up to the present, are a counter-witness to the Gospel. It is sin; it is a scandal.

The ecumenical movement initiated a counter-movement. It is not the work of the spirit of liberalism and indifference; it is the stirring of the spirit of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit. And because it is that, we may trust in the fact that God’s Spirit carries out what it has itself begun. Therefore we are able and permitted to hold to the ecumenical option; there is

no alternative. “They shall be my people, and I will be their God”. That is the basic promise of God to the people of the Old Covenant. That also applies to us today.

The fact that we signed the Joint Declaration ten years ago and thus were able to end an almost 500-year-old serious conflict, indeed, that we were able to even extend the consensus achieved at the time — that was and is for me, and many others, a sign of the workings of the Holy Spirit. We cannot be thankful enough for that and for many, many other steps that have been possible since. The godless complaining about the supposed standstill in the ecumenical movement and the miserable moaning about what has not yet been achieved, forgetting all that has been given us in the last few years — all that is sheer ingratitude.

So in this service of worship let us give heart-felt thanks and — despite all the disappointments we might have in our own heart, and all the resistance, and all the occasional shots across the bow — let us repeat what we said 10 years ago at the signing: we have reached out and joined hands and we will not let go.

We must be realistic and know that the path of gathering the people of God is not yet ended. There are still stumbling-blocks, sometimes also huge rocks on the path. Sadly, there are still unsolved problems and open questions between us. Overlooking them and keeping silent would not only be irresponsible and reckless, it would not only be blind and foolish, it would also be life-threatening, as it could lead to crashes and total destruction.

What is to be done? The prophet gives us the

answer. "I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them". How true! There is no ecumenism without a change of heart; there is no ecumenism without a renewal of the heart; there is no ecumenism without renewal by the Holy Spirit. We have become too complacent, too self-satisfied and too self-righteous. We have — as the prophet says — set up abominable idols, be they only apparently ineradicable prejudices. If we need one thing — not just in ecumenical relations but in the German church and in western Europe in general — then it is a new Pentecost, a new momentum, a new enthusiasm and a profound spiritual renewal.

We have structures; we have governing bodies; we also have money, relatively speaking, at least that is not the main problem. Rather, we make it into the main problem if we think it will solve our problems. We need a spiritual ecumenism, and it has grown, thank goodness, in the last few years. A spiritual ecumenism is first and foremost an ecumenism of the prayer "Come Holy Spirit". After all, we cannot make unity, we cannot organize it, let alone force it to come; unity is the gift of the Holy Spirit and a fruit of prayer. A spiritual ecumenism means an ecumenism of the common life and prayerful reflection on the Bible as the Word of God and God's direction for our lives; in spiritual ecumenism we set out together to follow Jesus. To the extent to which we are one with him we will also be one with ourselves.

Spiritual ecumenism, finally, means an ecumenism of active love, which does not seek the limelight at the expense of others and does not talk about them in a spirit of malice or *Schadenfreude*. Rather it gets to know, understand and appreciate the other with respect to his/her positive characteristics, including the differences compared to ourselves. It seeks to assist others when they are in difficulties, it is an ecumenism of active love, seeking cooperation among all Christians and building them up to minister together to the needs of others. Ultimately ecumenism is not an end in itself; it aims to go beyond itself towards reconciliation, unity and world peace. Let us thus be the vanguard and precursors of this unity and this peace. Amen.

CLOSING SPEECH FOR THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE JOINT DECLARATION ON THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

31 October 2009

Cardinal Walter Kasper

According to the program both organizers of the Conference should make a final speech. I find this extremely difficult since this meeting, while looking backwards, should also serve as a fresh start and a new departure. It was meant to give impetus to the dialogue and cooperation between Lutherans and Catholic. I hope, within the realms of possibility, that this has been achieved. Hence, firstly a word of thanks to all those who organized the Conference and thereby contributed to its success. I would love to name names but there are too many who have earned the right to recognition. I do wish to thank

the two local churches representing the City of Augsburg and above all the three main speakers who have borne the brunt of the work.

A new beginning does not mean that we are starting from scratch; we do not need to rediscover ecumenism. The Catholic principles of ecumenism are clearly set down in the Council's Decree on Ecumenism. Ecumenism builds upon the consensus that, despite the painful divisions between our Churches, has remained: belief in our Lord Jesus Christ as the sole Saviour and Mediator between God and mankind as it is witnessed in the Holy Scripture and our common Apostolic Constitution. Even though many bridges between us have been demolished, this central pillar has stood fast. We have expanded upon it in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification upon which we can build even further. Together we recognise that only in our belief in Jesus Christ, His Cross and His Resurrection God the Father in the Holy Spirit grants us Salvation and Redemption so that we may stand before God and accept one another as brothers and sisters.

