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POPE JOHN PAUL II AND ECUMENISM

October, 2003 - January 2004

ADDRESS AT THE SIGNING AND PROMULGATION OF "PASTORES GREGIS"

October 16, 2003

On Thursday morning, October 16, the 25th Anniversary of his Pontificate, the Holy Father addressed the Cardinals, Patriarchs, Presidents of Episcopal Conferences, Archbishops and Bishops in the Paul VI Auditorium on the occasion of the signing and promulgation of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Pastores Gregis *(shepherds of the Lord's flock), recalling that the Bishop "is called to be a father, teacher, friend and brother to every person after the example of Christ". The Exhortation was the result of the Tenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's Address, given in Italian.*

(...) As a *guide of the Christian people* with pas* toral and ministerial power, the Bishop must be concerned to encourage the participation of all the faithful in the building up of the Church. He will carry out his specific task with that personal responsibility which derives from his mission at the service of the entire community.

Attentive to the needs of the Church and of the world, he will face the challenges of the present time. He will be a *prophet of justice and peace,* defender of the rights of the lowly and the marginalized. He will proclaim to all the Gospel of life, truth and love. He will look with special love upon the multitudes of the poor who populate the earth.

Mindful of Christ's desire *"ut omnes unum sint"* (that all may be one) *(Jn* 17:21), in the first place he will support the *ecumenical process,* so that the Church may shine among the peoples to rally them to unity and concord. In addition, in our multiethnic society at the beginning of this third millennium, he will champion *interreligious dialogue. (...)*

ORE, October 22, 2003

ADDRESS AT THE CONSISTORY

October 21, 2003

In St Peter's Square at the Ordinary Public Consistory conducted on Tuesday, 21 October, for the creation of new Cardinals, 30 prelates received their biretta from the Holy Father.

At this Consistory I have had the joy of presenting the Cardinals biretta to 30 praiseworthy ecclesiastics, reserving *in pectore* the name of another. Some have worked closely with me in the Roman Curia; others carry out their ministry in venerable Churches of ancient tradition or of recent foundation; yet others have distinguished themselves in the study and defence of Catholic doctrine and in ecumenical dialogue.

ORE, October 29, 2003

FOR THE CONFERENCE ON "VLADIMIR SOLOVYOV, RUSSIA AND THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH"

October 28, 2003

On the occasion of a Conference on the theme: "Vladimir Solovyov, Russia and the Universal Church", held in Lviv, Ukraine, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Russian philosopher, the Holy Father sent a Message to Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, Major Archbishop of Lviv for Ukrainians. The Conference was organized by the new Ukrainian Catholic University, by the Solovyov Society of Geneva and by other Ukrainian cultural institutions.

The Pope noted in his Message that in gathering people from both Eastern and Western cultures, the Conference would enable them to compare their thoughts and see fruitful results, "confirming the Church's need to be able to breathe with both her lungs: the Eastern Tradition and the Western Tradition". He also pointed out that "the unity of the Church was one of the main aspirations of Vladimir Solovyov".

The following is a translation of the Holy Father's Message, which was written in French and dated 28 October.

To Cardinal Lubomyr Husar
Major Archbishop
of Lviv for Ukrainians

1. I learned with deep joy of the international Conference organized by the Ukrainian Catholic University, in collaboration with the Solovyov Society of Geneva and other cultural Ukrainian Institutions, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov.

On this happy occasion I would like to convey through you, Venerable Brother, my cordial greetings and encouragement to the organizers, the speakers and the participants of this Conference for this initiative that aims to examine in depth the thought of one of the greatest Russian Christian philosophers of the 19th and 20th centuries.

This event, which gathers people of the Eastern and Western cultures, will enable them to compare their reflections on the truth of the one Gospel of Christ and to see the reciprocal fruitfulness that can result, confirming the Church's need to be able to breathe with both her lungs: the Eastern Tradition and the Western Tradition. The strictly cultural dimension is consequently combined with an undeniably ecumenical aspect, so important in the ecclesial context of our time.

2. The unity of the Church was one of the main aspirations of Vladimir Solovyov, who was very familiar with the prayer that Christ addressed to his Father during the Last Supper (cf. *Jn* 17:20-23). Raised in deep Orthodox spirituality from his earliest years, he lived through various cultural periods during which he had the opportunity to become acquainted with Western philosophical thought. Disappointed, however, by the incomplete responses that human reflection offered to the anguish that tormented his heart, in 1872 he returned to the Christian faith of his childhood.

His thought, based on God's wisdom and on the spiritual foundations of life, like his insight concerning moral philosophy and the meaning of human history, influenced the rich flourishing of contemporary Russian thought and also made an impact on European culture by fostering a fertile and enriching dialogue concerning the fundamental issues of theology and spirituality.

Especially in his later years, Solovyov harboured the ardent desire that the Churches would likewise enter into a perspective of encounter and communion, each one contributing the treasures of her own tradition and feeling mutually responsible for the unity of the faith and for ecclesial discipline. With a view to attaining this goal, so dear to the great Russian thinker, the Catholic Church has irrevocably committed herself at all levels.

3. The theme of the Congress, "Vladimir Solovyov, Russia and the Universal Church", clearly mirrors the basic concern of this great author. The study of his thought on the universal nature of Christ's Church will highlight once again the duty of the Christian communities of East and West to listen to Christ's desire with regard to the unity of his disciples. Solovyov was convinced that it is only in the Church that humanity will be able to coexist in full solidarity.

May the rediscovery of the treasures of his thought foster a better understanding between East and West and, in particular, hasten the progress of all Christians towards full unity in the one fold of Christ *(ct.Jn* 10:16).

As I express my fervent best wishes for the success of this international Conference, I invoke the intercession of the Most Holy Mother of the Saviour, and I impart an affectionate Apostolic Blessing, the source of abundant heavenly gifts, to you as well as to the other Cardinals, to the different speakers and to all the people who in their different capacities will be attending this meeting.

From the Vatican, 28 October 2003, Feast of the Holy Apostles, Sts Simon and Jude

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

ORE, December 10, 2003

To 22nd ECUMENICAL CONGRESS: FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

November 25, 2003

On Tuesday, November 25, the Holy Father addressed the following Message, written in Italian, to the Bishops and Friends of the Focolare Movement who were attending the 22nd Ecumenical Congress conducted recently in Rocca di Papa, Italy.

Venerable Brothers,

1. I joyfully extend my cordial greeting to each of you, Bishops and Friends of the Focolare Movement, who are taking part in the 22nd Ecumenical Congress which, in light of the tragic events of the past days, has been transferred from Istanbul to Rocca di Papa.

Although you will be unable to visit the venerable Church of St Andrew in Constantinople, you will nevertheless be warmly received at the Church of Sts Peter and Paul in Rome and offered hospitality reserved for brothers in Christ.

2. The programme of your annual meeting is centred on the Sacred Scripture phrase: *"You are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal* 3:28). You are dealing with a theme more current than ever: it can provide a legitimate response to the serious rifts that plague today's world.

Your Congress can strengthen you in the ecumenical duty to hasten on the road towards that full unity for which Jesus prayed to the Father and for which he offered his very life!

You know well that Christian unity is dear to my heart and as such, from the beginning of my Pontificate, has received my constant attention.

3. I repeat to you, dear Brothers in the Episcopate, what I recently wrote to the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity: "The force of love impels us towards one another and prepares us for listening, dialogue, conversion and renewal (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* n. 1)". And again: "Only an intense ecumenical spirituality, lived in docility to Christ and fully open to the promptings of the Spirit, will help us live with the necessary dynamism this interim period in which we must sum up our progress and our defeats, with the lights and the shadows on our journey of reconciliation" *(Message,* 3 November 2003, *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 3 December, p. 6).

4. With fraternal affection I encourage you in the apostolic work you have undertaken and, while I assure you of my prayers for your pastoral activities, I impart a special Apostolic Blessing to you all, which I gladly extend to Ms Chiara Lubich, who has welcomed you, and to those who are part of the Focolare Movement Centre.

From the Vatican, 25 November 2003

JOANNES PAULUS PP. II

ORE, December 10, 2003

TO THE PRESIDENT OF BULGARIA

November 27, 2003

On Thursday, November 27, the Holy Father received in audience in his Private Library H.E. Mr Georgi Parvanov, President of Bulgaria. The following is a translation of an excerpt of the Pope's Address, which was given in Italian.

(...) Today's meeting takes me back to the unforgettable visit that Providence granted me to make last May to Sofia, St John of Rila and Plovdiv. I vividly remember the faces of countless people who wanted to express to me their vibrant spiritual joy. I was able to perceive their determination to build the Country with refound serenity and trust in the future, within the great European household.

My thoughts then go to the venerable Patriarch Maxim, Head of the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, who desired to welcome me to his home with brotherly attention during my visit. This marked another stage in our progressive growth in ecclesial communion. With him, I observed that Europe expects the common commitment of Catholics and Orthodox in the defence of human rights and the culture of life (...)

ORE, December 17/24, 2003

FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE JUBILEE YEAR OF COMPOSTELA 2004,

November 30, 2003

The Holy Father sent a Message dated 30 November 2003, the First Sunday of Advent, to Archbishop Julián Barrio Barrio of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, for the opening of the Holy Door of St James' Cathedral inaugurating the first Jubilee Year of the century. The theme of the Year of St James is "Pilgrims through Grace: What do you talk about on the way?".

(...) The Way to Santiago, then, is also a place and time for dialogue, reconciliation and peace; a journey of spiritual brotherhood and an incentive to ecumenical commitment in accordance with the universal vocation of the Church. Hospitality, an inherent feature of people on pilgrimage, also implies an important contribution to the European society of our day, where the phenomenon of migration demands special attention. (...)

ORE, February 11, 2004

TO CHIARA LUBICH

December 4, 2003

On the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the birth of the "Work of Mary" (Focolare Movement), the Holy Father sent a message to the Foundress of the Movement, Ms Chiara Lubich.

The following is a translation of an excerpt the Holy Father's Message, written in Italian and signed on December 4, 2003.

(...) 2. In unison with the Magisterium of the Church — I think especially of the Second Vatican Council and the Encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* of my venerable predecessor, the Servant of God Paul VI — the members of the Focolare Movement have become apostles of dialogue, the privileged way to promote unity: dialogue within the Church, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, dialogue with non-believers.

How many rapid and disturbing social changes have marked the life of the world in these 60 years? Humanity has become ever more interdependent and, pursuing fleeting pleasures, has at times lost its own ideal values. Now, it risks finding itself almost "without a soul"; that is, without the essential unifying principle of its every project and activity.

ORE, January 7, 2004

TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE

January 12, 2004

On Monday, January 12, the Holy Father received the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See in the Regia Hall at the Vatican for the traditional exchange of New Year greetings. H.E. Mr Giovanni Galassi, Ambassador of the Italian Republic of San Marino, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, addressed the Pope at the beginning of the Audience. The Holy Father took "a look at the world" with the Diplomatic Corps and focused in particular on the "four convictions" which, he said, occupied his thoughts and prayers: "Peace still threatened", "Faith: a force for building peace", "Religion in society: presence and dialogue", and "As Christians, we are jointly responsible for the peace and unity of the, human family". The Holy Father's Address, was delivered in French. Here are his comments on Christian Unity.

AS CHRISTIANS, WE ARE JOINTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PEACE AND UNITY OF THE HUMAN FAMILY

(...) You are aware that *ecumenical commitment* has been one of the concerns of my Pontificate. In

fact, I am convinced that if Christians could overcome their divisions there would be greater solidarity in the world. That is why I have always encouraged meetings and joint declarations, seeing each one of these as an example and an incentive for the unity of the human family.

As Christians, we are responsible for *"the Gospel of peace" (Eph* 6:15). All together, we can effectively contribute to respect for life, to safeguarding the dignity of the human person and his or her inalienable rights, to social justice and to the preservation of the environment. Moreover, an evangelical way of life enables Christians to help their companions in humanity to control their instincts, to make gestures of understanding and forgiveness, to help those in need together. We do not give sufficient importance to the pacifying influence that Christians could have, were they united, on their own community as well as on civil society.

If I say this, it is not only to remind all who claim to be followers of Christ of the pressing need to set out with determination on the road that leads to the unity that Christ desired, but also to point out to the leaders of societies the resources they could find in the Christian heritage as well as among those who practise it.

On this subject, a practical example can be cited: teaching peace. You will recognize this as the theme of my Message for 1 January this year. In the light of reason and faith, the Church proposes teaching peace in order to prepare for better times. She wishes to make all her spiritual energies available, convinced that "justice must find its fulfilment in charity" (n. 10). This is what we humbly propose to all people of good will, for "we Christians see the commitment to educate ourselves and others to peace as something at the very heart of our religion" (n. 3).

ORE, January 21, 2004

CELEBRATION IN ROME OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR UNITY

January 18-25, 2004

As *usual the annual week of Prayer for Christian Unity was celebrated in 2004 in Rome. Pope John Paul II spoke about the importance of seeking Christian Unity in addresses at the Angelus on January 18th, at the General Audience on January 21st, and again at the Angelus on January 25th. On the latter occasion the Pope extended to all an invitation to come to an ecumenical celebration of Vespers to close the Week that afternoon at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. His Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper presided over that Vespers Service. Many pastors of other local churches and ecclesial communities took part in the Vespers Service as well.*

Printed below are the Holy Father's statements during the Week, and the Cardinal's homily at the Vespers Service.

ANGELUS

January 18, 2004

The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity began on Sunday, January 18, with the theme: "Peace I leave with you". Prior to the praying of the Angelus with the faithful gathered in St Peter's Square on that day, the Holy Father noted that the Week's theme was Christ's pledge of support to his disciples in such painful trials as "the enduring division between Christians". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's reflection, which was given in Italian.

1. *"Peace I leave with you".* These words of Jesus from John's Gospel (cf. 14:27) are the theme of the annual *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* that begins today. It is significant that this theme was suggested by the Churches of the Middle East where unity and peace are the most acutely felt priorities.

In the coming week, Christians of the different denominations and traditions in every part of the world will gather together to pray intensely to the Lord to strengthen their common commitment to full unity. They will do so starting precisely from the rich meaning contained in Christ's promise and meditating each day on the Gospel gift of peace and the commitments it entails.

2. In promising them his peace, Christ assured the disciples of his support in trials. And is not *the enduring division* between Christians a *painful trial?* This is why they keenly feel the need to turn to their one Lord, in order that he help them overcome the temptation to despair on the gruelling journey that leads to full communion.

In a world thirsting for peace, it is indeed urgent that Christian communities proclaim the Gospel *unanimously.* It is indispensable that they witness to divine Love which unites them, and make themselves messengers of joy, hope and peace, becoming the leaven of a new humanity.

3. I hope with all my heart that this Week of Prayer will bring abundant fruits for the cause of Christian unity. May it be a favourable opportunity for those who believe in Christ to exchange *a fraternal embrace in the peace of the Lord!* May the motherly intercession of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, obtain this for us (...)

ORE, January 21, 2004

GENERAL AUDIENCE

January 21, 2004

At the General Audience on Wednesday, January 21, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Holy Father reflected on Christ's words to his disciples at the Last Supper: "My peace I give to you", the theme for the Week of Prayer.

1. *"My peace I give to you" (Jn* 14:27). This year, the week of prayer and reflection for Christian unity focuses on the words Jesus spoke at the Last Supper. In a certain sense they constitute his spiritual testament. The promise he made to his disciples was to be totally fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection. When he appeared to the Eleven in the Upper Room, he greeted them three times with the words: *"Peace be with you" (Jn* 20:19).

The gift Christ offered to the Apostles, therefore, is not any kind of "peace", but it is Christ's own peace: "my peace", as he says. And to make them understand, he explains more simply: My peace I give to you, *"not as the world gives it" (Jn* 14:27).

The world is longing for peace and needs peace, today as in the past, but often seeks it by inappropriate means, sometimes even with recourse to force or by balancing opposing powers. In these situations, people live with the distress of fear and uncertainty in their hearts. Christ's peace, instead, reconciles souls, purifies hearts, converts minds.

2. This year the theme of the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* was suggested by an ecumenical group in the city of Aleppo, Syria, which prompts me to remember the Pilgrimage I had the joy of making

to Damascus. I recall with special gratitude the warm welcome I received from the two Orthodox Patriarchs and the Greek-Catholic Patriarch. That meeting lives on as a sign of hope for our ecumenical journey. Ecumenism, however, as the Second Vatican Council recalls, is not genuine unless there is *"interior conversion. For it is from newness of attitudes of mind, from self-denial and unstinted love, that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way"* (Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio,* n. 7).

The need for a profound spirituality of peace and pacification is more and more keenly felt, not only by those who are directly involved in ecumenical work but by all Christians. Indeed, the cause of unity concerns every believer, called to belong to the one people of those redeemed by the Blood of Christ on the Cross.

3. It is encouraging to see that the search for unity among Christians is constantly spreading, thanks to timely initiatives that involve the various contexts of ecumenical commitment. Among these signs of hope I would like to list the growth of fraternal love and the progress recorded in the theological dialogues with the various Churches and Ecclesial Communities. It has been possible in these dialogues to reach important convergence, to a varying degree and with different specificity, on topics that were deeply controversial in the past.

Taking these positive signs into account, we must not be discouraged by the old and new difficulties we encounter, but face them with patience and understanding, relying always on divine help.

4. *"Wherever there is charity and love, there is God":* this is what the liturgy prays and sings this week, reliving the atmosphere of the Last Supper. From charity and reciprocal love flow the peace and unity of all Christians, who can make a crucial contribution to helping humanity rise above the causes of its divisions and conflicts.

Besides prayer, dear brothers and sisters, let us also feel strongly motivated to make our own the effort to be authentic *"peacemakers"* (cf. Mr 5:9) in the places in which we live.

May the Virgin Mary, who witnessed the redemptive sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, assist us and accompany us on this path of reconciliation and peace.

The Pope then led the prayer of the faithful dedicated to Christian unity in the various languages.

ORE, January 28, 2004

ANGELUS

January 25, 2004

On Sunday, January 25, prior to the prayer of the Angelus in St Peter's Square, the Holy Father reflected on Christian unity at the close of the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity", reminding the faithful that "unity is a gift to welcome and develop in an ever-deeper way". The following is a translation of the Holy Father's Reflection, given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Today, Feast of the Conversion of St Paul the Apostle, we conclude the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,* during which Christians in every comer of the world prayed together so that their full communion might be fulfilled according to the Lords' will: *"Ut unum sint* — that all may be one" *(Jn* 17:21). The fervent prayer of Jesus in the Upper Room *continues to remind* Christian communities that *unity is a gift to welcome and develop* in an ever-deeper way.

2. Christian unity has been a constant preoccupation of my Pontificate and continues to be a priority demand of my ministry. In the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* at the close of the Jubilee, I wanted to mention that this longing by Christ is "a binding *imperative,* the *strength* that sustains us, and a *salutary rebuke* for our slowness and closed-heartedness" (n. 48).

Therefore, may the duty to pray for unity and its continual pursuit never diminish! Obstacles, difficulties and even misunderstandings and failures cannot and must not discourage us, since the "hope that even within history we shall be able to reach full and visible communion with all Christians" is based not on our own human strength but on the prayer of our mutual Lord (cf. *ibid.f*

3. Let us now confidently call upon Mary, Mother of Christ and the Church, so that she will sustain and accompany us on the ecumenical journey.

