



THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN UNITY

JOINT DECLARATION BETWEEN POPE JOHN PAUL II
AND THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH DIMITRIOS I
Phanar, 30 November 1979

We, Pope John Paul II, and the Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, give thanks to God who has granted us the possibility of meeting to celebrate together the feast of the apostle Andrew, the one first called and the brother of the apostle Peter. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" (Eph 1:3).

Seeking only the glory of God through the accomplishment of his will, we affirm again our resolute determination to to everything possible to hasten the day when full communion will be reestablished between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church and when we will at last be able to concelebrate the divine Eucharist.

We are grateful to our predecessors, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I, for everything they did to reconcile our Churches and cause them to progress in unity.

The progress made in the preparatory stage permits us to announce that the theological dialogue is about to begin and to make public the list of the members of the mixed Catholic-Orthodox commission that will be responsible for it.

This theological dialogue aims not only at progressing towards the re-establishment of full communion between the Catholic and Orthodox sister-Churches, but also at contributing to the multiple dialogues that are developing in the Christian world in search of its unity.

The dialogue of charity (cf. Jn 13:34; Eph 4:1-7), rooted in complete faithfulness to the one Lord Jesus Christ and to his will over his Church (cf. Jn 17:21), has opened up the way to better understanding of our mutual theological positions and, thereby, to new approaches to the theological work and to a new attitude with regard to the common past of our Churches. This purification of the collective memory of our Churches is an important fruit of the dialogue of charity and an indispensable condition of future progress. This dialogue of charity must continue and be intensified in the complex situation which we have inherited from the past, and which constitutes the reality in which our effort must take place today.

We want the progress in unity to open up new possibilities of dialogue and collaboration with believers of other religions, and with all men of goodwill, in order that love and brotherhood may prevail over hatred and opposition among men. We hope to contribute in this way to the coming of true peace in the world. We implore this gift of him who was, who is, and who will be, Christ our one Saviour and our real peace.

Phanar, on the feast of St Andrew 1979.