This Conference has made clear once again that this is neither old hat nor a theological quibble. It is *the* Christian answer to the question about meaning, happiness and the where from and where to of life. It is also not a rigid viewpoint but rather the initiation of a journey through life which one describes, together with the Scriptures, as the way to Sanctification, i.e. life before God, from God and for God, life that knows that God is its refuge in all situations.

This belief is a gift that we should give to a world largely disoriented and uncertain about the fundamental questions of existence. Belief is no private matter; it involves a mission of hope for the world by bearing witness not only to the Word but also through social deeds. Justification and commitment to justice — and this worldwide — belong together. When we are deeply united then we can and must promote them together even more than we do so currently. The upcoming Second Ecumenical Church Day (*Kirchentag*) will, I hope, give us new direction in the mission to the world today.

Allow me a second reflection. This Conference has shown us anew the fundamental importance of Bible study. Exegesis over the last ten years has significantly contributed to a better understanding of today's — at first glance distant — message of justification. It has demonstrated that it is not a minor question, but that ultimately it is the very message of God as the friend of life; it is the message of the God of mankind, the God that became man through Jesus Christ, a God with a human and humane face. The central question of the message of justification is not the Church, but God Himself, and this is also our central theme today.

We are, therefore, indebted to the experts of the exegesis, yet the Bible does not belong to them alone. It is the Book of God's People. Hence joint Bible studies should figure more centrally in our ecumenical endeavours. We separated over the Bible and over the Bible must we reunite. It is thus a tragedy that in Germany that which has been possible and attainable

elsewhere in the world, namely a common translation of the Bible, has not been possible.

Joint Bible study does not mean that we revert to the Scriptures as a quarry for evidence to sling against each other; instead we understand it as the Book of life, as nourishment and direction for life. In this sense we can all learn from each other and enrich one another. Ecumenical dialogue is not a convergence on the lowest common denominator: it is an exchange not only of ideas but also of gifts with which each Church is enriched in its own way. In this sense we work and pray for unity in diversity. Ecumenism also means that we should be a Church that cannot be made, organised and reformed according to our own taste and need, rather one that is a Church under the Word of God.

This brings me to my third point, the question of the Church. Luther believed that what a Church is could be understood by any seven year-old child. Today he would be hard pressed to say the same. Sadly so! Today Luther's other words about a blind, and obscure concept of Church are more suitable. The Church is no longer to everyone's taste. Indeed, in my opinion Churches today are too wrapped up in their own concerns, their structures and their structural reforms. God knows these things are necessary. But they are not what makes the Church engaging or credible. Churches will no longer be clearly perceived as the sign and witness of the free and joyful message of a God of justice and of a justified mankind. The Joint Declaration must serve as a call to the real concern: God's concern with humanity.

Several voices have blamed the Joint Declaration for failing to draw any consequences from the message of justification for the teaching and the practice of the Church. The Declaration is aware of these *desiderata* and has communicated them to the Churches. The Churches have made the Joint Declaration their own. Individual theologians and journalists have distanced themselves from the Declaration but no Church has done so, the Catholic Church included. If one looks back over the last ten years at the dialogue between our Churches, it is not true that nothing has happened concerning the question of the Church. The last joint Lutheran-Catholic Document on the Apostolicity of the Church — to give one example — builds upon the Joint Declaration and makes noteworthy progress.

However, there is no getting past the fact that the great breakthrough has at this point unfortunately eluded us. That is why a common invitation to Eucharistic Communion is still not possible. Many have thus become impatient and disappointed. I can understand why. Yet when it is about the Truth, protests and polemics do not help. Ultimately the question concerns what we mean when we say Church and what we mean when we want the unity of the Church, that is a unity in diversity. That is no secondary issue. We should strive to put forward our different ecumenical objectives over the next few years. This cannot happen if we attempt to distinguish ourselves by making ecumenical scapegoats of the others and portraying ourselves as ecumenical

world champions. Only the honesty to recognise our own failures and weaknesses and a readiness to correct ourselves creates new trust.