After leading the recitation of the Angelus, the Holy Father said:

This afternoon the traditional *Ecumenical Celebration* to close the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held in the Basilica of St Paul-Outside-the-Walls. I invite everyone to unite themselves spiritually to such an important moment of communion (...).

ORE, January 28, 2004

CARDINAL KASPER'S HOMILY

January 25, 2004

On Sunday, January, 25th in the Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls, Rome, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, celebrated vespers that concluded the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. The following is a translation of the homily the Cardinal delivered in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. "My peace I give to you": This year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is inspired by these words

taken from the Gospel of John. To all of you here I now address the ancient biblical and liturgical greeting: *Shalom! Pax vobiscum! Peace be with you!*

I greet with joy the Christian communities of Rome, especially the brothers and sisters of the communities that are not Catholic, united to us in the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This year, a special bond joins us to Christians of the Middle East and in a particular way to those of Syria, where — in Aleppo — the text was prepared for the Week of Prayer. Let us fervently ask that peace may return to this tormented region of the world; a region which, in the early centuries, was the cradle of a rich Christian culture; a region where today, however, Christians are a minority but give a good example of living in concord and of ecumenical collaboration. To these brothers and sisters we extend our gratitude and prayer: "Peace be with you!".

2. Men and women have always looked towards peace with hope and longing, ever opposed to violence and war and continuing to believe that in the end, peace will have the last word. This cry raised up by those thirsting for peace is heard by God, since God is the God of men, a God who answers our in-, vocation. Peace is one of his names (cf. *1 Cor* 14:33). *Shalom,* peace, is an ancient promise, a promise we find again in both the Old and New Testaments.

Peace does not mean simply the silence of weapons. Peace is an order willed by God for all things, a world where men and women live together without violence, in freedom and happiness. Peace means peace in the universe, peace between nations, peace within a population, peace in the depths of the heart. The Bible concludes with the world vision where God will "wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or mourning, crying out or pain" *(Rev* 21:4).

The New Testament announces to us this hope of peace that is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. "For he is our peace" *(Eph* 2:14). Christ founded peace and nailed hatred, violence and hostility on the Cross. He underwent violence in his own body but did not respond with violence, praying instead for those persecuting him. He entrusted his disciples with the responsibility to be, like him, peacemakers (cf. *Mt* 5:9).

We cannot regain unity by our own unaided efforts. This is why Jesus has left us his peace. He has infused his Spirit into our hearts: not the spirit of this world, but the spirit of peace, justice, reconciliation, docility and charity, the spirit which transforms our egoism and selfishness and makes us new men and women, persons in whose hearts the peace of Christ joyfully reigns (cf. *Col* 3:15). As men and women who have been given peace, we Christians must be ambassadors, witnesses, pioneers of peace in this world.

3. Dear brothers and sisters, faced with the urgency of this message of peace, our heart fills with sorrow and shame, since the images that our world — and even our Churches — send us are much different. Our Churches are divided and down through history, their example, rather than being mutual and in favour of peace, has been one of opposition.

Each time that we Catholics say, at he moment of the Eucharistic celebration before Communion, "Peace be with you", we earnestly add: "Look not upon our sins". This also means: Do not look upon the sin of schism, the scandal of separation. And we all have reason to ask: "Give us unity and peace".

This prayer at the centre of the Eucharistic celebration has already grown in my heart for many years. It is for me the prayer for Christian unity. Day after day, especially Sunday after Sunday, it is pronounced by a large number of Christians worldwide. For this, it cannot be recited in vain, it cannot go unheard. By reciting this prayer, we unite ourselves to Jesus' own prayer to the Father on the eve of his death, "that they may all be one" *(Jn* 17:21). Jesus pronounces this prayer before us, with us, for us.

4. Thus, united in prayer with Christ, we are able to welcome the consoling words of the Gospel: "Do not let your hearts be troubled". These are important words, especially in those moment when we are tempted to succumb to discouragement in the face of the difficulties we encounter on the ecumenical journey.

In the last 10 years, we are able to see, thanks to God, that we have made great progress. We no longer make use of expressions of hatred, contempt and reciprocal derision. A new spirit of brotherhood has developed and we live, work and pray together. We have become friends.

But if we look at the world objectively, we cannot pretend that everything is perfect. Sometimes we notice hints of "ecumenical fatigue", signs of a new confessionalism, efforts to undermine the journey towards unity. After having filled in the ditches that once divided us, we now observe that new ones are appearing in the field of ethics.

Of course, from a merely human viewpoint, there is reason to worry and to lose heart. But let us not forget that we are Christians! "The Spirit God has given us is no cowardly spirit, but rather one that makes us strong, loving and wise" *(2 Tim* 1:7). Christians are people of hope. This hope has nothing to do with a naive optimism; it is a gift of God, preserved in patience (cf. *Rom* 5:4), a gift that allows us to hope against all hope (cf. *Rom* 4:18) and to understand that God is greater. It was the Second Vatican Council which emphasized that the ecumenical movement is bom from the impulse of the Holy Spirit; when the Spirit of God starts something, he always brings it to completion. Therefore, there is no reason for discouragement: "Do not let your hearts be troubled".

5. The Feast of the Apostle Paul that we celebrate today at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer suggests to us the direction that we must take. It points us in the direction of conversion. The teaching of Jesus himself begins with an invitation to conversion: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" *(Mk* 1:15). The same holds for ecumenism if we wish to make headway. The Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vati-

can Council clearly states that ecumenism is impossible without conversion, purification of the memory and heart; without a renewal of mind, language and behaviour (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* nn. 4,7; Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint,* nn. 15 ff, 21, etc.). Ecumenism is impossible without openness to reform and renewal. Likewise the holy Church, as the Second Vatican Council says, is "always in need of purification, [and] follows constantly the path of penance and renewal" *(Lumen Gentium,* n. 8).

We are used to speaking about the conversion of others; however, conversion must begin in ourselves. We must not look at the speck in our brother's eye when we miss the plank in our own (cf. *Mt* 7:3). Ecumenism encourages us to exercise self-criticism. As the Holy Father said, [ecumenical dialogue] also serves as "an examination of conscience" and must be an exhortation to seek forgiveness *(Ut Unum Sint,* n. 34). It is not simply others who must convert; we all must convert to Christ. To the degree that we are united to him, we are also united among ourselves.

I would like to add a second point regarding dialogue. Dialogue is the ecumenical method itself. It is not a simple exchange of thoughts or arguments but is an "exchange of gifts" *(Ut Unum Sint,* n. 28). We must not centre our attention on the shortcomings of others but focus on their strong points, their richness, for we can learn from one another and be mutually enriched. We must be a blessing for one another. It is fallacious, therefore, to think that ecumenism is a process of impoverishment where a meeting with the other is based on the lowest common denominator. On the contrary, ecumenism does not allow anything to become lost: it is a process of growth and enrichment. Through dialogue, the Spirit wants to guide us "to all truth" *(Jn* 16:13). It is therefore necessary to have humility and the capacity to recognize that we too have need of others. The principle virtue of Christians is not arrogance or obstinacy, but humility. And why should this not be true for ecumenism as well?

Lastly, I would like to recall the importance of the spirituality of communion. The invitation of the Apostle is clear: to "lead a life worthy of the calling you have received, with perfect humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another lovingly... [preserving] the unity which has the Spirit as its origin and peace as its binding force" *(Eph* 4:1-3). Without such a spirituality of communion, institutional communion would become a mechanism without a soul. Spirituality of communion means, as the Holy Father has well-expressed, making room for our brothers and sisters, sharing with them their desires, burdens, sufferings (cf. *Novo Millennio Ineunte,* n. 43). *We* must not, therefore, point our finger at the weakness of others, but must stand beside them in solidarity, helping them to overcome their difficulty: this is what unites us. This is what builds peace.

Let us now call upon the Spirit of peace, praying to him to make us his instruments. May the peace of the Lord, able to overcome every tension, fill your hearts. May the Lord be merciful and give us his peace. Amen.

ORE, February 4, 2004

LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC RELATIONS

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE *JOINT DECLARATION ON THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION*

The year 2004 marks the fifth anniversary of the official signing, by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation, of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. This important event took place in Augsburg, Germany on October 31st, 1999. As a way of marking this anniversary, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity, and Dr. Ishmael Noko, General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation — both of whom were among those who took part in the signing of the Joint Declaration in 1999 — together sent a letter to Catholics and Lutherans calling attention to the anniversary, and asking that ecumenical events be organized in various settings to celebrate this important occasion. Their letter is printed below.

In January, 2004, following a custom established almost fifteen years ago, an ecumenical delegation from Finland came to Rome to celebrate the feast of St. Henrik, the patron saint of Finland. In the Audience granted to them by Pope John Paul II, both the Pope's discourse, and the address of Bishop Eero Huovinen, Bishop of the Helsinki Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, called attention to the fifth anniversary of the Joint Declaration. Their discourses are found below.

LETTER OF CARDINAL KASPER AND DR NOKO

Geneva and Rome, February 6, 2004

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of the new year, we like to send to you from Geneva and Rome our warm greetings and best wishes in our Lord Jesus Christ. This year we celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ), signed and celebrated on 31 October 1999 in Augsburg, Germany, by the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church.

The signing of the JDDJ will rightly be remembered as the day when we as Lutherans and Catholics were able to state officially that there is a consensus between us on basic truths related to the doctrine of justification. And we not only stated it, we rejoiced and celebrated, because, with God's help, we could reach — not yet the final goal — but an important milestone on our common pilgrimage to full, visible unity. We extended our hands to each other and we are not willing to let them go again.

As a result, we can give common witness to the essence of the Gospel. This is highly important in our present day world of growing secularization and loss of the meaning of life. In a world troubled by so many conflicts, Christians must be able to testify together to peace and reconciliation, which belong at the heart of the Christian message.

Theologians on both sides had long been aware that there is a basic consensus between Lutherans and Catholics regarding the biblical teaching of justification and grace. The Joint Declaration states in paragraph 15: "Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping us for and calling us to good works». This consensus enabled us at the same time to declare that the mutual condemnations of the 16th century in relation to justification do not apply to the Lutheran and Catholic understandings presented in the Joint Declaration. Thus our communion has become more deep and real, although it is still incomplete. Herein lies the historic ecclesiological consequence of the Joint Declaration.

It is our heartfelt view that the Fifth Anniversary of the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification calls for celebrations and for renewed study around the world. The anniversary day itself — October 31, 2004 — is particularly appropriate for such ecumenical celebrations, locally as well as at the diocesan and/or national levels. We encourage you to mark this event in ways appropriate for and relevant to your particular regions.

In addition to celebrations in worship, a day of study around the time of the celebration, arranged in cooperation with seminaries or theological faculties, may be a good way for pastors and theologians to deepen their understanding of what has been achieved, as well as of the tasks that still remain.

Regarding available resources, the full text of the Joint Declaration, with the Official Common Statement and its Annex, are available from the offices of the LWF and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. They are also available in PDF format on the LWF and on the Vatican web sites.[1] Please contact us if there are other ways in which we might assist you as you consider plans for events of the kind mentioned here.

Substantial further work still remains to be done before an agreement in all its fulness and extension is

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[1] www.lutheranworld.org/Special_Events-Justification.html or: www.vatican.va (go to Roman Curia - Pontifical Councils - Promoting Christian Unity).

reached between Lutherans and Roman Catholics regarding the significance of the gospel of justification in the life of the church. Therefore, the Joint Declaration itself (cf. *paragraph* 43), and the Official Common Statement by which the Joint Declaration was confirmed, both call for continued ecumenical efforts by the two sides.

Following upon the Joint Declaration, many initiatives have been undertaken to deepen the consensus reached so far. The fourth phase of the International Lutheran-Catholic Commission on Unity is working on the theme of "Apostolicity of the Church", which includes the question of ministry (cf. *JDDJ,* 43). The Commission takes seriously the fact that there is a variety of elements which constitute the apostolicity of the Church.

In 2001, for the first time, Lutherans and Catholics together invited others, Methodists and Reformed, to a consultation on "Unity in Faith — The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification in a Wider Ecumenical Context". This consultation considered how other Communions could relate to the agreements reached in the Joint Declaration. As a result, a theologically substantiated affirmation of the Joint Declaration is being prepared by the World Methodist Council.

Another significant outcome of the Joint Declaration within the Lutheran World Federation has been the study program on the contemporary meaning of justification: "Justification in the World's Context" (LWF Documentation 45/2000), as well as the 2002 international symposium, resulting in the publication, "The Doctrine of Justification: Its Reception and Meaning Today," 2/2003). These events brought together those involved in official dialogues with those who are examining questions about the current relevance of justification in different situations.

In order to broaden the biblical section of the Joint Declaration, a symposium of biblical scholars will be organized by the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Likewise, in the light of concerns expressed by Lutheran and Reformed Christians regarding aspects of ecumenical celebrations and concerning the matter of indulgences in the Jubilee Year 2000, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, together with the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, organized a symposium in 2001 on the meaning of indulgences today. In addition, various projects referring to the doctrine of justification and to the JDDJ have been carried out, and others are under way. We see the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary as an opportunity to draw on the ecumenical resource that the agreement represents. It is also an opportunity for churches and dioceses around the world to contribute to the ongoing discussion of the issues and challenges still remaining.

We thank you in advance for dedicating attention to this upcoming event, which we hope, by the guidance of God's Spirit, will contribute to the continued positive development of our ecumenical relations both locally and globally.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Dr. ISHMAEL NOKO
General Secretary

WALTER CARDINAL KASPER
President
Pontifical Council for
Promoting Christian Unity

VISIT OF THE DELEGATION FROM FINLAND

On Monday, January 19, 2004, second day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Holy Father received at the Vatican an Ecumenical Delegation from Finland, on a visit to Rome for the Feast of their Patron, St Henrik. The following is the Holy Father's Address.

THE HOLY FATHER'S ADDRESS

Dear Friends from Finland,

Once again this year I am pleased to welcome your Ecumenical Delegation on its visit to Rome for the feast of Saint Henrik, Patron of Finland. In this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, I wish to express my gratitude for the ecumenical progress made between Catholics and Lutherans in the five years since the signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification.* A promising sign of this progress on our path to full and visible unity has been the establishment of a new dialogue group between Lutherans and Catholics in Finland and Sweden. It is my hope that Lutherans and Catholics will increasingly practise a *spirituality of communion,* which draws on those elements of ecclesial life which they already share and which will strengthen their fellowship in prayer and in witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Upon all of you I cordially invoke God's abundant Blessings.

ORE, January 28, 2004

ADDRESS OF BISHOP EERO HUOVINEN, HELSINKI DIOCESE (ELCF), VICE PRESIDENT, LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Your Holiness,

1. On behalf of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the Diocese of Helsinki, I greet You most warmly on the Feast of our Patron saint, Bishop Henrik. And, in addition, at the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, I bring you the fraternal greetings of the Christians of our northern country, who still fondly recall Your pastoral visit to our dear soil. As the Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation (LFW) I also greet you on behalf of the world-wide Lutheran communion. The witness of the Bishop of Rome is carefully attended to in all Christian churches.

2. This year will be five years from the time our churches recognized a joint understanding of the basic truths of the doctrine of justification. We have walked a distance together. His Eminence, Cardinal Walter Kasper, also a deep friend of the Finnish Lutherans, assured the LWF Assembly in Winnipeg last summer that the Roman Catholic Church has, for Her part, committed Herself fully and completely to the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. His encouraging greeting to the Assembly has remained in my mind, when he said that to all the bleeding wounds and divisions of the world "the Christians' answer is nothing other than the message of justification".

3. It is the fervent hope of many Christians that the rapprochement of our churches would continue on the basis of the Joint Declaration. What is needed is the deepening of this consensus as well as its broadening, that is, to encompass questions which remain open. In Winnipeg the LWF expressed its commitment to further work on the Joint Declaration. The goal of this cooperation is, as was stated in the Declaration, visible unity. These efforts are also being continued in the excellent spirit of the dialogue group of the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches of Sweden and Finland.

4. Our sincere desire for visible unity and for a shared Eucharist calls for a patient, deeper advance into the roots of our Christian faith. Lutherans long to be at the common table of the Lord with our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters because the Eucharist is the meal of Christ's presence. We Lutherans have always wanted to trust that at Holy Communion Christ Himself is present in the consecrated bread and wine "truly and substantially" *(were et substantialiter).* There He donates to baptized believers the entire reality of salvation. As a community, the Church lives in the true meaning of the word *de eucharistia,* that is to say, on the mystery and gift of the Eucharist.

5. The trust in Christ's true presence in the Sacrament of Holy Communion is such a treasure of faith that it could bring us closer to each other. Most Holy Father, You wrote in your encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* of this mystery of faith: Christ, truly man and truly God, is present in the wine and bread of the Eucharist "really, wholly, and entirely". We Lutherans have also wanted to believe that Christ's presence is realized, as it is put in the encyclical (§ 15), "in objective reality" *(in ipsa rerum natura)* and "independently of our minds" *(a nostro scilicet spiritu disiuncta).*

6. The Sacrament of Holy Communion brings Christ's person and also his work — His sacrifice and victory — into the present and gives them to us personally. "The Eucharist thus applies to men and women today the reconciliation won once for all by Christ for mankind in every age" (§ 12). That is why we can speak together of the "unifying power" of the Eucharist (§ 24).

7. With these words, Most Holy Father, I greet You in this year of the anniversary of Your years of ministry. In the same breath, I pray for You strength, wisdom, and joy in the service of Christ, our common Lord. May the Lord be with You.

VISIT OF CARDINAL KASPER TO MOSCOW

February 17-23, 2004

Responding to an invitation from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Russian Federation, Walter Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity, visited Moscow February 17-23, 2004, accompanied by Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary, and Father Jozef M. Maj, s.j. of the same Council. At the events of those days they were also accompanied by the Apostolic Nunzio to the Russian Federation, Archbishop Antonio Mennini.

The Cardinal first gave a presentation to the Catholic community, on Tuesday, February 17th, at the Catholic Cathedral in Moscow on relations between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church at this fortieth anniversary of the Decree on Ecumenism Unitatis redintegrazio. *The four Catholic bishops were present, along with many priests and faithful. This was followed by a concelebrated mass. On the afternoon of the same day, the Cardinal met for discussion with the Bishops' Conference. Thursday, February 19th, was spent in conversations with Metropolitan Kirill, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow, and his staff at their headquarters, following which a communique was published. On Friday, February 20th, the Cardinal and the others visited the Russian Orthodox Church's Sergei Posad Academy of Theology. On Sunday, February 22nd, the Cardinal met with His Holiness Patriarch Alexii, of the Patriarchate of Moscow.*

Below can be found the discourse given by Cardinal Kasper at the Catholic Cathedral, along with the communique issued after the meeting with Metropolitan Kirill.

CARDINAL KASPER'S ADDRESS

Orthodoxy and the Catholic Church
40th Anniversary of the Decree on Ecumenism
"Unitatis redintegratio"

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today in the cathedral of "Maria Immaculata". This is the fourth time I have visited this church. I still remember my first visit. It was in the 90's, I was at that time Bishop of the diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart in Germany. The church made a lamentable impression: the Communists had expropriated it and built in extra floors, the foundations and the roof were no longer in order. Spontaneously I offered financial assistance from our diocese for renovation. This evening I am able to say: that assistance has been worthwhile; a beautiful, light and inviting church has been recreated.