Today, one must unfortunately note that alongside the traditional questions, new issues have arisen. In the 16th century — and even in the following centuries — we had common answers to ethical questions, namely questions concerning the shape to give our lives according to the message of justification. Only 20 years ago in 1989 we could still publish the common orientation "God is a friend of life". I fear that today that would no longer be possible. The rapidly changing ecumenical landscape unfortunately also entails the emergence of new differences and tendencies that distance us from one another and lead to new divisions.

The message of justification is no abstract theory: it must have a deep impact on our life. Therefore — today more than ever — it is a pressing task to reflect upon its ethical consequences. This message is in itself awakening and liberating. The Churches would betray their own nature and make ecumenism irrelevant if they no longer had the courage, in loyalty to God's Word, when necessary to formulate uncomfortable though liberating alternatives to what "people" today commonly hold as right. In light of the message of justification, political correctness should not be the yardstick of Church speech and behaviour.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about what I hold most dear in ecumenism: spiritual ecumenism. It is the heart of ecumenism. It is understood as the ecumenism of prayer and conversion. Without prayer and conversion there is no ecumenism. But with prayer and conversion, according to the word of Jesus, a great deal — indeed everything — is possible.

The father of spiritual ecumenism, Abbé Paul Couturier of Lyon, spoke of an invisible monastery. He meant by this Christians scattered across the world yet praying together and for each other. I get the impression that this invisible monastery is currently thriving. It is getting ever more visible in many small and larger groups, communities and movements that, together or individually, pray for one another, read the Bible together, share spiritual experiences and correspond with one another. They are the real ecumenical cornerstone and are growing. What belongs together, grows together.

We ought to be thankful: we have achieved much and it is more than many think. Soberly must we add however that much still remains to be done. For the way forward we need patience and impatience alike. Both qualities belong to the Kingdom of God. This country contains countless people who are eagerly and impatiently waiting for one Church united around the one Table of the Lord, people who are praying for and working towards this goal: that all may be one. I hope that this Conference has not disappointed you and that it has strengthened us with patient impatience but also with joy and cheerful hearts to work and to pray so that the full unity, willed by Jesus Christ, becomes a reality. I thank you all for your participation.

PRESENTATION OF “HARVESTING THE FRUITS: BASIC ASPECTS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH IN ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE”

On October 15, 2009 at a Press Conference given by Cardinal Walter Kasper, assisted by Mgr Mark Langham, the Cardinal's new book “Harvesting the Fruits: Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue” was presented. The project is itself the fruit of two years' work by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and its Consultors and partners, who have collected and collated the results of forty years' dialogue with the Lutheran World Federation, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Anglican Communion, and the Methodist World Council. The text was presented to the Plenary Session of the Pontifical Council in December 2008, where it received overwhelming approval. As a result of many helpful and creative comments received at and after that Plenary Session, the work was thoroughly revised, and a commentary was provided by Cardinal Kasper, who oversaw the entire project. The result is a celebration of remarkable achievement, and at the same time a challenge to engage with certain issues and open questions. It is hoped that Harvesting the Fruits will be a major contribution to future ecumenical dialogue. The following Press Release was issued on this occasion.

PRESS RELEASE

15 October 2009

Almost immediately following the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), bilateral dialogues began with major Christian churches and ecclesial communities, including the four major communions stemming from the Reformation: the Lutheran World Federation, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Anglican Communion, and the Methodist World Council.

Forty years later, it is time to assess where these bilateral dialogues stand. The record of these dialogues is impressive. The list of statements and documents, and the achievements they represent, bears witness to extraordinary dedication and insight, and the remarkable results achieved, in furthering the aims of unity. A new generation that has grown up since the Vatican Council needs to be introduced to the rich achievements of these four bilateral dialogues and the breakthroughs that they represent.

While the commitment to dialogue and its eventual aim of full and visible unity has never wavered, the ecumenical scene is different from that of forty years ago. The various Christian Communions know each other far better, and thereby also appreciate more fully the real issues at the heart of old disagreements. At the same time, some developments within some Communions have cast old agreements in a new light and opened up new areas of disagreement.

In *Harvesting the Fruits: Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue*, Cardinal Walter Kasper reviews the outcomes of these four ecumenical encounters. He considers their results thematically, and while not neglecting the areas still in need of attention, demonstrates the significant area of agreement reached across the dialogues. The book is a celebration of these extraordinary achievements. The Cardinal, however, also takes a realistic look at the

state of current ecumenical dialogue. With so much achieved, why are we not further forward on the path to full and visible unity? Looking towards the future, Cardinal Kasper asks how these four dialogues should continue and develop. His questions concern not only the content, but also the method, of the dialogues — not just the fruits, but the harvesting process itself.