I would like first and foremost to extend to you the most cordial greetings of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. I can assure you that the Catholic Christians in Moscow and in all of Russia, and the whole Russian people, have a special place in the heart and in the prayers of the Holy Father. He can not come to you physically, but he is with you and among you in spirit. He expressly asked me to convey his blessings.

I

This evening I would like to speak about the subject which forms my special sphere of activity in Rome as a commission from the Holy Father, the subject of ecumenism. That is particularly fitting, because this year it is exactly 40 years since the Vatican Council in 1964 resolved and solemnly proclaimed the Decree on Ecumenism. This Decree begins with the words: "The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only" *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 1).

I still remember very well the events of those days. I had just become Professor in Münster in Westphalia at the age of 31. This resolution of the Council filled us with great enthusiasm. For us it was a breakthrough. During the Second World War I had grown up in a village which was over 80% Catholic. At that time we did not even know the word Ecumenism. On the contrary, "Luther" and "Calvin" were bad words for us, and I would never have set foot in a Protestant church. Sadly, at that time we knew Russia only through news reports from the warfront and through Russian prisoners of war. That there were Orthodox Christians there who were suffering terribly under Stalin's persecution we were never told. Orthodox Christianity virtually did not exist for us at that time. It was only later in religious instruction and as we studied theology that we heard about it, but Orthodoxy was still very far away, very abstract and theoretical.

What a change has taken place since Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council! The Russian Orthodox Church was involved in the ecumenical movement from the very beginning, and representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church were among the first to attend the Council as observers and to become our friends. Unfortunately this relationship became troubled after 1990. There have been regrettable misunderstandings and failings on both sides, and ecumenism still faces great difficulties in this country. But I am confident that my visit here in

Moscow can be interpreted as a sign that the spirit of rapprochement and friendship is once more gaining ground. The Russian Orthodox Church is not only numerically the largest Orthodox church, it is also a great church in regard to the spiritual and cultural richness of its tradition, and deserves our respect and esteem. We Catholics want to live in peace and love with this church and work together as good friends.

Among us in the West and throughout most of the world Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Christians, despite all the differences in their beliefs now no longer see one another as opponents or rivals, they know that what unites them is far more than what divides them, they see one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. They live together, they work together, and they pray together. That takes place at the congregational level, at the episcopal level, and in Rome, where the Pope regularly and almost as a matter of course receives Orthodox and Protestant visitors with great warmth.

This development gives us cause for great gratitude. This rapprochement is not driven by the spirit of the times, the spirit of relativism, indifferentism or liberalism. It is driven, in the words of the Second Vatican Council, by the Holy Spirit *(Unitatis redintegratio* 1; 4), which is a spirit of unity and reconciliation. Jesus himself on the eve of his passion prayed that all may be one *(John* 17:21). He did not want many churches, he wanted one single church. The New Testament presents a vivid image of the original congregation in Jerusalem as a model for us, and says they were united in heart and soul *(Acts* 2:44-47).

In the confession of faith that we share, we confess that we believe in the one God, the one Lord Jesus Christ, the one Holy Spirit and the one baptism, as well as "in the one holy, catholic and apostolic church". The Apostle Paul writes in the Letter to the Ephesians : "One body and one spirit ... one Lord one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all" *(Eph* 4:4-5). Believing in the one God, the one Lord Jesus Christ and the one Holy Spirit means affirming and seeking the unity and peace of the church. This is an obligation for each individual one of us.

The division of the church is against the will of Jesus, it is a sin, and it scandalises the world. From us Christians the world does not expect conflict: there is enough of that in the world already.. From us they expect the testimony of unity and reconciliation. We should be witnesses and instruments of peace.

The ecumenical movement set in train a countermovement to the divisions between East and West and the divisions in the West since the 16th century. The ecumenical movement is among the few rays of hope in the 20th century just past, which was a dark and bloody century, with two inhuman totalitarian systems and two world wars which left millions dead. For the Russian people and for us Germans this was a particularly painful experience. We therefore bear a particular responsibility for peace in the world and in the church.

Il

Since the political shift of 1989/90 we are faced with a new situation in the world and in Europe. The division of the world into two hostile blocks is, thank God, at an end. The Berlin Wall has fallen. Russia and Europe are moving closer together again. That also presents the church with new tasks and new challenges. The churches must not form the rearguard in this unification process, they must not be an obstacle standing in its way, they must form the vanguard and take the lead courageously. They must not leave the emerging unity of Europe and the collaboration between Russia and Europe to others; we Christians must be the ones to actively structure the future. We cannot do that if we are divided, we can only do it together.

The culture of our peoples has for centuries been moulded by the spirit of Christianity and by the values of Christianity. Following the demise of the atheistic ideologies and dictatorships it must be this spirit which renews our culture once more. It is our shared responsibility see to it that East and West do not lose their Christian soul. That is only possible if we succeed in overcoming the division of the church into East and West, now that the political and military division of Europe has been overcome. The West needs Russia, Russia needs the West, it needs Rome if it does not want to stand apart in isolation.

The division in the church has deep roots, it reaches back to the distant past. Often it is connected with the year 1054. At that time in Constantinople the Papal Legate Humbert von Silva Candida and the Greek Patriarch Kerullarios excommunicated one another. But this event, as painful as it was, has only a symbolic significance. Before that time East and West had already grown apart. They became alienated from one another, they no longer understood one another. As the Second Vatican Council stated, they had from the beginning taken up the legacy inherited from the Apostles in different forms and in different ways *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 14). In addition, they spoke a different language, had a different culture and a different mentality.

Despite these differences, East and West lived together in fraternal communion for many centuries. The two Apostles of the Slavic peoples, Cyril and Methodius, undertook their missionary work with the blessing of both Rome and Constantinople.. The baptism of the Rus of Kiev under Prince Vladimir in 988 also occurred during the time of the undivided church. So despite all their differences East and West, the Latin church and the Slavic Orthodox churches, share common roots and a rich common heritage, as Pope John Paul II reminded us so eloquently in the encyclical *Slavorum Apostoli* (1985).

• It was a lack of understanding and love which led to the split. The division of the church led to consequences which are shameful for us Christians. I will name only the Crusades, which — contrary to their original intention — were directed not only against Islam but also against Orthodoxy, and thereby in the end weakened not only Byzantium but also the whole

of Christendom in its struggle against Islam. Repeated conflicts with the Teutonic Order and with Poland aggravated the situation further. In Russia they were interpreted as a continuation of the Crusades and as an attempt to subjugate the Russian Orthodox Church to the leadership of Rome. Thus it came about that in the East the growing distrust of the Latin West and of Rome built up into a love-hate relationship.

In the end the division meant that both sides were left the poorer. Both have forfeited something of their catholicity and universality as it is expressed in actual life. Both have been wounded in some way thereby. So today Christians from both sides feel a passionate longing to learn from one another again. To mention just one detail. It is striking how widespread the esteem and reverence for icons has become among us in the West. Ecumenism means reciprocal giving and taking, an interchange of gifts *{Ut unum sint,* 28; 57). The church in East and West must once more breathe with both lungs *(ibid.* 54).

Thank God, the centuries of darkness and waiting are now coming to an end. 40 years have passed since Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras met in Jerusalem and embraced one another. They exchanged letters which have entered history as the *"Tomos agapis",* the "Book of Love" (Rome-Istanbul 1971), and at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council they expunged the fateful excommunication of 1054 from the memory of the church. That established a new beginning. Since then we call one another sister churches.

The Second Vatican Council acknowledged the rich heritage of the Eastern churches *{Orientalium ecclesiarum,* 1; *Unitatis redintegratio,* 17) and renounced the previous policy of Latinisation of the East, which had created so much distrust. Pope John Paul II opens his Apostolic Letter *Orientate lumen* (1995) with the words "The light from the East has illumined the universal church". Indeed, Christianity did emerge from the East, the first councils, which were shared by all of us, were held in the East, the Eastern churches have handed down to us a great wealth of spiritual and theological wisdom, of art and culture. Therefore the Pope says immediately in his introduction that the ancient tradition of the Oriental churches represent "an essential component of the patrimony of Christs church".

In the Ecumenical Encyclical *Ut unum sint* (1995) the Pope adds a further, more contemporary argument. He writes: "The courageous witness of so many martyrs" of the 20th century from every church gives new vigour to the Councils call and reminds us of our duty to listen to and put into practice this exhortation". In no other century have there been so many martyrs for the Christian faith from every church as in the past century. If it is true, as the church writer Tertullian said during the persecution of the Christians in the 3rd century, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of new Christians, then we can say today: the blood of so many martyrs from all churches, the Orthodox as well as the Catholic, is the seed of the unity of the Catholic and Orthodox churches.

Today we are rediscovering that, in spite of the division, essential elements of unity have been retained. We are still united as we were in the past by the one Apostolic faith of the first millennium, as it was witnessed by the Church Fathers and the Councils which we shared in the first centuries; while using different rites we celebrate the same sacraments, in particular the eucharist, which is the focus and the climax of the life of the church; and finally we are united by the one episcopal office in the succession of the Apostles, together we revere the saints, especially Mary the Mother of God, and we have in common a high regard for monastic life.

Our divisions do not therefore reach down to our deepest foundations, nor do they reach up to heaven. God is greater than our differences and God's Holy Spirit — in the words of the Second Vatican Council — is also active among our separated brothers and sisters *{Unitatis redintegratio,* 3). Therefore today the Eastern and Western churches acknowledge one another once more as sister churches *{ibid.,* 14). They see one another — or rather, they should see one another — not as rivals nor much less as enemies, but as brothers and sisters. Therefore it is high time to turn a new page in relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church and to place the relationship on a new foundation.

Ill

Before I turn to more practical questions I would like to say something about the model which we have in mind for the unity of the church. When we speak theologically about unity we should not envisage a secular or political ideal of unity. Our goal is not the creation of a great and powerful empire or a gigantic administrative entity. Our starting point must be the ideal of unity which is expressed in the Trinity. According to the faith we share, we confess and worship the one God in three divine persons *{hypostaseis)* as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and we confess the three divine persons as the one God. This unity in trinity and trinity in unity is the archetype and model for the unity of the church. We must see the church as the image, an icon as it were, of the threefold unity of God. That is how the Church Fathers of both the East and the West — Cyprian, Augustine, John Damascene and others — understood it. The Second Vatican Council took up these ideas and made them its own once more *{Lumen gentium,* 4; *Unitatis redintegratio,* 5).

That means: just as the unity of God is a communio unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the unity of the church must not be interpreted as a rigid uniformity but as a living communio, as unity in diversity and diversity in unity. The unity of the church does not mean the uniformity of the church. The Apostle Paul describes the inner riches and variety of the church when he says: "Now there are diversities of gifts but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations but the same Lord. And there are

diversities of operations but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (*1 Cor* 12:4-6). The church is a harmony and a divine symphony says Origen *(Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew Cap* 14, 1-2).

One of the most pleasing results of ecumenical dialogue is that in almost all dialogue documents we find the understanding of church unity expressed as communio unity in accordance with the archetype of trinitarian unity. This consensus is expressed most clearly in those documents which have resulted from international theological dialogues between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches. The very first document of 1982 bears the characteristic title "The Mystery of the Church and the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity".

This shared understanding of the church as communio according to the archetype of the trinity leads to important conclusions. The most important consequence is: the unity of the church is not a problem of organization or administration. The administrative unity of the church is not at issue. Nor is it a matter of a merger of individual churches into one church. Both of these would be secular, political and sociological conceptions. For us, unity is a gift and a work of the Holy Spirit. The issue is the communio *(koinonia)* which we have with the Father in the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ. The issue is communion in the life of the triune God *(1 John* 1:3) and communion in the divine nature (2 *Pet* 1:4).

Secondly: if we understand the unity of the church as a spiritual unity, that does not mean that it is only an invisible unity. The church is the body of Christ, it is therefore to be understood as a divine-human unity in accordance with the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became man. The Spirit of God makes use of visible signs which we call sacraments and which are called mysteries in the language of Eastern theologians.

The fundamental sacrament, through which we are integrated into the communion *(koinonia)* with God the Father in the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, is baptism. Through baptism — as the Apostle Paul says — we are made one with the body of Christ *(1 Cor* 12:13). Even if we belong to different ecclesial communities, we are through baptism already part of a deep — though still imperfect — spiritual communion. This communion cannot be destroyed by us human beings, it is stronger than all the power of sin. Despite our divisions we are already now brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ *(Lumen gentium,* 15; *Unitatis redintegratio,* 3).

The climax of the sacramental life of the church is the celebration of the eucharist *(Lumen gentium,* 11). The church draws its life from this sacrament. The church exists everywhere where the eucharist is celebrated. It is first and foremost because we recognize the celebration of the eucharist by the Orthodox churches *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 15) that we recognize them as true churches and value them as sister churches *(ibid.,* 14).

Thirdly: the sacramental visibility of the church finds expression in the episcopal office of the bishop. Through the sacrament of order he stands in the succession of the Apostles. Through this sacrament the Spirit of the Lord bestows upon the bishop not merely a purely legal authority but also sacramental authority *(exousia),* through which he can speak and act in the name of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit *(Luke* 10:16; 2 *Cor* 5:20). So Orthodox bishops deserve our respect and our esteem. They have been appointed by the Holy Spirit as shepherds of their flock *(Acts* 20:28).

These commonalities have been given expression in various documents of the "Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue". I have already mentioned the first document of 1982 with the title "The Mystery of the Church and the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity". At this point I can add two further documents "Faith, Sacraments and the Unity of the Church" (1987) and "The Sacrament of Order in the Sacramental Structure of the Church, with particular reference to the Importance of the Apostolic Succession for the Sanctification and Unity of the People of God" (1988).

These deep commonalities do not exclude differences. Here we must distinguish between differences which divide the church and legitimate diversity in liturgical, spiritual and theological forms of expression. Such diversity does not constitute an obstacle to unity but is on the contrary a treasure. Among the different traditions, the Council stresses that the churches of the Orient "from earliest times" had followed "their own forms of ecclesiastical law" "which have been sanctioned by the approval of the Church Fathers and synods, even by the ecumenical councils" *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 16). In order to exclude any doubt the Council solemnly declared that the churches of the East "have the power to govern themselves according to the disciplines proper to them, since these are better suited to the character of their faithful and more for the good of their souls". It particularly emphasizes the significance of the patriarchal churches which have arisen "thanks to divine Providence" *(Lumen gentium,* 23; *Orientalium ecclesiarum,* 5; *Unitatis redintegratio,* 16).

These differences are not conflicting but complementary That is in the opinion of many theologians also on the question of the *"Filioque",* that is, of the Latin insertion in the Creed, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father "and the Son" *(filioque).* The overwhelming majority of Western theologians today as well as individual Russian Orthodox theologians (B. Bolotov and S. Bulgakov among others) are of the opinion that this does not represent a divisive difference for the church but mutually complementary expression. The "Catechism of the Catholic Church" has endorsed this opinion (n. 248).

Thus the Council was able to declare that the whole spiritual and liturgical, disciplinary and theological heritage with its diverse traditions is an integral part of the catholicity and apostolicity of the church *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 17). It is our shared heritage. Therefore the Council wishes the historically evolved identity of the Eastern churches to be maintained, and where it is in danger of being lost, be renewed.

The really difficult question and basically the only serious issue is the question of the Petrine office. This issue cannot be dealt with in this context. I would simply like to comment that the Pope himself in his Ecumenical Encyclical *Ut unum sint* has invited the Eastern churches to participate in fraternal dialogue about the future exercise of the Petrine office (no. 95). That has sparked off a lively discussion. Last May a symposium on this question was conducted in Rome with representatives of the Orthodox churches, although — to our regret — the Russian Orthodox Church did not take part. It has become clear that there are openings on both sides, but a consensus is not yet in sight. We hope to be able to take up this question again soon in the International Commission.

Many respected Catholic theologians hold the view that in practice hardly anything would need to be changed if full communion of the churches of the Orient with the Apostolic See in Rome was established. Within the unity with Rome the churches of the Orient could retain their rich spiritual, liturgical, disciplinary and theological tradition and develop it further. The Pope has said in *Slavorum Apostoli* that it was a question of full communion, which is "neither absorption nor fusion" but unity in truth and in love (no. 27). The great Russian philosopher and theologian V. Solovjev pointed in this direction already in his brilliant work "Russia and the Universal Church" (1899). He demonstrated how Eastern and Western wisdom could encounter and mutually inspire and enrich one another.

IV

In the ideal I have just evoked, we have looked a little way into the future. To some of you what I have said may have appeared utopian or theoretical. And indeed, measured by human standards, the path to full church communion will still be arduous. Therefore I would like in this final section to give some thought to possible intermediary steps in this direction. Let us ask: What practical steps can we take now in order to arrive at this goal? I do not wish to outline a complete program, I will content myself with five suggestions. Even then, some of it may appear remote from your reality here and now. What I have to say comes out of experience gained elsewhere. But why should it not "mutatis mutandis" be possible here too, with goodwill on both sides? The commission we have received from Christ obligates us to dare to make a new beginning.

Firstly: We must overcome prejudices and renounce polemics. Persistent prejudices and established cliché views exist on both sides; they exist among Catholics and Orthodox, among Russians and among Poles. Through thoughtless speech, through journals and books, they are constantly passed on. If we take a closer look, most of them fail to measure up to reality. Following the old mirror of conscience as part of preparation for confession, we had to ask ourselves: Have I spoken ill of anyone? One must also ask oneself this question when one speaks of other churches. It ought to be in the personal interest of the leadership of both churches to ban all malicious writings which break the eighth commandment. Just as in "normal" life, it is normal for churches also to again and again encounter problems, tensions and misunderstandings. Since we are all sinful human beings, mistakes are made again and again on both sides. Even Catholics and the Vatican are not faultless. But if we enter into public polemics every time the other side makes a mistake, then we are pleasing and serving the interests only of secular journalists, who have no concern for the church but only for selling their story. The church itself can never gain anything from it, but only lose. Such public polemics simply damage the public reputation of both churches, and also lead to the confusion of the faithful. Nor does one solve problems by breaking off dialogue each time the other makes a mistake. It is precisely when problems arise that we must talk to one another. No problem is solved by the refusal to dialogue.

On the occasion of the visit of Patriarch Theoctist from Romania (2002), Pope John Paul II urged us to consider whether and how we could establish permanent institutional structures for the regular exchange of information and consultation between the churches. In the first millennium Rome and Constantinople established the institution of the Apokrisar, a kind of authorized ambassador. There should be something of the sort today, a kind of "red telephone" perhaps, so that contact can be established very quickly in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings, and to clear up misunderstandings which have arisen as rapidly as possible.

Secondly: It is not only important to clear away misunderstandings and prejudices, it is also important to build up a positive mutual understanding. We know far too little about one another. The churches of the East and the West have grown apart in the course of a long historical process, now they must live together again and build up mutual understanding and respect. For that we need not only the ecumenism of "summit talks" and expert discussions, we also need an "ecumenism of life" at the local level. We must get to know, understand and esteem one another better. That can only occur if we encounter one another, shake hands with one another and look one another in the eye.

We have already achieved much. In the encyclical *"Ut unum sint"* Pope John Paul II said that the real fruit of previous ecumenical dialogue was the rediscovered fraternity of all Christians (no. 42). Already today there are many more things we can do together than we normally do, without acting against our conscience or against a canon of church law. That starts with with very simple things. Reciprocal greetings and visits, reciprocal invitations to celebrations, reciprocal sympathy in the case of death or tragedy, but also congratulations on joyful events, reciprocal aid in times of need. One must simply be a little inventive, and love is inventive.

At the "upper level" we have once more taken up important forms of church communion of the first millennium: reciprocal visits and regular messages of

greeting between the Pope and the Patriarchs. These are not simply diplomatic courtesies. They are important ecclesial events.

I would also like to mention encounter and exchange between monasteries and centres of spiritual life. In *Orientate Lumen* (1995) (9-16) Pope John Paul had good reason to emphasis the significance of monastic life for the Eastern churches. Fortunately such exchanges already exist. I will name only Grottaferrata, Chevetogne, Bose, Niederaltaich and not least Bari with the tomb of Saint Nicholas.

It is essential that what has already been achieved is received and to put it into practice. That is true first and foremost of the statements of the Second Vatican Council, the many statements of the Holy Father about ecumenism, and the results of the Joint International Commission. It is amazing how much has been achieved, and how little of that achievement is known, how little has entered into the life of the church. We must introduce a reception process into catechesis, into preaching, into adult education, and into the theological training and professional development of the clergy.

Thirdly: the unity of the church is unity in the truth, full communio is not possible without clarification of the questions of dogma which stand between us, particularly the question of the Petrine office. Therefore it is essential to recommence international theological dialogue as soon as possible. Exchange and collaboration between theological faculties, academies and institutes are of great significance. This last aspect has been significantly intensified by the "Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity" in recent years. In that time, good contacts have been established with Minsk and Kiev, Belgrade and Sofia, and also with Moscow, though that is still a tender young plant.

In the field of history there is still much to be done. Within our churches there are memories of painful events of the past which burden and impede our relationship today. We tell and re-tell the story of the wrongs "the others" have committed against us in the past. Often these stories are in fact true: then one must ask for forgiveness, as the Pope has done publicly on several occasions. Often, however, they are historical myths which do not stand up to historical scrutiny. Then a "purification of the memory" is necessary. Often the guilt is shared by both sides. So we should examine our schoolbooks and ask ourselves whether they present the history and the doctrine of the others objectively and fairly. As Christians we know the Lord's commandment to forgive one another, and we believe in the power of forgiveness. Through forgiveness we clear the way for a shared future.

Fourthly: recognition of the Orthodox churches as sister churches involves a number of important rules for mutual conduct. Already in 1992 they were formulated by the then Pontifical Commission "Pro Russia", and a few months later they were publicly affirmed by Pope John Paul II in his homily at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The title of this directive is "General principles and practical Norms for the coordination of evangelization and ecumenical participation of the Catholic Church in Russia and in the Community of Independent States". The main issue is the coordination and balance between the missionary mandate of the church and its ecumenical efforts. There can be no conflict between them, since both are the will of God and grounded in the one mission of the church.

Here I can only summarise the most important points in the directive from the "Pro Russia" Commission. The church is in its essence a missionary church *(Ad gentes,* 2). The manner in which the church carries out this missionary mandate of course depends on the concrete circumstances. Russia is not a pagan land, rather the Catholic Church is in Russia confronted with a situation which has been moulded for centuries by the presence of the Orthodox Church. That Church has moulded the culture of this land, and we can only hope that, following the end of totalitarian rule by atheistic Communism, it can do still more in the future. It is our duty to do all in our power to assist. Our missionary mandate must therefore be exercised in an ecumenical spirit, not in rivalry but with respect and in cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church. "Pro Russia" states expressly: the missionary mandate of the church in a land with an ancient Orthodox tradition is substantially different from the "missio ad gentes", the mission "to the nations". The Catholic Church has the right to exist and carry out its mission in the countries of Eastern Europe which have an Orthodox majority. It has been present there not just in recent days but for centuries. But its pastoral and charitable activity must bear the imprint of an ecumenical spirit. The first duty of the Catholic Church is to take care of the pastoral needs of its own faithful. That does not exclude individual conversion if an Orthodox Christian wishes it of his own accord for reasons of conscience *(Unitatis redintegratio 4).* In such cases both sides must respect religious liberty and freedom of conscience. But respect for the conscientious decision of the individual is something different from actual mission work among Orthodox Christians. Since we recognize the Orthodox Church as a true church and its sacraments as true sacraments, there can be no deliberate policy or strategy of evangelization of Orthodox Christians.

The declaration "Pro Russia" takes up a similar position to that of the so-called Balamand document (1993) which was produced by the Joint International Theological Commission. It was expressly affirmed in the encyclical *Ut unum sint* (1995) (no. 60). The document rejects what the language of the Orthodox Church calls Uniatism and proselytism, that is missionary activity among members of the Orthodox Church, as a current or future method. Where this did occur in the past, it was the expression of an exclusivist ecclesiology which did not recognize that true sacraments, and therefore true means of salvation, are present within the Orthodox Church. This exclusivist ecclesiology was overcome by the Second Vati-

can Council. The foundation for our relationship today is and must be mutual recognition as sister churches, and dialogue in love and truth. With goodwill on both sides it should be possible to arrive at binding agreements and rulings, on the basis of the principles and practical norms as they are established in the directives of the Pontifical Commission “Pro Russia". Why not establish a joint commission to develop a kind of “code of behaviour"?

Fifthly: the most important aspect is spiritual ecumenism; it is the soul of the ecumenical movement. We cannot bring about the unity of the church; it is a gift of the Holy Spirit; we need another Pentecost. This will come only through prayer. So we must do something similar to what was done by Mary and the disciples after the Lord’s ascension. They withdrew into the upper room and prayed fervently for the coming of the Holy Spirit *(Acts* 1, 13f). Prayer for unity, if possible joint prayer for unity, and the celebration of the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity must be the focus of our ecumenical efforts. An integral part of spiritual ecumenism is the insight that the unity of the church is not possible without personal conversion and repentance, without personal sanctification and without the renewal of the church. Living according to the Gospel is the best ecumenism *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 6-8; *Ut unum sint,* 15f; 21-27).

“Quantum est nobis via?" “How long is the path before us?" asks the Pope in the encyclical *Ut unum sint (57).* We do not know. We have no power over history. God alone holds time in his hands. Therefore the unity of the church cannot be enforced or calculated in advance. But there is no cause for resignation. The Council affirmed that the movement which strives after the full unity of the church is inspired and fostered by the Holy Spirit *(Unitatis redintegratio,* 1; 4). God is faithful; we can rely on him; and the Holy Spirit is always capable of surprising us.

So we may hope that if we do all in our power, the Spirit of God will bring to completion the work that he has begun. In the new third millennium he will restore the unity which existed in the first millennium and was broken in the second. Only then can the church become a sign to the world and the instrument of reconciliation and peace which we long for so much. Only then can Europe become a spiritual and moral force once more. Only then can we stand before God and history. It is my hope and my wish that my visit here can make a modest contribution towards that goal.

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COMMUNIQUE

Meeting of Cardinal Kasper and Metropolitan Kirill

On 19 February 2004, in Moscow, a meeting took place between the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow, Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Kirill, and the President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Cardinal Walter Kasper. In the course of their conversations, the parties considered the matters at issue in relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, especially in Russia and in Ukraine. In particular, Cardinal Kasper confirmed that the Holy See had received the written response of the Russian Orthodox Church on the possible establishment of a Greek- Catholic Patriarchate m Ukraine, as well as the responses of all the local Orthodox Churches on this question.

Cardinal Kasper indicated that the unanimous position of all the Orthodox Churches is being given serious consideration by the authorities of the Catholic Church. The Catholic party assured the Orthodox party that it is the wish of the Holy See to maintain and further strengthen positive relations with the Orthodox Churches. Both sides agreed that for the solution of specific issues in relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches a joint working group should be set up, composed of representatives of both Churches who will examine these questions and make proposals for their solution.

Partecipating in the meeting were Archbishop Antonio Mennini, representative of the Holy See to the Russian Federation, Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Reverend Father Jozef M. Maj,, official of the same Council, the Vice-Chairmen of the Department for External Church Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow, Bishop Mark of Egoryevsk and Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, and Reverend Father Igor Vyzhanov, acting secretary for Inter-Christian Affairs.

THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VATICAN COUNCIL II DECREE *UNITATIS REDINTEGRATIO:*

Cardinal Kasper's Presentation of its Theologically Binding Character

November 23, 2004 will mark the Fortieth Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council Decree Unitatis Redintegratio. *The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity will celebrate this anniversary with a special symposium, November 11-13, 2004.*

In this presentation released early in 2004 Cardinal Kasper discussed the theologically binding character of the Decree.

In the Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* the Second Vatican Council recognized that the ecumenical movement is a sign of the Holy Spirit's action and said that it considered the promotion of this movement to be one of its principal tasks. Today 40 years later, the ecumenical movement is in a different situation.

Alongside the progress, the burden of old and new divisions can be felt: the process of *rapprochement* has of course been drawn out far longer than many expected in an earlier, optimistic phase. Then there are impatient voices which,contrary to the Council's declared intention (cf. *Unitatis: Redintegratio,* n. 11) and screened by the mirage of presumed solutions, are giving rise to problems and misinterpreting the ecumenical movement, which they mistakenly believe they will further by surrendering to dogmatic relativism, indifferentism and pure pragmatism.

At times, the difficulties and the misunderstandings lead people to regard the ecumenical movement with mistrust. Doubt is then often cast on the theologically binding character of the Conciliar Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio.*

The argument used alleges that this document is not a Dogmatic Constitution but "merely" a Decree, that is, that it has no binding doctrinal character — or if it does, it is minimal — and that its only importance is pastoral and disciplinary.

1. At first sight the argument seems clear. In fact, a closer look shows that this is far from being the case. However, it is impossible to deduce an argument of this kind solely from the use of words. Indeed, the Council of Trent issued nothing but Decrees; yet it approved documents with this title that were both dogmatically important and binding.

As compared with Trent, the Second Vatican Council made a distinction between Constitutions and Decrees; but the Council did not explain this differentiation, or at least not in such a way as to justify the above-mentioned argument.

Pope Paul VI's declarations on the act of the solemn promulgation of *Unitatis Redintegratio* took another direction.

At the beginning of the second session of the Council, the Pope had already declared in a fundamentally important Address that ecumenical *rapprochement* was one of the purposes — the spiritual exigence, so to speak — for which the Council had been convoked.[1] If due consideration is given to this declaration, all the texts of the Council should be read in an ecumenical perspective.

When the Decree on Ecumenism was promulgated at the end of the third session (together with the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), Pope Paul VI said that the Decree explained and completed the Constitution on the Church: *"ea doctrina, explicationibus complete in Schemate De Oecumenismo' comprehensis..".*[2] Thus, with regard to theological importance, he closely linked this Decree to the Constitution on the Church.

Lastly, in his Closing Address on 8 December 1965 (in agreement with what Pope John XXIII had said in his Opening Address)[3] he declared that the Council overall, hence including the Dogmatic Constitution, had a pastoral orientation. And he left no room for doubt concerning the fact that the pastoral orientation neither excluded nor relativized doctrinal pronouncements but, on the contrary, was founded on the teaching of the Church.[4]

Effectively, there is no pastoral service worthy of the name that is not anchored in the teaching of the Church; nor is there any teaching of the Church that consists solely of doctrine and is devoid of pastoral aims. The First Vatican Council had already declared

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[1] *Ench. Vat.,* Vol. 1, *Documenti del Concilio Vaticano II* (Bologna, 1981), [104]f; cf. also the statements of POPE JOHN XXIII in his Address at the Opening of the Second Vatican Council, *ibid.,* [48]f.

[2] *Ibid.,* [178]f. If the Pope had not taken the Decree seriously from the theological viewpoint, his interventions immediately before its promulgation would be incomprehensible. Concerning this, cf. W. BECKER in: *LThK Das zweite Vatikanische Konzil, II* (1967), 38f; G. ALBERIGO (Ed.), *Storia del Concilio Vaticano II,* Vol. 4 (Bologna, 1999), 436-446.

[3] *Ench. Vat.,* Vol. 1, [42]f.

[4] *Ibid.,* [284]f.

that the teaching of the Church must be interpreted in view of the ultimate destiny of the human being (DS, 3016).

Therefore, just as pastoral work must be guided by the teaching of the Church, the teaching of the Church must be interpreted by observing man and his destiny, that is, in a pastoral sense. The viewpoint of the *salus animarum quale supreme lex* is not only a fundamental principle for the interpretation of canon law *(CIC,* n. 1752), but also of the Church's teaching.

From this derive important perspectives for the hermeneutics of the Conciliar texts. Just as it is not permissible to separate *Unitatis Redintegratio* from *Lumen Gentium* or to interpret the Decree in the sense of dogmatic relativism or indifferentism, *Unitatis Redintegratio* likewise indicates the approach to take in explaining the assertions of *Lumen Gentium* (an attitude of openness on more than one point): that is, a sense of theologically responsible ecumenical openness.

Thus, there is no opposition between the doctrinally binding character, on the one hand, and the pastoral or disciplinary character on the other.

Rather, any wish to discredit the theological aspect of the Decree on Ecumenism would be contrary to the overall ecumenical intention of the Second Vatican Council.

II. Rejection of the overall devaluation of *Unitatis Redintegratio* does not mean that a solution to every problem has been found. On the contrary, it is at this very point that the task of the correct interpretation of the Decree begins. And if this is the case we cannot but differentiate and classify its binding nature.

This can already be deduced from the Theological Commission's response at the end of the discussion on the Constitution on the Church on the matter of its binding character. "Clearly a Council text should always be interpreted in accordance with the general rules, known to all".

This means that it is necessary to accept and maintain the Council's assertions "in conformity with the intention of the Holy Synod itself, as shown, in accordance with the foundations of the theological interpretation, from the subject addressed or from the form of expression used".[5]

The Council's extensive discussion of the title of the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modem World" *(Gaudium et Spes)* led to the same result. In this debate the term "pastoral" and its theological significance were broadly discussed.

As a result, a note on this title expressly establishes: "It (the Constitution) is called 'pastoral' because, based on doctrinal principles, it desires to illustrate the relationship of the Church with the contemporary world. Hence, the pastoral purpose is not absent from the first pail nor the doctrinal purpose from the second", even if this part "not only contains unchangeable elements, but also elements conditioned by history". In brief, it is affirmed: "The Constitution must therefore be interpreted in accordance with the general rules for theological interpretation".[6]

Unitatis Redintegratio was debated in a similar way, although the discussion may not have been as broad as that on *Gaudium et Spes.* The result was objectively the same. The Council, precisely to avoid a false irenicism and a purely pragmatic ecumenism, did not accept the proposal of certain Council Fathers to eliminate everything theological from the text.[7]

The Council wished to retain the principle that pastoral affirmations rest on dogmatic principles and, moreover, that pastoral affirmations relate these dogmatic principles to concrete historical situations. As a rule, historical situations are complex and as such are susceptible to evaluations that can be perfected in the light of deeper investigation.

Affirmations on historical events with effects in the theological context must therefore be understood in accordance with the theological rules in force for interpretation, so as not to jeopardize the value of the doctrinal elements that might be present in them.

Unfortunately — and this is not the least important point that has emerged from the discussion of the theologically binding character of *Unitatis Redintegratio* — in the post-Conciliar period all too often knowledge of the rules for the interpretation of theology and the doctrine of theological qualifications has been forgotten.[8]

Regarding this the Second Vatican Council made its contribution in *Lumen Gentium,* distinguishing between infallible declarations and the authentic Magisterium and explaining that the degree to which they are binding is to be recognized "by the character of the documents in question, or by the frequency in which a certain document is proposed, or by the manner in which the doctrine is formulated" *(Lumen Gentium,* n. 25).

These distinctions must be taken into account when dealing with the theologically binding character of *Unitatis Redintegratio.* The question, therefore, is not merely: "Is this Council text binding or not?". Rather, within the documents, a distinction must be made between the different forms and degrees of obligation, and this must be brought concretely to the fore as appropriate.

If this is done, it will be hard to dispute that the first chapter of *Unitatis Redintegratio* (in which the "Catholic principles on ecumenism" are expounded) contains binding affirmations that either sum up or develop further the corresponding assertions in *Lumen Gentium.* Explicit citations of the dogmatic

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[5] Cf. the notifications of the General Secretariat of the Council, 16 November 1964, in *LThK-Das* zweite *Vatikanische Konzil, I* (1966), 349f.

[6] Cf. the comment of Ch. MOELLER in: *LthK - Das zweite Vatikanische Konzil, III* (1968), 280-282.

[7] Cf. W. BECKER'S comment in: *LThK - Das zweite Vatikanische Konzil,* II (1967), 30; G. Alberigo (Ed.), *Storia del Concilio Vaticano II,* Vol. 3 (Bologna, 1998), 283f.; 286.

[8] Cf. the historical and systematic panorama in L. SCHEFFCZYK, *Quatifikationen,* in: *LThK,* Vol. 8 (1999), 755-757.

affirmations of earlier Councils (the Fourth Lateran Council, the Second Council of Lyons, the Council of Florence, the First Vatican Council) confirm that it is a matter of theologically binding affirmations, although these may not always constitute ultimately binding infallible definitions.

On the contrary, especially in the third chapter (on "Churches and Ecclesial Communities which were separated from the Apostolic See of Rome"), historical affirmations can be found which by their nature cannot be theologically binding, even if here too there are statements that leave no doubt as to their implicitly binding meaning.

So it is with these words, for example: "This holy Synod solemnly declares" *(Unitatis Redintegratio,* n. 16); "this sacred Council... declares" (n. 17); "after taking all these factors into consideration, this sacred Council confirms..." (n. 18). In no way is this wording inferior to corresponding wording in *Lumen Gentium.*

Consequently, the hermeneutics of *Unitatis Redintegratio* and the judgment on this document's theologically binding character cannot be global but must be differentiated. To succeed in differentiating every single case demands concentrated work that no one can dispense with by resorting to generalizations.

III. Nonetheless, the interpretation of *Unitatis Redintegratio* cannot be limited to ascertaining the degree of obligation of every individual affirmation. After ascertaining the formally binding character of an affirmation, the problem arises as to the interpretation of its content.

For this too there are rules, and they obviously also apply to ecumenical theology. To treat this here would take too long and would require the exposition of an entire theological methodology. We briefly mention three of these rules.[9]

In the first place: a historical interpretation is fundamental.

Here the rule applies that one cannot invoke a vaguely Conciliar spirit but must start with the manner in which affirmations are expressed. At the same time, this means that we must pay attention each time to what the Council wanted to say. And this becomes particularly clear from an examination of the Acts of the Council.

Moreover, single affirmations cannot be considered on their own. The positivist citation of single sentences or even phrases taken out of context is not adequate.[10] * [11]

Instead, individual affirmations should be interpreted in the context of the Council documents, in connection with all the mysteries of the faith *(DS,* 2016) and according to the "hierarchy" of truths (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* n. 11). This historical and systematic interpretation confronts many historical and hermeneutical problems: we should not evade them to take refuge either in a purely positivistic way of citing them or in the disputable distinction between the spirit and letter of the Council.

Secondly: an interpretation in the light of Tradition.

No Council is independent but every Council follows in the wake of the tradition of all the others. Thus, the Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* refers to the confession of the faith of the Church and to the earliest Councils.

It would therefore be erroneous to interpret the Second Vatican Council, and especially the Decree on Ecumenism as a break with tradition." Actually, one of the most important reasons for this Council was a *resourcement,* a return to the sources; the Council dealt with a new actualization of Tradition, and in this sense, with its *aggiomamento* (a concept that is nowhere to be found in the documents of the Council).