This project has been developed over several years, in conjunction with officials and consultors from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, ecumenical partners, and other advisors. The material from each of the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican and Methodist dialogues has been carefully researched and arranged thematically across four chapters. Mention is also made of the most important parallel dialogues at national level and within the multilateral dialogue of the World Council of Churches. This allows for the first time a comparison of achievements and of remaining questions, and an overall sense of the status of western ecumenical dialogue at the international level.

In the first chapter, *Fundamentals of our Common Faith: Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity*, the large area of basic consensus in faith is amply demonstrated, including a fundamental common understanding of the Gospel, the Trinity, and basic aspects of Christian doctrine. Nevertheless, questions are raised about the role of Scripture in the Reformation tradition, the relation of Scripture to Creedal statements, and the way that new scholarship can call into question central aspects of our common faith traditionally assumed to be universally accepted.

The second chapter looks at *Salvation, Justification and Sanctification*, topics at the heart of the sixteenth century Reformation, but also the field of some of the most significant ecumenical progress of recent years. The chapter contains a special treatment of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, a formal agreement between the Roman

Catholic Church and Lutheran World Federation in 1999, and subsequently adopted by the World Methodist Council in 2006. This ecumenical landmark is one of the most significant achievements in the forty years of dialogue. However, Cardinal Kasper also shows that this achievement must be seen in a wider context, and raises the question of the importance of the Doctrine of Justification itself in relation to other doctrines within the Church. Furthermore, issues which were not in the forefront in the sixteenth century, such as questions of ethics and Christian anthropology, are identified as needing further work to clarify what the Doctrine of Justification means for the contemporary Church.

The third and longest chapter looks at *The Church*, demonstrating how ecclesiology has come to prominence in recent ecumenical dialogue. Again, basic agreements are demonstrated on the fundamental issues of the Church's nature, Trinitarian foundation and relationship to Christ, and mission. Analysis of the documents shows how an emphasis on *Communion/Koinonia*, and even on Sacrament, have emerged through the dialogues. A detailed discussion of Authority in the Church shows how the dialogues have successfully found new ways to address formerly intractable questions. Ministry has been addressed in all the dialogues in various aspects; its relationship to the Church, its historical and sacramental aspects, the nature and exercise of *episcopé*. The documents have engaged with the issue of the relationship of the universal to the particular within the Church, and they present imaginative treatment of previously divisive issues such as Petrine Ministry and Teaching Authority. Overall, there has been remarkable progress in difficult areas, and many old suspicions and misconceptions have been overcome. Cardinal Kasper notes that the dialogues betray a weakness in their treatment of the nature of the Church, and in particular its actual manifestation. Here, the fundamental Reformation disagreement about the relationship of the visible and invisible Church needs to be addressed if real progress is to be made in other areas.

Chapter four deals with *The Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist*. Again, a surprising level of consensus is revealed. Cardinal Kasper notes the positive ecumenical effect of the rediscovery of the role of the Holy Spirit, and a renewed emphasis on liturgy. There is a basic consensus on Baptism, and notable convergences even on questions that were once the

cause of considerable controversy, such as the sacrificial character of the Mass, and the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The documents reveal that basic work is needed on these key issues, which cannot be ignored as though such long-standing issues have been already resolved.

In an important concluding chapter, *Harvesting the Fruits* celebrates the rich harvest that has brought about a real convergence between the ecumenical partners. However, it also poses important questions about theological process, about emerging ethical issues, and about the very understanding of the Church itself, which are in danger of hindering progress and even undermining much of what has been achieved.

It is the hope of the Pontifical Council that this book will stimulate intense ecumenical interest. For the first time, it is possible for members of individual bilateral dialogues to see how their own discussions fit into a broader context, and how many of their concerns have been treated in other forums. Certainly, it is impossible to read *Harvesting the Fruits* without being struck by the remarkable areas of progress, and one of the most desirable outcomes of the book will be a publicising throughout the Christian community of these astonishing achievements.