We should, of course, ask ourselves what does "tradition" mean in the theological sense, and in so doing, it is necessary to distinguish between the one Tradition and the many traditions.[12] The ecumenical openness of the Second Vatican Council is not a break with Tradition in the theological sense of the word; but it is certainly an intentional modification of individual traditions, for the most part relatively recent.

Thus, it is indisputable that the Council consciously went beyond the defensive and prohibitive assertions of Pope Pius XI in *Mortalium Animos* (1928) and, in this sense, made a qualitative leap.[13] Understood in this way, tradition and innovation are not in opposition.

On the subject of Tradition, in the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *(Dei Verbum),* the Second Vatican Council made its own the deep understanding of Tradition as treated by J.A. Mohler and J.H. Newman, who have made it the foundation of their respective theological reflection (cf. *Dei Verbum,* n. 8). The Council understood Tradition to be a living reality, full of the Holy Spirit: that is, both as fidelity to the *Depositum fidei* that we received as our inheritance once and for all, and as an ever renewed "youthfulness" in eternally new situations.

This living interpretation, made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has nothing in common with an easy adaptation to the spirit of the times: often, on

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[9] For the hermeneutics of the Second Vatican Council, cf. W. KASPER, *Die bleibende Herauslorderung durch das II Vatikanische Konzil,* in: *Theologie und Kirche* (Mainz, 1987), 290-299; H.J. POTTMEYER, *A New Phase in the Reception of Vatican II,* in G. ALBERIGO *et al.* (Ed.), *The Reception of Vatican II* (Washington, 1987), 27-43; for a brief overview cf. O. RUSH, *Still Interpreting Vatican II: Some Hermeneutical Principles,* Pro-manuscript (Sydney, 2003).

[10] A concrete example: when it is a question of judging the celebrations of the Last Supper in reformed communities, it is not enough to quote from *Unitatis Redintegratio,* n. 22, which says that these "have not preserved the proper reality *[substantia]* of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness", instead, it is necessary to complete the sentence that immediately follows, in which the Council seeks to control the importance of these celebrations in a positive way.

[11] This is what Cardinal J. RATZINGER quite rightly states; *Rapporto sulla Fede* (Milan, 1985), 33-35.

[12] Cf. Y. CONGAR, *La tradition et les traditions,* Vol. I (Paris, 1960), Vol. 2 (Paris, 1963).

[13] Cf. G. ALBERIGO (Ed.), *Storia del Concilio Vaticano II,* Vol. 3 (Bologna, 1998), 287; 290; Vol. 4 (Bologna, 1999), 504.

the contrary, the only way it can express the timeliness of Tradition is by a prophetic witness against the spirit of the times.

The Second Vatican Council document *Unitatis Redintegratio* must therefore be interpreted in continuity with all the Councils. This continuity must not be understood as a dead or fossilized reality, but a living event through which the Holy Spirit introduces us again and again into the fullness of the truth *(Jn* 16:13). It is he, says St Irenaeus of Lyons, who keeps the *Depositum fidei* young and "dewy", who preserves the one and the same Gospel not as something eternally out of date, but with inexhaustible youth.[14]

Thirdly: the importance of the reception of the Council.[15]

Understanding Tradition as a living reality implies that not only in *Unitatis Redintegratio* but also in many other texts of the Second Vatican Council (also in *Lumen Gentium), old and new* are often found side by side.

This looks like a compromise. Yet it is not always a "bad compromise", given that an intelligent compromise can be an intellectual undertaking of high value and an expression of great wisdom because, while it clearly excludes error on the one hand, on the other, it permits the existence for the time being — for love of unity in the essentials — of insurmountable intra-ecclesial differences, deferring their solution to future discussion.

Nor could the earliest Councils — as every student of the history of dogma knows well — dispense with these expressions of compromise that led subsequently to a laborious process of assimilation. In this regard, the Councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (451), and the subsequent history of this, are eloquent examples.[16]

People who criticize *Unitatis Redintegratio* for its use of some "immature" wording should also criticize the Dogmatic Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council and essential elements of the most ancient history of the Councils. The wording of a Council, despite the absolute certainty that it is exempt from error, is also always open-ended; defining it sparks a lively process of reception.

In this sense, *Unitatis Redintegratio* cannot be read merely as a historical text, isolated from the history of the effects of its reception in the post-Conciliar period.[17] Attached to this form of reception are the many magisterial documents that confirmed and further developed ecumenical openness including, especially, the Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* (1995). So, too, is the acceptance that *Unitatis Redintegratio* met with in the faith and life of the Church, in theology and in ecumenical dialogue.

Without a doubt, several points are not yet fully mature; in the face of certain erroneous developments, in fact, the Magisterium of the Church has had to take a firm stand, as occurred with the Declaration *Dominus lesus* (2000). Yet this Declaration should not be interpreted out of context either, but in the light of all the other magisterial documents and within the framework of the whole process of their reception.

In the past 40 years, *Unitatis Redintegratio* has been assimilated by both the authentic Magisterium of the Church and the *sensus fidelium.* The Decree, in the past 40 years, has made a great contribution to developing ecumenical awareness in the consciences of many Christians. Of course, there has been no lack of exaggerated interpretations and inappropriate applications; but although wild growth must be controlled, one cannot uproot the good wheat along with the weeds (cf. *Mt* 13:29).

Thus, to underestimate *Unitatis Redintegratio* 40 years after its promulgation, would be to set ourselves above an Ecumenical Council, above the authentic Magisterium of the Church, above the life of the Church (which is guided by the Holy Spirit); it would mean resisting the very Spirit who has pushed this process forward through its high and low phases, with all its problems, but more than these by far, its many hopeful aspects.

Therefore, in the changed ecumenical situation we have every reason to ensure (in fidelity to the Tradition of the Church and in the light of Catholic doctrinal principles, but also with courage and creativity) that *Unitatis Redintegratio* will develop its vitality both in theology and in praxis.

ORE, Febrary 25, 2004

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[14] IRENAEUS of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses,* III, 24, 1.

[15] The subject of reception has long been neglected by Catholic theology. In this regard, in addition to the well-known and now classical treatment of it by A. GRILLMEIER and Y. CONGAR, cf. especially the extensive exposition of G. ROUTHIER *La Reception d'un Concile* (Paris, 1993). In the philosophical perspective, H.G. GADAMER and P. RICOEUR have shown that the history of the effect of a text is part of it and cannot be separated from it.

[16] Cf. M. SUCKLER, *Uber den Kompromiss in Sachen der Lehre, in: Im Spannungsfeld von Wissenschaft und Kirche* (Freiburg im Breisgau. 1980) 99-109.

[17] Cf. R FISICHELLA (Ed.) *Il Concilio, Vaticano II. Recezione e attualità alia luce del Giubileo* (Rome. 2000). 335-415, with contributions by E. FORTINO. J. WICKS, F. OCARIZ, Y. SPITERIS, V. PFNOR.

PLENARY OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

November, 3-8, 2003

THE HOLY FATHER'S MESSAGE

On the occasion of the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Holy Father addressed a Message to Cardinal Walter Kasper, President, encouraging all those taking part in the Assembly to respond to Christ's prayer for unity by sparing no effort to hasten its fulfilment. The following is a translation of the Holy Father's Message, which was written in Italian and dated 3 November.

To my Venerable Brother
Cardinal Walter Kasper
President of the Pontifical Council
for Promoting Christian Unity

1. I willingly address this Message to you in order to ask you to be kind enough to convey my greeting to the Members, Consultors and Officials of this Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity on the occasion of its Plenary Assembly. Many of the participants in this important event are associated for the first time with the task entrusted to the Pontifical Council, and thus starting to share directly in the "passion" for the unity of all Christ's disciples.

That the disciples "'may all be one" was Christ's prayer to the Father on the eve of his Passion (cf. *Jn* 17:20-23). It is a prayer that demands our commitment since it constitutes an indispensable task for the Church, which feels called to spare no effort in hastening its fulfilment. In fact, "to desire unity means to desire the Church; to desire the Church means to desire the communion of grace which corresponds to the Father's plan from all eternity. Such is the meaning of Christ's prayer: *'ut unum sint'"* (Encyclical *Ut Unum sint,* n. 9).

2. I am certain that the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, as well as the experts in various disciplines gathered at the plenary meeting, are fully aware of the Church's urgent need to advance in the task of re-establishing full communion among Christians. Moreover, the commitment with which my Predecessors have worked and prayed for the achievement of this goal is visible to all. I myself have said several times that the movement directed at restoring unity among all Christians is one of the great pastoral concerns of my Pontificate. Today, 25 years after my election to the See of Peter, I thank the Lord because I can see that in the ecumenical process, despite the ups and downs, we have taken important and meaningful steps towards our goal.

3. Of course, the ecumenical route is not an easy one. As we gradually progress, we can more easily make out the obstacles and estimate their difficulty. The same goal declared in the various theological dialogues in which the Catholic Church is engaged with the other Churches and Ecclesial Communities seems even in certain cases to become more problematic. The prospect of full and visible communion can sometimes give rise to distressing phenomena and reactions in those who want to accelerate the process at all costs, or in those who become discouraged at the long journey ahead. We are learning at the school of ecumenism, however, to live this interim period with humble trust, aware that it is, in any case, a journey of no return.

Together let us overcome disagreements and difficulties, together let us recognize our non-compliance and procrastinations regarding unity, let us re-affirm our desire for reconciliation wherever it seems threatened by mistrust or suspicion. All this can only be done, in the Catholic Church herself and in her ecumenical action, by starting out with the conviction that there is no other option, for "the movement promoting Christian unity is not just some sort of "appendix' which is added to the Church's traditional activity. Rather, ecumenism is an organic part of her life and work" *(ibid.,* n. 20).

4. Like a beacon to guide us between the shadows of the divisions inherited from so many centuries of sinning against unity, our steadfast hope endures that Christ's Spirit will sustain us on this crossing, healing our weaknesses and reticence and teaching us to live his commandment of love to the full: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" *(Jn* 13:35).

The force of love impels us towards one another and prepares us for listening, dialogue, conversion and renewal (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* n. 1). The main theme of this Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity — "*Ecumenical spirituality"* — fits most appropriately into this specific context.

5. In the course of the years, many initiatives have been started to encourage Christians to pray. I wrote in the Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint:* "Along the ecumenical path to unity, pride of place certainly belongs to *common prayer,* the prayerful union of those who gather together around Christ himself"

(n. 22). Among these initiatives, the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" deserves special encouragement. I myself have often urged people to make it a widespread practice that is supported everywhere, not a routine habit but a prayer that is constantly enlivened by the sincere desire for an ever broader commitment to restoring the unity of all the baptized. Indeed, I have also encouraged the faithful of the Catholic Church in many ways not to forget in their daily conversation with God to make their own the prayer for Christian unity. I am therefore deeply grateful to those who have supported my concern and have constantly prayed for Christian unity in their conversation with the Lord.

Forty years after the celebration of the Second Vatican Council, when many of the pioneers of ecumenism have already entered the Father's House, we can see in looking back over the ground covered that we have come a long way and have entered the very heart of the divisions, exactly where they hurt most. This has come about above all thanks to prayer. We must, therefore, take note of the "primacy" we should give to the commitment to pray. Only an intense ecumenical spirituality, lived in docility to Christ and fully open to the promptings of the Spirit, will help us live with the necessary dynamism this interim period in which we must sum up our progress and our defeats, with the lights and the shadows on our journey of reconciliation.

6. I hope, Your Eminence, that new insights will stem from the Plenary Assembly of this Pontifical Council that will broaden ecumenical spirituality and root it more deeply in the souls of all. This will be an effective antidote to any discouragement, doubt or hesitation. The most truly pleasing sacrifice to offer to God is peace and fraternal concord among Christians: the spectacle of a people gathered together by the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (cf. St Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione,* 23: *PL* 4, 536).

My Blessing to you all!

From the Vatican, 3 November 2003.

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

ORE, December 3, 2003

INTRODUCTORY REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT, CARDINAL WALTER KASPER

I. PRINCIPLES

In the two years since the last Plenary held in November 2001, the PCPCU has continued, in accordance with its mandate, to encourage and promote ecumenism, "as it is understood by the Church" (cf. *Christas Dominus,* 16), on the basis of Catholic principles formulated by the Second Vatican Council in the Decree *Unitatis redintegratio* [UR] and often developed by the Holy Father, particularly in the Encyclical *Ut unum sint* [UUS] in 1995. The juridical principles of this mandate can be found in the Code of Canon Law [CIC], in the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches [CCEO], in the constitution *Pastor bonus* (1988) and in the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (1993).

In line with this responsibility, the PCPCU does not shape an ecumenism to its own liking, nor does it seek to impose it as it pleases. The Dicastery is bound to undertake the mission that Jesus entrusted to his disciples on the eve of his death *(Jn* 17, 21) and acts on behalf of the Church, which — as often highlighted by the Holy Father — has chosen irrevocably the ecumenical path inaugurated by the Second Vatican Council. Unity is a fundamental concept of the New and Old Testaments, as well as of the profession of faith of the Church. Indeed, we profess the one God, the one Lord Jesus Christ, the one Spirit, the one baptism, and the one Church (cf. *Ef* 4:4-6). For this reason, ecumenism is not simply an appendix added on to the pastoral mission of the Church, but pertains intrinsically to its life and action *(UUS* 9; 20); the Second Vatican Council includes it among its principal tasks *(UR* 1), and it is one of the pastoral priorities of the current pontificate *(UUS* 99). The path of ecumenism is the path of the Church *(UUS* 7).

The promotion of the unity of Christians is the task both of an ecumenism *ad extra* — that involving dialogue with the Churches and Ecclesial Communities not in full communion with the Catholic Church — and of an ecumenism *ad intra,* that is, the promotion and dissemination of the ecumenical spirit and action within the Catholic Church itself. The latter involves, for example, encounters with bishops and episcopal conferences, particularly within the framework of *ad limina* visits, as well as various visits and conferences aimed at widening understanding and encouraging the ecumenical commitment within the local context.

The ecumenism promoted both *ad intra* and *ad extra* is not just any sort of ecumenism. It is ecumenism in truth and in love: in no way can it be achieved at the cost of truth *(UR* 11; *UUS* 18, 36). Its declared aim is the visible unity of the Church in the faith, in the sacraments, above all in the shared celebration of the Eucharist, and in the ministry *(UR* 2; *UUS* 9). Both the theological basis and the scope of ecumenism qualitatively distinguish ecumenical dialogue from interreligious dialogue. The latter is not a broader type of ecumenism or a macro-ecumenism, but a dialogue based on mutual human and religious respect, with the view to attaining a deeper understanding in terms of friendship and collaboration.

During the last Plenary in 2001, we attempted to clarify our aim through reference to the biblical and patristic concept of *communio* within the context of

the Catholic ecclesiology of communion. This fundamental concept has been the underlying basis of our work over the last two years. In this Plenary, we hope to deepen reflection on this concept through reference to the spirituality of communion, as it has been presented by the Holy Father in his vision of the third millennium and in his Apostolic Letter *Novo millennia ineunte* (particularly nos. 43-45) (2001).

II. The Ecumenical Situation: Lights and Shadows

1. If it is true that our mission has remained the same over the last two years, it is also true that the context within which that mission is undertaken is rapidly changing. What was said in 2001 with regard to the changing ecumenical situation is even more true today. Our appraisal then has been reconfirmed: the change in the ecumenical scene of which we spoke has become more noticeable. Lights and shadows have been cast on both ends of the scale.

On the one hand, we now witness an encouraging growth in basic ecumenical understanding. For many communities and associations, ecumenism has become an enriching reality now taken for granted, deeply ingrained in the life of the Church. This emerges clearly from the contributions we have received for this Plenary. The informal relations and testimonies that we have gathered, representing only a selection of examples, speak eloquently in this regard. They demonstrate that ecumenism has not simply taken an external form; we have received a great many moving testimonies of lived ecumenical spirituality. I call to mind with profound gratitude those groups and communities that have taken on the responsibility of organising the "Prayer for Christian Unity". While it emerges that there are areas in which spiritual ecumenism must still develop, both the *Reports on the Practice of Spirituality* prepared for this Plenary and the *Inquiry* undertaken by our Dicastery among the Episcopal Conferences regarding the diffusion of the "Prayer for Unity" highlight that the spiritual focus of ecumenism is expanding substantially. Overall, it can be affirmed that the task entrusted to the PCPCU bears out the expectations and aspirations of many Christians, that "all may be one".

In this perspective, the words of John Paul II when speaking of the fruits of ecumenical dialogue in *Ut unum sint* still maintain their relevance: "It is the first time in history that efforts on behalf of Christian unity have taken on such great proportions and have become so extensive. This is truly an immense gift of God, one which deserves all our gratitude" (no. 41). The Holy Father affirms that the true fruit is rediscovered fraternity: "It happens for example that, in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, Christians of one confession no longer consider other Christians as enemies or strangers but see them as brothers and sisters". In summary, the Pope observes: "In a word, Christians have been converted to a fraternal charity which embraces all Christ's disciples", and adds "It needs to be reaffirmed in this regard that acknowledging our brotherhood is not the consequence of a large-hearted philanthropy or a vague family spirit. It is rooted in recognition of the oneness of Baptism and the subsequent duty to glorify God in his work" (no. 42).

At the same time, the unity of the Church is the sign or instrument of the unity of humanity *(Lumen gentium,* 1). Thus, solidarity among Christians is a service to all humanity. A common commitment has emerged to safeguard the values of liberty, justice, peace, and the future of the world, in the same way that concrete collaboration has developed in the field of charity and diakonia. "It is clear, as experience shows, that in some circumstances the united voice of Christians has more impact than any one isolated voice" *(UUS* 43).

The spontaneous compactness of the Churches and Ecclesial Communities in speaking out for peace and against war, both this year and last, is moving and meaningful. On the Day of Prayer for Peace celebrated in Assisi in 2002, they affirmed together that God speaks a word of Peace, and that he cannot ever be invoked to justify violence. In Europe, collaboration with the Orthodox Churches and the Conference of European Churches [CEC] has intensified in order to highlight and safeguard the Christian roots of the continent.

2. In contrast to the ecumenical trend towards unity, there are also opposite tendencies sustaining tension and, sometimes, even division within the Churches, Ecclesial Communities and confessional families. If on the one hand it has been possible to overcome longstanding hostility or, at least, to move towards rapprochement, on the other hand, new divergences have emerged, mainly in the field of ethics, on issues such as abortion, divorce, euthanasia, homosexuality, etc. Similarly, ethnic, social and political issues often have the effect of creating division. Disputes among the autocephalous Orthodox Churches, within the Anglican Communion, within the Reformed ecclesial communities and, at times, within the Catholic Church itself, are destructive for ecumenical dialogue. The lack of consensus internally can only obstruct, and at times impede, the attainment of ecumenical consensus "externally", and could lead to a paralysis in ecumenism and even to its impotence.

In this context, we must ask ourselves who then are our partners, given the paralysis of some confessional families due to internal conflicts, while at the same time individual groups within these families remain open to dialogue and come knocking at our door? In principle, the PCPCU undertakes theological dialogue with the Orthodox Churches overall and with the world confessional families. However, in the current situation we should ask ourselves, as we did during the last Plenary, whether it may not be possible to contemplate a "two-speed ecumenism". Undoubtedly, this is a sensitive question, but we should also ask ourselves whether in the long-term it is possible to avoid merely for reasons of diplomacy.