At the same time, in a period when the Western dialogues appear perhaps to have lost impetus, and when developments within communions can raise difficult questions for relations with other partners, this book is offered to stimulate discussion on how to take dialogue forward. Questions of method, as well as content, are posed; a realistic approach is invited that takes account of fundamental issues and employs a robust scrutiny of common formulae. Through celebration and challenge, then, *Harvesting the Fruits* aims to further the process of reception of the ecumenical achievements, and refresh the ecumenical spirit through a new incisiveness in the dialogues themselves.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

WALTER KASPER, *Harvesting the Fruits: Basic aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue*.

Publishers: Continuum, London 2009, pp 224.

Translations will be available in French, German, Italian, Spanish.

ECUMENICAL NEWS

FIFTEENTH GLOBAL ASSEMBLY OF THE MENNONITE
WORLD CONFERENCE

Asunción, Paraguay, 14-19 July 2009

The Mennonite World Conference (MWC) defines itself as a communion of Anabaptist-related churches linked to one another in a worldwide community of faith for fellowship, worship, service, and witness. The new president of the MWC is Danisa Ndlovu of Zimbabwe.

There are approximately 1.6 million members of MWC churches worldwide. The assembly had more than 6,200 participants, of which about half of those in attendance were Paraguayan Mennonites. Paraguay has the largest Mennonite population of South American countries, as a result of an immigration from the Soviet Union of ethnic German Mennonites 80 years ago. Paraguayan Mennonites still mostly speak German and live in their own communities. Paraguay is home to approximately 31,000 Mennonites, and they are well regarded in Paraguay. The immediate past President of Paraguay is a Mennonite.

In addition to the Catholic observer, there were several ecumenical observers present for the assembly, including representatives from the World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance, Seventh Day Adventists, Lutheran World Federation, World Baptist Alliance and African Instituted Churches. All the observers were warmly received by the MWC staff and participants.

The ecumenical highlight of the assembly was an address by the Lutheran World Federation general secretary, Dr. Ishmael Noko, in which he announced the result of a study by the LWF which will go before their next general council meeting. This study recommends that Lutherans apologize for the persecutions of Anabaptists in the 16th century. This was warmly received by the MWC assembly.

Greetings from Cardinal Walter Kasper on behalf of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) were offered to the gathering at an evening plenary session of the assembly. Each of the ecumenical observers also extended their communities greetings.

The Catholic observer participated in a meeting of the MWC General Council, the MWC governing body of about 150 members, a reception for Christian World Communion and Paraguay national church observers, the opening celebration of the global assembly, and in two workshops:

1. “Meet the Global Church” *Getting Acquainted with the Churches of the World*. Brief presentations by Larry Miller (MWC General Secretary) and leaders of other global Christian churches and organizations.

2. “Catholics and Anabaptist-Mennonites in Conversation” *Catholics and Anabaptists in Dialogue in Colombia*. Leader: César García (Mennonite Brethren Church Colombia), *Catholics and Mennonites in Dialogue in Germany*. Leader: Fernando Enns (German Mennonite Church and University of Hamburg).

Each of these workshops was well attended, with full rooms of 50-75 for each session, two sessions for each workshop.

In addition to participating in the workshops and plenary sessions of the assembly, the Catholic side held meetings with Larry Miller (MWC General Secretary), to discuss the possibility of initiating another round of conversations between the MWC and the PCPCU.

The PCPCU will send a letter proposing a round of conversations with specific suggestions as to a topic and timetable to begin, tentatively in late 2010 or early 2011, with discussions centered on Baptism ‘the theology and practice of baptism in our communities’.

CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE WORLD EVANGELICAL
ALLIANCE AND THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR
PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

São Paulo, Brazil, 26 July – 1 August 2009

Evangelicals and Catholics began a planned five-year round of an International Consultation co-sponsored by the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) in São Paulo (Brazil) from 26 July to 1 August 2009. A first international Consultation between some Evangelical leaders and the PCPCU took place 1977-1984 and resulted in the document *Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission (ERCDOM)*. A second series of meetings, between the WEA and the PCPCU, 1993-2002, resulted in the publication of the document *Church, Evangelization and the Bonds of Koinonia* (2002). Last year it was agreed to start a new phase of consultations in order “to strengthen the bonds between those who, through personal faith and commitment to his mission, belong to Christ, by seeking common understanding, as called for by the Scriptures, on those issues which divide us”. This year’s Consultation focused on “Catholics and Evangelicals: Common Ground on Dogmatic Questions and Ethical Issues”.

Participants on the Evangelical side were Rev Rolf Hille (Germany, Co-Secretary), Mr Bonn Clayton (USA), Dr James Nkansah-Obrempong (Kenya), Rev José de Segovia (Spain), Rev Claus Schwambach (Brazil) and Christoph and Corinna Schubert (Germany) as observers. On the Catholic side, partici-

pants were Mgr Juan Usma Gómez (Columbia, PCPCU, Co-Secretary), Most Rev Rodolfo Valenzuela Nuñez (Guatemala), Mgr Donald Bolen (Canada), Rev Gregory J. Fairbanks (USA, PCPCU) and Ms Beatriz Sarkis Simões (Brazil).

This first meeting of the new round focused on a review of the last report, and featured papers and discussion concerning the common ground on dogmatic questions and on ethical issues. Discussions were held within a context of joint prayer. The Consultation featured warm and honest discussions on aspects which bind us together and others which present challenges for our respective communions.

The Consultation will continue next year focusing on “Scripture and Tradition”, and “The Authoritative Interpretation on the Word of God”.

JOINT WORKING GROUP BETWEEN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
PLENARY MEETING

Cordova, Spain, 12-19 October 2009

INTRODUCTION

The plenary session of the Joint Working Group (JWG), the body that monitors and promotes collaboration between the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches (WCC), was held from 12 to 19 October 2009, in Cordova (Spain). The JWG comprises 36 members, 18 nominated by the Catholic Church and 18 chosen by the various member churches of the WCC. The JWG has a seven-year mandate. The present one started with the last WCC General Assembly in 2006, at Porto Alegre (Brazil) and will end with the coming General Assembly in 2013 at Busan (Korea). The JWG plays a significant and constructive role in the evolution of the ecumenical movement. It constitutes in fact a point of permanent observation, enabling a wide-ranging and thorough reflection, a quick and animated exchange, the reception of numerous suggestions and the launching of concrete initiatives in the ecumenical field. At the end of the plenary session in Cordova, the JWG published the following press release:

PRESS RELEASE

The ancient city of Cordova in Spain, with archeological sites dating back to the Roman Empire, relics of Christian martyrs of the fourth century, and impressive traces of hundreds of years of Jewish and Muslim presence has been and continues to be a city at the crossroads of important historical dynamics. Cordova has been named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Diocese of Cordova hosted this year’s plenary session of the Joint Working Group (JWG), which is the body that monitors and promotes collaboration between the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). Bringing together representatives of RCC and a wide spectrum of mem-

ber churches of the WCC, the JWG is one of the most inclusive ecumenical instruments in the world.

The choice of Cordova contributed significantly to an intensive ecumenical encounter. The lively and committed ecumenical engagement of the local Roman Catholic Diocese and its partners inspired the JWG, which was warmly welcomed by the Coadjutor Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Seville and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Cordova, Most Reverend Juan José Asenjo Pelegrina. The local ecumenical centre, which is led by the experienced ecumenist Rev. Manuel González Muñana, impressed the participants with its well developed concept and practical initiatives from ecumenical courses with children to ecumenical Bible seminars, social projects, and common celebrations and prayer. The programme of visits was completed by receptions offered by the City of Cordova and by the Diocese. Members of the group participated in the worship of local congregations. Much appreciated was the visit of the WCC Central Committee member Bishop Carlos Lopez-Lozano of the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church from Madrid.

The JWG met at the Casa San Antonio, the Diocesan Spirituality Centre of Cordova, from October 12-19, 2009 under the leadership of the co-moderators, Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste (Romania) and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin (Ireland). This was the third meeting of the group in its ninth phase running between the 2006 and the 2013 WCC Assemblies. The main task of the group was to give shape to its continuing work on the themes of *Reception* and *Spiritual Roots of Ecumenism*. The choice of these themes was motivated by the need to harvest the fruits of many years of ecumenical encounter and dialogue. The spiritual roots of ecumenism are at the heart of the quest for Christian unity: that is, they entail conversion and renewal, holiness of life in accordance with the Gospel, personal and communal prayer. Careful attention needs to be paid to processes essential for receiving ecumenical achievements so that the prayer, life and mission of the whole believing community will be enriched as it pursues the goal of full visible unity of the Churches.