Another problem relates to the fact that ecumenical understanding and practice are often superficial.

Modern and post-modern pluralist and relativist thought, which distances itself from the question of truth, would look at the existing differences in matters of faith with a misconstrued sense of tolerance, not based on respect for the opinions of others, but on an attitude of indifference with respect to one's own convictions of faith and those of others. One thing should be quite clear: ecumenism is not the cause, but the victim of this relativism, widespread also in other contexts, and of the loss of the understanding of faith and its substance. Indeed, the conviction that dogmatic problems between the churches have, in principle, already been resolved or have become in the meantime irrelevant or obsolete leads only to a transitory "wild ecumenism", which does not respect the boundaries of ecclesial discipline and ultimately negates itself. Thus, ecumenism becomes irrelevant.

In the face of this danger, all the Churches and Ecclesial Communities show signs of a new confessionalism. Despite the fact that this trend highlights concerns that may be justified and are certainly not to be neglected, retreating into one's own and self-sufficient confessional identity does not represent a practicable solution. Such an attitude denotes a particularism and a nationalism that are at the same time ancient yet modem, a sort of anti-global mentality. In contrast to the ecumenical attitude of openness to new thought, to conversion and reconciliation, one discerns the opposite tendency, characterised by arrogance, or rather by obstinacy and self-interest. When this attitude verges on fanatical fundamentalism, it can lead — even today — to confessional hostility and even to violence.

3. This phenomenon is particularly noted in the older and newer sects and in many neo-religious movements. Bishops of the third world constantly call our attention to this problem, which has intensified after the Council. The *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (no. 35-36) refers to this issue, as do the Continental Synods and many Addresses of the Holy Father. The issue is extremely complex and has multiple causes. The concept of "sect" itself is difficult to define, and theologians and sociologists of religion have not yet arrived at definitive conclusions. We are dealing with a very wide range of phenomena that are all but uniform, and that are emerging with different characteristics in various parts of the world, ranging from the religious panorama of the third world, the breakdown of the countries of the ex-Eastem bloc, and our materially saturated and secularised Western society.

Various underlying motives and factors can be discerned in this trend: there are authentic spiritual concerns and our own pastoral inadequacies; but there are also often eclectic and syncretistic, or rather ideological elements of a new gnosticism, and also political and economic factors; as well, the yearning for the miraculous and an element of vainglory also play a part, and even sometimes there are satanistic elements.

The problem of sects must be fundamentally distinguished from the question of ecumenism. Clearly, ecumenical dialogue pre-supposes reciprocal respect. While meekness and charity may make possible many things, dialogue becomes very difficult, if not at times impossible, with sects that aggressively maintain a fanatical exclusivity with regard to salvation. From a practical point of view however there are often gradations. This is the case particularly with respect to the charismatic and pentecostal movements. Indeed, with many of these we undertake a congenial and productive dialogue; with others, dialogue is practically impossible due to their aggressive proselytism. It remains our task to seek dialogue wherever possible, as these movements are in constant expansion throughout the world, while the traditional mainline churches decline. This is an important aspect of the global ecumenical situation that is rapidly changing. It is a situation that calls for further clarification of the relationship between ecumenical theology and missiology.

Some aspects of this changing situation will be briefly commented upon in the reflections that follow, with examples taken from specific dialogues. For a deeper assessment of this issue, more detailed information is available in the activity reports of the PCPCU made available to participants in the Plenary.

III. Dialogue with the Churches of the East

1. Dialogue with the Churches of the East has been one of the most salient priorities of this Dicastery over the last two years. We are very close to these Churches in terms of faith, sacraments and episcopal ministry, and we are bound to them in a "communion of faith and charity", in "family ties which ought to thrive between local Churches, as between sisters" *(UR* 14; *UUS* 55-57; 60). They have conserved a spiritual richness that is the patrimony of the universal Church *(Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 1). Yet, a range of non-theological factors, and a divergence in our history, culture and mentality, have often been the cause of considerable misunderstanding. Nonetheless, it is a source of joy to affirm that over the last two years the bonds of fraternal *communio* with many individual Orthodox Churches have been reinforced in a way that was unthinkable until only recently. And this is an aspect that is still not widely known and sufficiently appreciated in the changing ecumenical situation.

This ecumenical development has been considerably enhanced by the visits of the Holy Father to countries and regions with Orthodox majorities: Romania, Armenia, Egypt and Mount Sinai, Jerusalem, Syria, Greece, Bulgaria. The PCPCU has also been able to establish a series of new contacts and to weave new friendships through its own visits. Many of these Churches have made return visits of high-ranking representatives to Rome. The change of climate in relations with the Orthodox Church in Greece and in Bulgaria, as with the Serbian Orthodox Church, can only be defined as simply astonishing; in the meantime, an increasing and cordial collaboration with individual Orthodox Churches has been progressively developing. It

should also be borne in mind that relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate continue to be intense and cordial, as in the past.

A further and encouraging experience of dialogue has been shared with the Ancient Churches of the East. After a dialogue with individual Churches, in January this year a new dialogue was resumed with these Churches as a whole. The atmosphere of the first preliminary session was serene, friendly and fraternal. The first plenary of this dialogue will be held in January next year, most probably in Egypt. The great respect and veneration for the Holy Father within the Orthodox Churches and the Ancient Churches of the East has been clearly expressed, particularly in relation to the 25th anniversary of his pontificate.

The Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration has also played an important role in this improvement in relations. As well as the scholarships, which are particularly sought after, the Committee also supports various theological centres (Minsk, Kyiv, Sofia, Belgrade, and Moscow) through financial aid and educational materials. This assistance to future ministers and lay people involved in serving their Churches has in time revealed itself to be a most promising "investment" The PCPCU maintains constant contact with *CNEWA, Kirche in Not, Renovabis,* and *Missio,* to which it regularly offers advice and encouragement. We are also kept updated through contact with individual dioceses and institutions (such as *Ostkirchliches Institut* in Regensburg, *Pro Oriente* in Vienna and others), and with communities and movements (such as Sant'Egidio, Opera di Maria and the Focolare Movement).

2. Relations with the Russian Orthodox Church, which had been positive overall until the political upheaval of 1989/90, have assumed a very delicate character (beyond the latest crisis in relations with the Orthodox Church of Georgia). Accusations of Uniatism (with regard to the Greek Catholic Church in Western Ukraine) and proselytism have been made since 1989-1990, worsening in 2002 with the introduction of ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the Russian Federation and, more recently, in Kazakhstan the establishment of two new dioceses in Eastern Ukraine. These difficulties emerge against a background of theological issues concerning the understanding of the Church (autocephaly, canonical territory, understanding of the term *Sister Church),* as well as issues relating to the affirmation of a religious and cultural identity, and the identification with the Russian culture as a counterpoise to so-called Western liberalism, with religious liberty taken to be an expression of such liberalism.

Nonetheless, dialogue has never been completely interrupted; a series of informal contacts have taken place over the last two years and, more recently, signs have emerged of the willingness to work towards a distinct if slow improvement of relations. For our part, while maintaining a firm line on principles, we must offer proof of our patience, our trust and our understanding for the difficulties and concerns of our partner. We must demonstrate above all our respect for the longstanding ecclesial and spiritual tradition of Russia. On this basis, it would be beneficial to establish a sort of "code of behaviour" between the Patriarchate of Moscow and the Catholic Episcopal Conference of Russia (that is, the Holy See). Moreover, on many issues (Europe, the Near East, peace in the world) a closer form of collaboration could be possible and desirable, in the interests of both.

3. The main problem in our relations with the Eastern Churches is represented by the *impasse* in the international theological dialogue established in 1980 with the Orthodox Churches as a whole. No progress has been made on the question of so-called "uniatism" since the last plenary session of the Commission in Baltimore in 2000. Since then, internal difficulties in some of the Orthodox Churches have impeded a new convocation of the Commission, although both sides have expressed the will to continue the dialogue. The Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Patriarch are firmly determined to do so. In the meantime, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has undertaken to obtain consensus among the Orthodox Churches on the continuation of the dialogue, on the issues its should tackle, and on the presidency on the Orthodox side of the International Commission. We hope to receive a positive answer on the outcome of this undertaking during the visit of the Delegation of the Holy See to the Phanar for the Feast of Saint Andrew on 30 November.

Without wishing to "substitute" the official theological dialogue, but rather with the intention of providing a contribution to it, the PCPCU convened last May a Catholic-Orthodox academic symposium on the Petrine ministry, in response to the invitation of Pope John Paul II in no.95 of the Encyclical Letter *Ut unum sint.* The meeting featured high-level presentations, and its atmosphere was very positive; despite differences, encouraging openings were observed, on both sides. The proceedings of the symposium will be published shortly. The participants expressed the wish for a similar symposium on the theme of *koinonia /communio* . This theme touches the crucial theological problem in relations with the Eastern Churches: that is, the problem of autocephaly, which is also — according to many renowned Orthodox the- ologians themselves — the fundamental problem of Orthodoxy . With a perspective to the future, there needs to be an appraisal of the concept in concrete terms and of the practice of universal communion fully respecting the rich and ancient liturgical, theo- logical, spiritual and canonical traditions of the East- ern Churches *(UR* 14-18).

All things considered, it would be absolutely out of place to speak of a general crisis in relations with the Eastern Churches. Rather, the contrary is true. Our relations with individual Eastern Churches are following a positive and most promising direction. In order to evaluate our current situation, we cannot take our cue from sensational and short-term episodes. While it is true that we sometimes come across obstacles that impede us and even cause us to retreat, it is also true

that the Holy Spirit holds many new and positive surprises in store. Generally speaking, with small steps, rather than huge strides, we may arrive more slowly, but more surely at our destination.

IV. Dialogue with the Western Ecclesial Communities

1. The differences with the Western Ecclesial Communities are not only historical and cultural, but also of a doctrinal nature, and are more serious than those with the Eastern Churches *(UUS* 64-68). However, what we have said about the changes in the ecumenical scene and on the lights and shadows of ecumenism is also relevant to dialogues with Western Ecclesial Communities. We are committed to many of these. Among the Churches and Ecclesial Communities, the Catholic Church is by far the one that undertakes the greatest number of ecumenical dialogues. After the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999), and as will be clearly evident in the *Activity Reports* of the officials of this Dicasteiy, the dialogues continue to progress, albeit slowly, yet seriously, within a context of positive relations. Many dialogues have had positive developments, particularly with respect to the World Evangelical Alliance with the document on *Church, Evangelisation and Bonds of Koinonia,* and the Methodists, who have initiated a process of adhering to the *Joint Declaration on Justification.* New dialogues, or rather conversations, have been established with Mennonites and Adventists. Difficulties arose after the publication of the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* (2000), the Encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003), and after the *Kirchentag* in Berlin (June 2003). Yet overall, a solid foundation based on trust has been created, enabling us to overcome difficulties and disagreements, and to resolve them within the degree that is possible.

Particular mention should be made of the dialogue with the Anglican Communion. After the document *The Gift of Authority* (1998), the *Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission* (ARCIC) is now finalising a document on Mariology. Over the last two years, following the meeting in Mississauga (2000) at the level of Bishops, we have established a new *International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission* (IARCCUM) dealing with the reception of documents published to date. Although the two commissions undertake positive and fruitful work, perhaps more than any other dialogue, our collaboration with the Anglican Communion highlights the current problem and aporia of ecumenism: namely, the emergence of new ethical problems and the risk of internal fragmentation of an Ecclesial Communion. We had an opportunity to discuss these concerns in a candid yet friendly manner during the visit of the new Archbishop of Canterbury to Pope John Paul II in October 2003. While not intending to interfere, it should be borne in mind that as ecumenical partners we are not simply observers, but active participants; indeed, the ecumenical fabric has become very closely woven, and the decisions of one partner impinge upon relations with all the others, and therefore these decisions should be taken in solidarity with one another.

Such solidarity and commitment for the unity of all the disciples of Christ is also a determining feature of our collaboration with the World Council of Churches (WCC), particularly through the Faith and Order Commission. The problems and difficulties of the Orthodox members regarding ecclesiology and the criteria for common prayer during ecumenical meetings present new challenges; yet they also highlight the changes in the ecumenical scene, changes that also emerge from recent discussion of the new ecumenical landscape (various ecumenical coalitions, Statutes of the World Council of Churches, the World Christian Communions, regional ecumenical organisations, non-govemment ecumenical organisations, etc.). The outcomes of this discussion are still very much an open matter.

2. Beyond current and mainly transient challenges, a deeper evaluation of these difficulties enables us to note the fundamental problem in dialogue with the Ecclesial Communities of the Reformation traditions. We are dealing with diverse ecclesiologies that lead to different conceptions of the same ecumenical goal to which we strive. In turn, these conceptions raise different expectations that, by their very nature, lead to disappointment on the part of one or other of the partners due to the very fact that one is not responding to the other's expectations, or cannot respond due to a different concept of the ecumenical goal. Such a situation has led in part to a sort of stalemate that makes substantial progress impossible, at least until the questions relating to ecclesiology have been fundamentally resolved.

As we have already stated, the ecumenical goal, from the Catholic point of view, is full and visible communion in faith, sacraments and ministry. This communion — as demonstrated, among other things, by the example of the Eastern Churches — considers the plurality of the forms of expression of the various local Churches to be a richness, on condition that it does not involve substantial divergence. The model of unity proposed by the *Leuenberg Agreement* (1973), which has become predominant in the context of continental European Protestantism, deviates from this understanding.

According to this model, the previously separated confessional Churches adopt a form of ecclesial communion pre-supposing a consensus in principle regarding the understanding of the Gospel, while leaving aside different professions of faith. From the confessional and institutional point of view, the Churches remain separated, yet are in communion for the pulpit and the Last Supper; furthermore, they mutually recognise each other's respective ministries. Such confessional pluralism is not considered a scandal; rather, quite the contrary — as E. Käsemann and others after him sought to demonstrate — it is considered legitimate on the basis of the New Testament. The most recent documents of the German Evangelical Church (EKD), *Kirchengemeinschaft nach evange-*

lischem Verständnis (2001) and *Das Abendmahl* (2003), follow this line.

It is clear that such an understanding of ecclesial communion is fundamentally distinct from ecclesial unity as the unity of *communio* according to the Catholic conception. Thus, one understands how and why the Protestant churches currently insist upon intercommunion or rather eucharistic hospitality; similarly, one understands how and why the Catholic Church must interpret this insistence in terms of a demand that it cannot meet because doing so would involve relinquishing its ecclesiological identity. Inversely, the Protestant Churches interpret the ecumenical goal corresponding to Catholic self-understanding as an imposition made of them insofar as it implies the recognition of the historical episcopal ministry and the historical Petrine ministry. Hence the current stalemate, which could also be defined as temporary ecumenical aporia.

3. The Leuenberg model is not the one and only model used by the evangelical side; there is also that constituted by the outcomes of dialogue between Lutherans and Anglicans: the *Porvoo Declaration* of the Scandinavian countries (1992); the Declarations *Called to Common Mission* (2001) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America; and *Called to Full Communion* of Waterloo (2001) of the Lutheran Church of Canada. These dialogues are along the line of the Lima Documents *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM) (1982). The same can be said of the dialogue of ARCIC in the document *Gift of Authority* (1998) and for the German document Comimwio *Sanctorum* (2000).

Lutheran scholars, both Protestant and Catholic, have demonstrated that Luther's intention — and that of the other reformers — was not to establish a separate confessional Church, but to reform, on the basis of the Gospel, the existing universal Church. This intention failed for both theological and political reasons. Given that currently the ecumenical movement embraces the legitimate requests of all involved as "an exchange of gifts" *(UUS* 28), the legitimacy of every separation of the Churches is called into question. In this sense, F. Heiler, the High Church movement, the older Una-Sancta movement and currently W. Pannenberg, H. Meyer and other German, American and Scandinavian Lutheran theologians have arrived at the conception of an Evangelical catholicity that does not stop at non-reconciled plurality, but that aspires to an authentically reconciled unity in diversity; such a catholicity extends to the recognition of the episcopal ministry in the apostolic succession and, truthfully, until now with some reservations, of the Petrine ministry.

Therefore, we are dealing with two different interpretations of the fundamental intention of the Reformation of the sixteenth century. While one constitutes a fundamental difference, the other has as its starting point a consensus of principle that ought to lead, through theological dialogue and an "exchange of gifts", to full consensus encompassing legitimate diversity. Until such time that Protestants are able to resolve this divergence between ecumenism of consensus and ecumenism of difference, no substantial progress can be made with the Ecclesial Communities of the Reformation traditions. The PCPCU has made a suggestion to the World Lutheran Federation to discuss these themes relating to the intention of the Reformation in the perspective of the 500th anniversary of the start of the Reformation, to be held in 2017.

V. Ecumenism in the short-term

Next year marks the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the promulgation of the Conciliar decree on ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio* (1964); the year 2004 also marks the anniversary of the conquest of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1204), and the following year, 2005, the 40th anniversary of the abrogation of the excommunications between Rome and Constantinople (1965). Especially in the light of the first of these anniversaries, the PCPCU has organised a meeting of presidents of the ecumenical commissions of the episcopal conferences and synods of the Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* in order to reflect upon the current situation and future direction of the ecumenical movement and to offer a new impetus to the Catholic commitment to the ecumenical movement.

The situation we have described should not lead us to resignation. As already observed during the last Plenary Assembly, the ecumenical movement has reached an intermediate phase of *good relations* and ecclesial *communio* that is much deeper if not yet complete. We are now dealing with an ecumenism of life; it is a matter of giving a shape to this intermediate situation and imbuing it with life. Many possibilities have presented themselves, as we observed also in the 2001 Plenary Assembly, and they are a long way from being exhausted. In the same measure that we give life to and gain insight from these possibilities, we will also witness the advent of a new, more serene situation, that will enable innovative and substantial developments. If we could attain all that is truly feasible and appropriate, without difficulty and without infringing ecclesial norms, we would already be well ahead on our journey.

In the light of this, I would outline three tasks to be undertaken, drawing particular attention to the third, which constitutes the theme upon which the Plenary will reflect this year.

1. Faced with the current danger of the erosion of what the Catholic principles of ecumenism *(UR* 2-4) maintain to be the ecumenical foundation of faith — baptism and baptismal faith, the Creed — it becomes necessary to reinforce such foundations. In line with the last Plenary Assembly, the PCPCU has initiated this task by approaching the Episcopal Conferences with a request to come to an agreement with their ecumenical partners on the mutual recognition of baptism, or to appraise and deepen existing agreements. This is not simply a matter of the formal

recognition of the validity of baptism conferred by water and the Trinitarian formula, but an agreement on the understanding of baptism and the profession of faith of which it forms a part. The replies we have received to date to this initiative have been encouraging. This work must clearly be continued.

2. Aristotle argued that for its very preservation every community, including the State, depends on friendship and the circle of its friends (Nic. Etica 1155; 1160a-61a). Friendship is an important category of the New Testament and is a term used by the early Christians to describe themselves *(Jn* 15:11-15; *3 Jn* 15). Ecumenism does not make progress principally on the basis of documents and actions, but on the strength of friendships that overcome confessional barriers. By virtue of the one baptism, the common membership in the one body of Christ, and the life emanating from the Holy Spirit, these friendships go beyond simply human empathy and create above all a climate of trust and mutual acceptance enabling theological dialogue to make substantial progress. For this reason, the PCPCU strives to create as many personal contacts as possible and to collaborate towards creating an ecumenical network of friendships.