Two issues, *Migration* and *Youth*, were further explored as elements of the work of this JWG mandate. The present global phenomenon of migration is changing the face of the local church in many places of the world. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for deepening Christian ecumenical relations across boundaries of nations and cultures. The JWG is also highlighting the need to give a space of leadership and responsibility to young people in the ecumenical movement. In view of this goal, the JWG is co-operating with the ECHOS youth commission of the WCC and youth organizations in the RCC. The task of the JWG is to strengthen ecumenical cooperation in responding to situations and areas that mark the life of the Churches.

A central moment of this meeting was a panel discussion on contemporary ecumenical challenges and the present stage of bilateral dialogues between the Churches. The panel addressed some of the principal

concerns and opportunities of the present stage in the search for Christian unity. As we approach the centennial of the 1910 World Missionary Conference next year in Edinburgh, the plenary recalled that the pioneers of the ecumenical movement were hoping to achieve their goal within one century. Experience has shown that progress towards unity in Christ is taking longer. It requires a deep change of mindsets, attitudes and habits in order to be credible and convincing.

The next JWG Plenary is scheduled to take place in September 2010 in the Middle East.

JOINT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCH - ELEVENTH PLENARY SESSION

Paphos, Cyprus, 16-23 October 2009

The eleventh meeting of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church took place in Paphos, Cyprus, a city with a rich history, having received three Apostles, Paul, Barnabas and Mark. The meeting took place from 16-23 October 2009, generously and fraternally hosted by the Orthodox Church of Cyprus.

Twenty Catholic members were present; several more were unable to attend. All the Orthodox Churches, with the exception of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria, were represented, namely the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Moscow, the Patriarchate of Serbia, the Patriarchate of Romania, the Patriarchate of Georgia, the Church of Cyprus, the Church of Greece, the Church of Poland, the Church of Albania and the Church of Czech Lands and Slovakia.

The Commission worked under the direction of its two co-presidents, Cardinal Walter Kasper and Metropolitan John of Pergamon, helped by the two co-secretaries, Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate) and Monsignor Eleuterio F. Fortino (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity).

At the opening session on Saturday, 17 October, the Commission was welcomed very warmly by the host, Metropolitan Georgios of Paphos, who emphasized the importance of holding the meeting in this apostolic city, famous in the history not only of this island but of the whole of Christianity.

On Saturday, 17 October, the Catholic members celebrated the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Cross, Nicosia, presided over by Cardinal Walter Kasper, in the presence of the Orthodox members. In his homily he expressed the gratitude of the Catholic Delegation to the Church of Cyprus and especially to Metropolitan Georgios of Paphos for his warm hospitality, and stressed that the spirit of humility and love should prevail in the work of our Joint Commission, emphasizing the words of the Lord: *"Whoever would be first among you shall make himself slave of all"* (Mark 10:44). On

Sunday, 18 October, the Orthodox members celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the Church of Phaneromeni, Nicosia, presided over by His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos, in the presence of the Catholic members. In addressing those present, Archbishop Chrysostomos stated: *"Together with all the other Orthodox Churches, we underline our firm insistence on the established basic poles of the ecclesiastical conscience of the first thousand years of the historical life of the Church. The Ecumenical Councils and the great Fathers of the first millennium are a guarantee of the authentic theological interpretation of the sacrament of the divine economy in Christ, and of its genuine experience by the faithful in the sacrament of the Church, which, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, extends the continuous and living presence of Jesus Christ in the world, until the end of time"*.

Afterwards, the co-presidents, Cardinal Walter Kasper and Metropolitan John of Pergamon, together with Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Metropolitan Vasilios of Constantia-Famagusta and Archbishop Roland Minnerath, were welcomed at the Presidential Palace by the President of Cyprus, His Excellency Dimitris Christofias, who expressed his hope for the continuation of this important dialogue in a world still divided, like Cyprus itself, and expressed his good wishes for progress towards communion between the two Churches in the future.

The members of the Commission visited the Byzantine Museum, and had an official lunch at the Archbishopric, offered by H. B. Archbishop Chrysostomos.

During the afternoon, the members paid a visit to the Metochion of Kykkos Monastery and were welcomed very warmly by the Abbot, Metropolitan Nikiphoros of Kykkos and Tylliria, and by Metropolitan Isaias of Tamassos and Orini. Later in the evening, Metropolitan Vasilios of Constantia-Famagusta hosted an official dinner at his Metropolitanate in Paralimni. During the course of the week, the members also visited the Monastery of St. Neophytos and the archaeological sites of St. Paul in Paphos.