3. Spiritual ecumenism is the soul and fulcrum of the ecumenical movement *(UR* 7s; *UUS* 21). When we speak of ecumenical spirituality, we do not use this word — which is unfortunately overused — to mean a spirituality that is vague, weak, merely sentimental, irrational and subjective, that does not take into account the objective doctrine of the Church, or even ignores it. On the contrary, it means the teaching of Scripture, of the living tradition of the Church, and of the outcomes of ecumenical dialogues that have been personally and totally assimilated, filled with life and in contact with life. Mere ecumenical activism is destined to exhaust itself; merely academic debate among experts, no matter how important it may be, escapes the "normal" faithful and touches only the margin of their hearts and lives. We can only expand the ecumenical movement by deepening it.

The pride of place in ecumenical spirituality belongs to prayer, culminating in the "Week of Prayer for Unity"; through it, our understanding grows that unity cannot only be the fruit of human effort; unity is a gift of the Spirit; we cannot as human beings "make" it *(UUS* 21-27). Personal conversion and sanctification play important roles, as there cannot be true ecumenism without personal conversion and institutional reform *(UUS* 15s; 21; 34s; 82s) and, ultimately, without a spirituality of *communio (Novo millennio ineunte,* 43-45). I would further mention the shared reading and meditation of Sacred Scripture, exchanges between monasteries, communities and movements of spirituality, visits to pilgrim sites and centres of spirituality, the study of the classical witnesses of the faith and of the new "martyrs". This list could continue. I would also add that the theme of Mariology and the veneration of Mary in ecumenical terms can only be tackled adequately and productively within a spiritual context.

Without anticipating the paper of Bishop Kurt Koch and the subsequent debate, 1 believe that by starting with a purer and clearer understanding of ecumenical spirituality, we can move towards a renewed and more profound ecumenical practice, capable of providing a new impetus to the ecumenical quest and of releasing it from its current difficulties, aporie and crises.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Docs this description of the ecumenical situation outlining its positive and negative aspects represent a realistic view? Are there other aspects that members of the Plenary would like to add on the basis of their own pastoral experiences?

2. Does the Plenary approve the theological basis of the work of the PCPCU? Are there any observations regarding the work of the Dicastery over the last two years or any suggestions for the future at the theological, dialogical or pastoral levels?

3. Is the direction to be taken in terms of concrete ecumenical work, particularly the focus on spiritual ecumenism, the right choice from the pastoral and theological points of view?

4. Are there any suggestions for the meeting to be organised next year of the Presidents of the Ecumenical Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences and the Synods of the Catholic Patriarchates *sui iuris?*

PLENARY THEME: ECUMENICAL SPIRITUALITY, MAIN REPORT

REDISCOVERING THE SOUL OF THE WHOLE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT (UR8) NECESSITY AND PERSPECTIVES OF AN ECUMENICAL SPIRITUALITY

BISHOP KURT KOCH[1]

In order to deal adequately with the theological and (above all) ecclesiological questions arising today within ecumenical dialogue, as well as in Christian and church life, it is imperative that we rediscover the core concept of the ecumenical movement. That means revitalizing the spiritual impulse which inspired the ecumenical movement from the very start and set it in motion. With the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity forming the prelude, the ecumenical movement originated in spiritual ecumenism, which the Second Vatican Council called "the soul of the whole ecumenical movement".[2] Today too, this spiritual ecumenism must remain — or once more become — the soul of all ecumenical endeavors. Bishop Brian Farrell had good reason in his 2002 report on the Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity to stress the Council's conviction "that the ecumenism of truth and love, which self-evidently retains its central position, must be complemented by a deep and comprehensively felt ecumenism of life",[3] and that the ecumenical movement at the present time needs "a renewed motivation grounded in the spirit", in other words a "renewed spirituality of ecumenism".[4]

I. Ecumenism at the crossroads

As the first step towards gaining a better understanding of this fundamental and auspicious postulate, the question arises where its motivation and its roots are to be found within the current ecumenical situation. At the moment it is often said that the ecumenical movement has reached a crossroads. Indeed, it is impossible to have a clear overview of the ecumenical landscape of today, which is also characterized principally by a marked lack of synchronicity. After the indeed modest beginnings, the optimists in the ecumenical movement express gratitude and pleasure at what has now been achieved. The pessimists, on the other hand, speak of the winter of ecumenism, or of the outbreak of an ice age; some even diagnose the end of ecumenism. Not a few of the faithful in our congregations associate ecumenism only with frustration, because they are waiting impatiently for the so-called "hot topics" within ecumenism to be tackled and resolved. Furthermore, the ecumenical consensus which has been reached, often through painstaking and meticulous theological effort, has scarcely reached the faithful in the congregations, and has not been received by them.

These phenomena demonstrate that we are indeed standing at a crossroads in ecumenism. But this word can and must also be understood in a thoroughly positive sense. That which has already been achieved in the ecumenical movement should indeed fill us with gratitude and joy. But it does at the same time give rise to pain and suffering. Cardinal Walter Kasper is right when he says: "Paradoxically, ecumenical progress itself is one of the causes for the ecumenical malaise".[5] The Janus face of ecumenism results from the fact that the closer we become to one another as Christian churches and ecclesial communities, the more painfully we become aware of the fact that we have not yet reached full ecclesial communion. That which separates us and thus prevents us from sharing the one eucharistic Lord's table grieves us all the more. It is therefore necessary to name the painful wounds within our ecumenical endeavours. Just as the doctor cannot initiate any therapy without making a clear diagnosis, in our situation the remedy of ecumenical spirituality is plausible only against the background of a clear diagnosis of the difficulties facing us in the current ecumenical situation. Here I must restrict myself to four observations which I consider not unimportant.

1. *Affirmation of denominational identity*

Firstly: following the extensive interdenominational rapprochements of the past decades, a new awareness of and search for an individual ecclesial identity can be discerned in all churches and ecclesial communities. In the first instance this development has social and cultural causes. For the context within which the European churches in particular are working can only be circumscribed with the keywords individualism and pluralism. And when in today's society tolerance is deemed to be one of the most important virtues, it is extremely difficult to convey "why the prevailing *tolerated* diversity between the denominations should not suffice, but needs to be transcended in favour of a *reconciled* diversity".[6] In this environment, maintaining the existing church-dividing differences, has become incomprehensible to many, and denominational affiliations are thus

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[1] Monsignor Kurt Kock, Bishop of Basel, is a member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

[2] *Unitatis Redintegratio,* Nr. 8.

[3] B. Farrell, *Der Päpstliche Rat zur Förderung der Einheit der Christen im Jahre 2002,* in: Catholica 57 (2003) 83-106, p. 83.

[4] Ebda. 106.

[5] W. Kardinal Kasper, *Communio — Leitbegriff katholischer ökumenischer Theologie. Situation und Zukunft der Okumene,* in: Catholica 56 (2002) 243-262, p. 245.

[6] B. Neumann, "Nehmt einander an, wie auch Christus uns angenommen hat" *(Röm* 15:7). *Bausteine zu einer Spiritualität der Ökumene,* in: Geist und Leben 76 (2003) 182-196, p. 183.

becoming less and less capable of giving an orientation to interprersonal social relationships. These developments are leading steadily towards a "process of de-denominationalisation".[7]

Faced with this social pressure towards the elimination of denominational distinctions, the Christian churches respond conversely with the quest for their own denominational identity. This denominational self-affirmation is perfectly understandable and even welcome, because encounter and dialogue presuppose the individual identity of each party and signify "riches and challenge".[8] It becomes problematic however when divergence is given greater prominence in place of the conviction — which has been steadily growing during recent decades — that that which already unites us is greater than that which still divides us. The intensive search for individual denominational identity is indeed to be regarded as just as important as the search for Christian unity. But this process can hinder ecumenical rapprochement, as more recent ecumenical aggravations have shown, for example the vigorous discussion and reaction in many Lutheran churches before and after the signing of the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" in Augsburg in 1999; or the debate surrounding the declaration "Dominus Jesus" by the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2000; or the ecumenically very unfriendly resolution of the Council of the EKD "The Protestant understanding of church fellowship"; or the atmospheric disturbances between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches.

These examples confirm the observation that old prejudices and animosities can even today continue to put a considerable strain on relationships between Christians and Christian churches. In this regard it would already be a progressive step if all churches and ecclesial communities could confess together that they all experience their own ecumenical aggravations, and that these are determined less by the individual denomination than by original sin, and if they could then avoid making one-way accusations of guilt. Reverting back to one's own denominational identity is not a phenomenon confined to particular churches. It can be found today in almost all churches. Only when we make this mutual confession will this reversion cease to be a hindrance to ecumenism and become instead an opportunity for mutual understanding and enrichment. But for that to occur, the "spirituality of communion", which Pope John Paul II saw as the great challenge facing us in the new millennium, is essential in the ecumenical context as well.

2. *The contentious goal of ecumenism*

Secondly: in the light of this we can also tackle the main problem of ecumenism. On the one hand extensive and pleasing convergence and consensus has been achieved on very many individual issues in the previous phases of the ecumenical movement; but on the other hand, all remaining points of divergence are still concentrated in the clearly profiled and widely divergent concepts of ecumenical unity held by the various churches themselves. The simple fact that even the goal of the ecumenical movement is still the subject of contention between the different churches and ecclesial communities forms the basis for a diagnosis of its real malaise.

The essential underlying cause for this inability to achieve an ecumenical consensus on the goal of ecumenism is in turn to be found in the fact that each denomination possesses and implements its own specific concept of the unity of its own church; it is therefore virtually a matter of course that each strives to apply this denominational conception to the goal of the ecumenical movement as a whole too.[9] For the interpretation of the church which any individual church represents and the ecumenical model of church unity which it postulates are very closely correlated and mutually interdependent.[10] "Just as there are different churches, there are also different ecumenisms, and therefore competing visions of how the plurality of churches — each with its individual claim to truth — can be united with one another and located in relation to that individual claim to truth".[11]

It is therefore no coincidence that the Protestant understanding of the church gives precedence to the concept of church fellowship, primarily in the form of the Leuenberger Concords, while the Roman Catholic church on the basis of its understanding of the church takes the concept of visible unity as its starting point. Yet another ecumenical concept is represented by the Orthodox churches on the basis of their own ecclesiological understanding of a communion of autocephalous churches. And it is to be expected that the free churches represent yet another ecumenical concept, on the basis of their own denominational understanding. This is the real reason why it is impossible to simply deduce a compatible ecumenical model of unity or fellowship on the basis of an individual denominational concept of the church, particularly if one has not tested it in ecumenical dialogue, but has simply assumed one's own denominational ecclesiology as an ecumenical absolute. As experience has shown, this danger exists in all churches.

Thus the widely divergent denominational con-

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[7] M. N. EBERTZ, *Aufbruch in der Kirche. Anstösse für ein zukunftsfähiges Christentum* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 17.

[8] Vgl. W. Kardinal KASPER, *Konfessionelle Identität — Reichtum und Herausforderung.* Unpublished paper at the Ecumencal Convention [Kirchentag] 2003.

[9] Cf. G. HINTZEN/W. THONISSEN, *Kirchengemeinschaft möglich. Einheitsverständnis und Einheitskonzepte in der Diskussion* (Paderborn 2001).

[10] Cf. K. KOCH, *Kirchengemeinschaft oder Einheit der Kirche? Zum Ringen um eine angemessene Zielvorstellung der Ökumene,* in: P. WALTER/K. KRAMER/G. AUGUSTIN (Hrsg.), *Kirche in ökumenischer Perspektive. Kardinal Walter Kasper zum 70. Geburtstag* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 135-162.

[11] F. W. GRAF und D. KORSCH, *Jenseits der Einheit: Reichtum der Vielfalt. Der Widerstreit der ökumenischen Bewegungen und die Einheit der Kirche Jesu Christi,* in: GRAF and KORSCH (Hrsg.), *Jenseits der Einheit. Protestantische Ansichten der Ökumene* (Hannover 2001) 9-33, p. 24.

cepts of the church and church unity still stand largely unreconciled alongside one other, with the result that no really workable consensus on the goal of ecumenism itself has yet been achieved. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that on the one hand the faithful often no longer know what the church really is, and in the wake of the current rapidly progressing 'self-secularisation'[12] of the church, a largely horizontal view of the church predominates. Meanwhile on the other hand, beneath the surface, the divergent concepts of the church retain their crucial normative influence not only on theology as a whole but also on the life of the church. This twofold observation leads to twofold consequences: clarifying the concept of unity must be the main item on the ecumenical agenda today; and the search for an ecumenically responsible understanding of the essential nature of the church must be conducted as a spiritual process.[13] That includes above all the "constant spiritual task" of sensitive differentiation "between those aspects of the church which are divine and therefore immutable, and those which are human and therefore dispensable, and which can thus be renewed, or reformed according to former ideals, or adapted to the demands of modern times".[14] Just as in every Christian spirituality the discernment of the spirit must be the central focus,[15] that must also be the case in a spirituality of ecumenism.

3. *The surrender of the original goal of ecumenism*

This spiritual clarification can of course only succeed if we retrieve once more the original goal of ecumenism, that is, visible unity in faith, in sacramental life and in ecclesial office. This has however to a large extent been lost from view, as was not least demonstrated by the vigorous debate before and after the Ecumenical Church Convention in Berlin 2003, and by the reaction to the encyclical "Ecclesia de Eucharistia" by Pope John Paul II. Not a few Catholics themselves have given up the original goal of ecumenism and have endorsed the opinion of many Reformation churches that the great ecumenical goal is joint communion, with the separated churches able to retain their separate identities. They consider that if the goal of joint celebration of the Lord's Supper has been reached, everything else can remain as it is.

This is of course a fatally wrong conclusion. For the real scandal does not simply consist in the fact that we are not yet able to celebrate the eucharist together, but rather that we as churches are just as separated as we were before, and that Christendom is still divided. It must be and remain the goal of ecumenism to overcome this stumbling block.[16] According to Catholic understanding, the goal of our ecumenical efforts cannot be intercommunion but "communio, within which fellowship in the Lord's Supper has its place''.[17] Therefore the real danger consists in losing sight of this great goal and deceiving ourselves regarding the concrete reality of everyday life, if we think we could at this stage celebrate the Lord's Supper together, but otherwise allow the division among Christians and churches to remain as it is. Anyone who celebrates a unity which does not exist could be deceiving themselves and passing reality by.

This honest observation is not a cause for resignation but rather a challenge to continue courageously down the ecumenical path — together with the Pope.[18] For he holds the conviction that it is the spiritual treasure of the eucharist itself which inspires us towards "the goal of fully sharing with all brothers and sisters with whom we are united by a common baptism".[19] Because the ecumenical impetus arises out of the eucharist itself and aims for sacramental unity, the Pope does not yet consider eucharistic fellowship to be a meaningful and responsible path. It could rather prove to be a hindrance to the achievement of full ecclesial communion, since it obscures the view for our current distance from the ecumenical goal.

The goal of visible unity of the churches is close to the Pope's heart, and indeed the ecumenical impetus runs like a thread through his pontificate. For that very reason he will not content himself with an occasional common celebration of the eucharist, which loses sight of the goal and is therefore in the end an expression of ecumenical resignation. The Pope is too honest and too realistic, and hopes for more ecumenism that even many Catholics today obviously feel to be sufficient. In this regard too the Pope is a challenge, which can naturally only be accepted in a truly ecumenical spirituality.

4. *The necessity for an ecumenical spirituality*

Up until now, ecumenical work has proceeded to a large extent on the basis of theological agreement. Today however there is talk of a crisis or even the end of the ecumenism of theological consensus. This verdict can and may not of course deny the assessment that interconfessional theological dialogue on a bilat-

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[12] W. HUBER, *Kirche in der Zeitenwende. Gesellschaftlicher Wandel und Emeuerung der Kirche* (Gutersloh 1998) 31.

[13] Cf. W. KASPER, *Kircheneinheit und Kirchengemeinschaft in katholischer Sicht. Eine Problemskizze,* in: K. HILLENBRAND/ H. NIEDERSCHLAG (Hrsg.), *Glaube und Gemeinschaft. Festschrift für Paul-Werner Scheele zum 25jahrigen Konsekrationsjubiläum* (Würzburg 2000) 100-117.

[14] G. AUGUSTIN, *Ökumene als geistlicher Prozess,* in: P. WALTER/K. KRAMER/G. AUGUSTIN (Hrsg.), *Kirche in ökumenischer Perspektive. Kardinal Walter Kasper zum 70. Geburtstag* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 522-550.

[15] Vgl. G. GRESHAKE, *Gottes Willen tun. Gehorsam und geistliche Unterscheidung* (Freiburg i. Br. 1984).

[16] Cf. K. KOCH, *Gelähmte Ökumene. Was jetzt zu tun ist* (Freiburg i. Br. 1991).

[17] P. NEUNER - B. KLEINSCHWARZER-MEISTER, *Ein neues Miteinander der christlichen Kirchen. Auf dem Weg zum Ökumenischen Kirchentag in Berlin 2003,* in: Stimmen der Zeit 128 (2003) 363-375, p 373.

[18] Cf. K. KOCH, *Eucharistie und Kirche in ökumenischer Perspektive. Implikationen der Enzyklika von Papst Johannes Paul II. über die „Eucharistie in ihrem Verhältnis zur Kirche" filr die Ökumene,* in: Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung 171 (2003).

[19] JOHANNES PAUL II, *Ecclesia de eucharistia,* Nr. 61.

eral and multi-lateral level has in recent years achieved positive and tangible results, and has been able to bring about a broad consensus on many disputed controversial questions of theology. Clearing away the theological differences between the various churches therefore remains an indispensable task which is not to be undervalued. However, the current ecumenical situation shows that the theological agreement alone is obviously not sufficient to bring about real and lasting progress in ecumenism.

We can thus draw the conclusion that the ecumenical process cannot be permitted to limit itself to theological and academic efforts, but that the extra-theological factors in ecumenism must be taken into account with greater determination. Pope John Paul II referred to those factors in his encyclical "Ut unum sint" when he acknowledged that the current ecumenical situation was to a large extent encumbered by "immobility, apathy and an insufficient knowledge of one another". Engagement in ecumenism must therefore, he said, "be supported by conversion of the heart and prayer", "which will also lead to the necessary purification of the historical memory".[20] If the extra-theological factors in ecumenism can not be dealt with theologically but only spiritually, then it will be important to comprehend ecumenism as a spiritual process in which all the faithful are to be involved, and which necessitates a new orientation of the ecumenical movement.

We will only make progress in the ecumenical movement today if we return to its spiritual roots and seek a renewed ecumenical spirituality. For we need in the first place not further ecumenical activity but a new ecumenical spirituality. Since the elixir of life of ecumenism consists in the mutual "exchange of gifts",[21] the Year of the Bible 2003 offers a good opportunity to live the spiritual dimension of ecumenism in shared reading of the Bible.