On the first day of the meeting, as is customary, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox members met separately to coordinate their work. The Orthodox meeting discussed among other things the negative reactions to the Dialogue by certain Orthodox circles, and unanimously considered them as totally unfounded and unacceptable, providing false and misleading information. All Orthodox members of the Commission reaffirmed that the Dialogue continues with the decision of all the Orthodox Churches and is pursued with faithfulness to the Truth and the Tradition of the Church. The Catholic meeting considered the draft text as a good basis for our work and confirmed the intention to continue the Dialogue with confidence and reciprocal trust, in obedience to the will of the Lord.

As was decided at the last plenary session in Ravenna, 2007, the Commission studied the theme *"The Role of the Bishop of Rome in the Communion of the Church in the First Millennium"*, on the basis of a

draft text prepared by the Joint Coordinating Committee, which met in Elounda, Crete, Greece last year. During this plenary meeting, the Commission carefully considered and amended the draft text of the Joint Coordinating Committee, and decided to complete its work on the text next year, by convening a further meeting of the Joint Commission. No final text has been decided upon, and any text that may be circulated is not valid.

It was decided that the 12th plenary meeting will be hosted by Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, in Vienna, Austria, from 20-27 September 2010.

The eleventh plenary session ended with Orthodox Vespers at St. Theodoros' Cathedral in Paphos, followed by a reception offered by Metropolitan Georgios.

The meeting of the Joint Commission was marked by a spirit of friendship and trustful collaboration. The members of the Commission greatly appreciated the generous hospitality of the Church of Cyprus, and they strongly commend the continuing work of the dialogue to the prayers of the faithful.

PROGRAMME FOR ARCIC III

23 November 2009

Revised at Informal Talks Between the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Communion

Pope Benedict XVI and Archbishop Rowan Williams said in a Common Declaration in November 2006

“It is a matter of urgency... that in renewing our commitment to pursue the path towards full visible Communion in the truth and love of Christ, we also commit ourselves in our continuing dialogue to address the important issues involved in the emerging ecclesiological and ethical factors making that journey more difficult and arduous”.¹

When they met in Rome on 23 November 2009, the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury said that they looked forward to the establishment of a third phase of international theological dialogue. In the light of their shared will to continue and to consolidate the ecumenical relationship between Catholics and Anglicans, the Preparatory Commission for the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC III) formulated this mandate in terms which the Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity now present:

The Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity thank the Lord for the work achieved by the previous phases of the Anglican-Roman

Catholic International Commission. Our journey towards reconciliation involves various tasks being carried out at different levels of the Church's life. At an international level these include theological dialogue; promoting forms of collaboration and shared witness in facing contemporary challenges; and consultation on matters which are not communion-dividing but which are vital for common mission and witness. Of these three tasks, ARCIC III should continue engagement in theological reflection. This work is only one component in the larger task of furthering relations between our two Communion, which continues to be taken forward by the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) and other regional, national, and local bodies.

At this point in our ecumenical journey, we now charge the Commission to undertake a third phase of its work.

From the beginning of the dialogue, the commitment of the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church has been to seek “restoration of complete communion in faith and sacramental life”.² This goal and this commitment have not changed. Nevertheless, we charge ARCIC to re-examine how, in the light of our common journey over more than forty years, this goal is understood and this commitment pursued today.

We ask the Commission to promote the reception of its previous work by presenting the previous work of ARCIC as a corpus, with appropriate introduction.

ARCIC has worked with a characteristic method. To quote the *Gift of Authority*, “From the beginning of its work, ARCIC has considered questions of Church teaching or practice in the context of our real but imperfect communion in Christ and the visible unity to which we are called. The Commission has always sought to get behind opposed and entrenched positions to discover and develop our common inheritance”.³ ARCIC III is asked to continue to work in this way on the basis of the Gospels and the ancient common Tradition.

On the basis of the Common Declaration of Pope Benedict and Archbishop Williams we affirm the two interrelated areas as critical for further work: *the Church as Communion, local and universal, and how in communion the local and universal Church come to discern right ethical teaching*. In both areas, the Commission is asked to build on what is already in the agreed statements of the first two phases of dialogue.

As we announce the continuation of ARCIC, and considering the challenges facing all Christian communities today, we offer encouragement in the words of Colossians 3:17, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father in him”.

¹ 2006 Common Declaration of Pope Benedict XVI and Archbishop Rowan Williams.

² 1966 Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey.

³ ARCIC Agreed Statement *Gift of Authority* © 1999 paragraph 6.