II. Misconceptions of ecumenical spirituality

At this point it becomes clear that an ecumenical spirituality must have a biblical foundation. That is particularly true in the current situation where the word spirituality is on everyone's lips and is used in an inflationary manner. Therefore a second step is necessary, an attempt to demonstrate what can not be understood as ecumenical spirituality. Klaus Berger has correctly diagnosed that the word spirituality is used as "semi-religious padding" in situations "where everything is unclear and blurred, with no firm contours and without straight lines".[22] And he added that this is particularly true of the broad expanse of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue. And indeed there is a great danger today that the word "spirituality" conceals specific sympathies or antipathies or a preference for particular themes. Also and especially within ecumenism we find that phenomenon which Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger has diagnosed as the "crisis of the present", "that the mediation between the subjective and objective sphere is lacking, that reason and feeling are drifting apart and that both are becoming sick in the process".[23]

This observation of an exclusively emotional spirituality is confirmed above all in the question of ecumenical eucharistic fellowship. Here it has become popular to perceive a discrepancy between the ecumenical spirituality of Christian hospitality on the one hand and the rigid dogmatism of church teaching on the other. Ecumenical spirituality of this sort acts primarily on the level of the emotions. That in turn is often linked to an emphasis on the broader disparity between the ecumenism of the congregations and that of theology and the church leadership. Joachim Wanke, Bishop of Erfurt, has defined this as the "self-blockading of ecumenism by splitting it into an ecumenism "from above" and one "from below".[24] Such an ecumenical spirituality "from below" wants an openness which sometimes extends to arbitrariness and seeks no security in the faith tradition, and which resists above all any halt called by church teaching.

A similar observation can be made in view of the current ecclesiological discussion. In the relativist consciousness of the spirit of the times, the divergent ecclesiologies of the various churches and ecclesial communities are to a large extent perceived as mere external differences in the ultimately one church of Jesus Christ, but not as overarching theological concepts of churches, so that one must with Cardinal Walter Kasper speak of different "types" of church or of churches of differing types.[25] By taking up the traditional distinction between the visible and the invisible church — in the sense that the earthly-historical form of the church is in the end declared to be indifferent in favour of an invisible communion of the spirit — such an ecumenical spirituality betrays an "ecclesiological docetism"[26] which Karl Barth has of course attacked in strong terms. Belief in the church is belief "in the invisible aspect which is the secret of the visible. Believing in the *ecclesia invisibilis,* we will enter the sphere of labour and and conflict of the *ecclesia visibilis".*[27]

In the presence of such diffuse ideas, ecumenical spirituality is not at all understood as an intensifica-

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[20] Johannes Paul II, *Ut unum sint,* Nr. 6.

[21] Ebda. 26.

[22] K. Berger, *Was ist biblische Spiritualitat?* (Gutërsloh 2000) 16.

[23] J. Kardinal Ratzinger, *Glaube - Wahrheit - Tolerant Das Christentum und die Weltreligionen* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 116.

[24] Vgl. J. Wanke, *Erlahmt der ökumenische Impuls? Anmerkungen aus der ökumenischen Praxis,* in: Catholica 53 (1999) 95-108, p. 97.

[25] W. Kasper, *Situation und Zukunft der Ökumene,* in: Theologische Quartalschrift 181 (2001) 175-190, p 185.

[26] E. Jungel, *Credere in ecclesiam. Eine ökumenische Besinnung,* in: Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 99 (2002) 177-195, p. 183.

[27] K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* Vol. IV/1 (ed. G Bromily and T. Torrance, T&T Clarke, Edinburgh 1956 p. 654 *[Die kirchliche Dogmatik.* Band IV/1 (Zürich 1953) 729.]

tion of the ecumenism of truth and love, but as an alternative to it or even its opposite. In this context people are wont to complain of the burden of an over-emphasis on theological teachings in the ecumenical movement, contrasting it with the Zen anecdote of sugar, whose taste cannot be acquired theoretically but can only be 'experienced'. Within the ecumenical movement too, this insistence on the experiential threatens to end up in the tendency which the psychologist Albert Görres called the "Hinduisation" of Christian faith, "in which the important thing is not dogma but the experience of being touched by a spiritual atmosphere which transcends all expression".[28]

By contrast, the wine connoisseur knows much better than the Zen anecdote. For an expert wine tasting depends not only on tasting the wine but also on talking about the wine. In the same way, the ecumenism of truth and love and the ecumenism of life in the sense of a renewed ecumenical spirituality are inextricably linked. Over and above that, an ecumenical spirituality can not be an alternative to theological dialogue within ecumenism, for the simple reason that *the* ecumenical spirituality has never existed, and the often cited conviction that theology separates while spirituality unites is impossible to verify even historically.[29] For behind the church schisms of the 1 1lh and the 16th centuries there were not only different theologies but also and especially different spiritualities. That is still true even today, above all in the relationship between eastern and western Christendom. On the level of theology we are indeed very close to the Orthodox churches, while on the level of spirituality and the culturally determined way of life we are very far apart. In the relationship with the churches and ecclesial communities which resulted from the Reformation, the situation is exactly the reverse.[30] But how can a renewed ecumenical spirituality help us to make progress in this situation?

III. Perspectives of an ecumenical spirituality

Biblical Christian spirituality is in essence living in communion with the crucified and resurrected Christ, who is present in his spirit in the churches and ecclesial communities. It is his will that we commit ourselves fully to overcoming the divisions between Christians and finding once more visible unity in faith, in the sacraments and in church office. The most profound reason for all ecumenical efforts is not human insights, no matter how outstanding they may be, but solely and entirely the will of Jesus Christ, who on the eve of his passion prayed for his disciples that they should all be one. An ecumenical spirituality must therefore be inspired by Christology and not simply by philanthropy.[31] The basic text for an ecumenical spirituality must be Jesus' farewell prayer. On the basis of this inexhaustible text in John 17 1 will attempt as a third step to outline the most fundamental perspectives of an ecumenical spirituality.

1. *Prayer as a wellspring*

In the first instance it is important to remember that Jesus does not demand the unity of his disciples from the disciples themselves, but rather prays for it. Just as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity stood at the beginning of the ecumenical movement, prayer for the unity of Christians and of Christian churches is and remains the definitive key signature encompassing all ecumenical efforts. The Reformed theologian Robert Leuenberger was right when he said of prayer that it was, within the river of time, "the time which withstands any course of time, because it belongs to God".[32] This is also true of the ecumenical course of time, which cannot be encompassed by any of our calculations, but is determined by God. But anyone who engages in prayer as time lost for God may well make the discovery that the time lost for God is transformed into time gained for us Christians, and that this is the richest and most beautiful time for ecumenism too. Shouldn't Christians from different churches spend at least as much time in prayer with one another as they spend in theological discussion with one another? They could surely make the discovery that doxology is able to lead them to greater depths of commonality in faith than theology alone.[33]

Of course, prayer runs counter to the current trend towards functionality and its constant concentration on what is "do-able". "How do we do it?" That has become the decisive question, even within the church and within ecumenism. When we pray for Christian unity on the other hand we give expression to the fact that we human beings cannot create unity, that we can only have it granted to us. That is the most profound reason why ecumenism is from first to last spiritual ecumenism. If there is to be a new Pentecost in ecumenism, we must prepare ourselves for it as intensively as the disciples did together with Mary. After Christ's ascension, the disciples gathered in the room of the Last Supper together with the women who had followed Jesus and with Mary the mother of Jesus, and remained there united in prayer for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Here Mary is revealed as the mother of the praying church, and surely also of the praying ecumenical movement.

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[28] A. Gorres, *Glaubensgewissheit in einer pluralistischen Welt,* in: Communio. Internationale katholische Zeitschrift 12 (1983) 117-132, p. 129.

[29] Cf. Card. W. Kasper, *Spiritualita` ed ecumenismo,* in: Rivista Teologica di Lugano VII (2002) 211-224, especially 214-216.

[30] Cf. W. Kardinal Kasper, *Okumene zwischen Ost und West. Stand und Perspektiven des Dialogs mit den orthodoxen Kirchen,* in: Stimmen derZeit 128 (2003) 151-164.

[31] W. Kasper, *Situation und Zukunft der Ökumene,* in: Theologische Quartalschrift 181 (2001) 175-190, p. 189.

[32] R. Leuenberger, *Zeit in der Zeit. Über das Gebet* (Zurich 1988) 118.

[33] Cf E. Schlink, *Ökumenische Dogmatik. Grundzugë* (Gottingen 1983), especially. 725-742: Der Lobpreis Gottes.

Today any reference to prayer as the wellspring of ecumenism is suspected as an alibi for simply folding one's hands so that in the end everything remains just as it was.[34] Therefore it is essential to stress the "obligatory nature" of prayer.[35] If we transpose the slogan of Benedictine spirituality, "ora et labora", to ecumenical spirituality, then prayer for unity obligates and encourages us to do all in our power for unity, in the clear knowledge that unity remains nevertheless beyond our disposal, as the gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. *The gift of the Holy Spirit*

That step brings us to the innermost core of prayer. The view expressed in the Holy Scriptures is that prayer is motivated by the Holy Spirit himself and is indeed one of his most beautiful works, as St Paul states: "Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered" *(Romans* 8:26). To that extent it is not so much we human beings who pray. It is rather the Holy Spirit who prays in us. He is the real and true leader in prayer. And prayer, which is the breath of faith, is only possible within the force field of the Holy Spirit. Prayer, also and especially prayer for unity, is, as Oscar Cullmann says, "one of God's great gifts of love to human beings".[36]

Prayer reminds us Christians that not everything is achievable in life or in ecumenism. The role of mankind in prayer consists rather in being prepared to be helped. In prayer it becomes evident that we — also and especially within the ecumenical movement — cannot look to and build on solely that which can be seen and done, that which can be planned and accomplished. In prayer it becomes evident that we must instead look to and build on the work of the Holy Spirit, which is not within our control, and make room for it; and that we should trust at least as much in prayer as we do in our own achievements. If we are really convinced that ecumenism is the work of the Holy Spirit[37] and that he has initiated the work of ecumenism, then it would be a lack of faith not to trust in him to carry the work through to the end. We can also trust that he will in the process grant us more than we dare to hope for or perhaps dream of. Ecumenism can only be accomplished in the presence of the Spirit. As the living We between the father and the son in the inner life of God, the Holy Spirit also becomes the creative We between the triune God and us Christians and the liberating We between Christians and Christian churches: so that ecumenical relationships too become more spiritual.[38]

3. *The trinitarian model of unity*

Jesus prays for unity among his disciples in a very precise way: "that they may be one as we are one". Jesus himself perceives the deepest foundation for unity among the disciples in the trinitarian love between Father, Son and Spirit. And that is in turn the model for the unity of the church. For in the trinitarian life of God two dimensions are brought to bear with equal authenticity, both the unity of the divine nature and the community of persons distinct from one another.

In the first instance God comprehends space for the existence of the other and therefore for plurality. For the Father is different from the Son and the Son is in turn different from the Holy Spirit. Within the divine trinity there exists a primordial and wonderful diversity of persons. The Christian church has therefore justifiably condemned as heresy modalism, the teaching that the one divine nature simply reveals it self in three different modes. Rather: God is intrinsically in himself difference in the differentiation [diversity] of the persons.

Secondly: this beautiful diversity of the divine persons Father, Son and Spirit on the other hand excludes an unrelated plurality within the divine trinity. For the triune God is actually occurring community, naturally not in the sense of a human community of three distinct self-sufficient persons who have retrospectively, from their state of selfhood, entered into a relationship with one another. While the Father is different from the Son and the Son is in turn different from the Spirit, the divine persons exist on the same level of being as partners in the heavenly trialogue: the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God. In God there exists a primordial and wonderful unity of the three persons, or as Paul Evdokimov has expressed it beautifully, "a pre-etemal trinitarian council".[39] The church has therefore condemned as heresy tritheism, which misinterprets the trinity as a congregationalist community of gods. Rather: God is in himself a living community in the primordial interrelated unity of love.

If one takes the two essential definitions of the mystery of the divine trinity together, then the God revealed in Christ is with equal authenticity both diversity and unity.[40] In this light, the church appears

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[34] Cf. J. WANKE, *Okumene im Gebet - nur eine Verlegenheit? Überlegungen zum theologischen and. pastoralen Stellenwert ökumenischer Gebetsinitiativen,* in: J. SCHREINER und K. WITTSTADT (Hrsg.), *Communio Sanctorum. Einheit der Christen - Einheit der Kirche. Festschrift für Bischof Paul-Wemer Scheele* (Würzburg 1988) 553-566.

[35] M. TURK, *Ökumene als Auftrag und Geschenk. Die Einheit der Christen zwischen Vision und Wirklichkeit,* in: K. HILLENBRAND/H. NIEDERSCHLAG (Hrsg.), *Glaube und Gemeinschaft. Festschrift für Paul-Wemer Scheele zum 25jährigen Konsekrationsjubiläum* (Würzburg 2000) 173-181, p. 175.

[36] O CULLMANN, *Prayer in the New Testament,* SCM Press London 1995 p. 143

[37] Cf. W. PANNENBERG, *Die Ökumene als Wirken des Heiligen Geistes,* in: S. LEIMGRUBER (Hrsg.), *Gottes Geist bei den Menschen. Grundfragen und spirituelle Anstösse* (Miinchen 1999) 68-77.

[38] Cf. K. KOCH, *Geistes-Gegenwart Gottes. Fastenpredigten uber den Heiligen Geist* (Freiburg / Schweiz 1999).

[39] P. EVDOKIMOV, *Welches sind die Hauptanliegen der orthodoxen Kirchen gegeniiber der katholischen Kirche?,* in: Concilium 2 (1966) 263-268, p. 267.

[40] Cf. G. GRESHAKE, *Der dreieine Gott. Eine trinitarische Theologie* (Freiburg i. Br. 1997); DERS., *An den drei-einen Gott glauben. Ein Schlussël zum Verstehen* (Freiburg i. Br. 1996);

as the locus of salvation pre-ordained by the triune God, or as the Second Vatican Council maintained, "the people brought into one by the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit".[41] Ecclesial and ecumenical unity is therefore ultimately grounded in the community of the trinity, and the church is the "icon of the trinity".[42] The church can however only be the icon of the trinity if it understands its unity from the ecumenical perspective too not as uniformity, nor of course as unrelated plurality, but — far from any ecclesiological modalism or tritheism — as unity in diversity and as diversity in unity. The goal of the ecumenical movement is and remains "visible unity, not a uniform church".[43] This goal must be fundamental to ecumenical spirituality.

4. *Ecumenical spirituality of communion*

To direct the ecumenical contemplation of the heart towards the mystery of the trinity and to see its light shining on the faces of our ecumenical sisters and brothers, that is the core of the "spirituality of communion" which Pope John Paul II numbers as the special pastoral priorities of the church in the new millennium: "To make the church the home and the school of communion, that is the great challenge facing us in the new millennium, if we wish to be faithful to God's plan and respond to the world's deepest yearnings".[44]

This pastoral program also applies in a special way to ecumenism. For an ecumenical spirituality can only be an ecclesial spirituality which follows the principle "sentire ecclesiam". Then it becomes a spirituality of communion, on the foundation of Christian brotherliness and sisterliness.[45] The rediscovery of this foundation is doubtless the most elementary result of the ecumenical movement. For Christians today remain divided as before, but they no longer perceive one another as opponents, nor as indifferent neighbours, but as brothers and sisters, not of course on the basis of any hospitable philanthropism, but on the basis of their one-ness in one baptism.[46] Through this one baptism we are linked to the other still separated churches and ecclesial communities in an indeed real but still imperfect communion. To allow this communion which already exists between us Christians "to grow into full communion in the truth and in love"[47] is therefore the real motive of the ecumenical endeavours which an ecumenical spirituality of communion has to serve.

Like every human community, ecumenical spirituality of communion knows no one-way streets, only two-way traffic. For ecumenism is not meant to impoverish but to enrich. As a consequence, true ecumenism occurs wherever the particularity and uniqueness of other Christian churches and ecclesial communities become a bridge to mutual understanding rather than a barrier. For no church is so poor that it would not be in a position to make its own specific contribution to the greater communion of ecumenism. Nor is any church so rich that it no longer has any need of the charisms of other churches. Ecumenical spirituality is therefore at heart a reciprocal exchange of different gifts,[48] in order that the beauty and richness of Christian faith may be lived more clearly and more credibly.

That is also and especially true of our Roman Catholic church, which has been wounded by the divisions and is not able to fully realize its own catholicity in the still prevailing situation of schism. Ecumenical spirituality is therefore a shared pilgrimage, through which the spirit of God will lead us to full truth {*John* 16:13) and open up to us the full totality of catholicity. Seen in this way, "Catholic and ecumenical are not opposites but the two sides of one and the same medal".[49] This is the sense in which we are to interpret and evaluate the request by Pope John Paul II that the responsible leaders of the other Christian churches might enter into a dialogue with him on a new understanding of the papal office, which should take into account the newly created ecumenical situation while maintaining the foundations of the primacy.[50]

5. *Ecumenical hermeneutics of learning and suffering*

An ecumenical spirituality does not whittle away individuality in order, by way of example, to arrive at the lowest common denominator. It wishes rather to foster a greater awareness of individuality, as the Innsbruck dogmatician Lothar Lies formulates the basic principle of ecumenism. "Ecumenism means recognizing more clearly the individuality of the other".[51] For ecumenical spirituality does not aim at standardisation or fusion but seeks rather to profile uniqueness while at the same time recognizing a legitimate plurality in the individual manifestations of the shared Christian faith.

That can of course only succeed in an ecumenical hermeneutic which, in contrast to the previous divisive denominationalism, reads the diverse ecclesial traditions with a view to that which unites rather than that which divides. To be more precise, this can only be a hermeneutic which does not

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K. KOCH, *Im Glauben an den dreieinen Gott leben* (Freiburg/ Schweiz 2001).

[41] *Lumen Gentium,* Nr. 4.

[42] B. FORTE, *La chiesa - icona della Trinita. Breve ecclesiologia* (Brescia 1984).

[43] W. KASPER, *In allem aber die Liebe,* in: R. RUNGE u.a., *Ökumenischer Kirchentag 2003. Ihr sollt ein Segen sein. Denk-Anstösse von Persönlichkeiten aus Gesellschaft, Kirchen und Politik* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 66-68, p. 68.

[44] JOHANNES PAUL II, *Novo millennio ineunte,* Nr. 43.

[45] Vgl. J. RATZINGER, *Die christliche Brüderlichkeit* (München 1960).

[46] Vgl. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* Nr. 14-18.

[47] JOHANNES PAUL II, *Ut unum sint,* Nr. 14.

[48] Vgl. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* Nr. 4.

[49] W. Kardinal KASPER, *Priesterlicher Dienst an der Ökumene. Chancen und Grenzen,* in: G. AUGUSTIN/J. KREIDLER (Hrsg.), *Den Himmel offen halten. Priester sein heute* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 78-90, p 81.

[50] JOHANNES PAUL II, *Ut unum sint,* Nr. 88.

[51] L. LIES, *Eucharistie in ökumenischer Verantwortung* (Graz 1996)233.

accomplish recognition according to the model of consonance but according to the model of recognition of the other precisely in his otherness. Whereas recognition based on the model of consonance can only lead to a "community" of the similar or the assimilated, and seeks and finds in the other — as though in a cabinet of mirrors — merely its own identity, only the recognition of the other in his otherness is able to lead to a communion in diversity which also encompasses changing ones' own standpoint. For we can only become alert for the new in ecumenism too not through consonance and correspondence but through contrast and dissonance, although in most instances that cannot be achieved without pain.

That is expressed in the Greek language itself, which rhymes "mathein" (learning) with "pathein" (suffering) in many proverbs. Indeed we humans are only able to truly recognize and understand something when we engage with this other and change ourselves in the process. "In my recognition of the other I undergo the pain and the joy of my own change, not in order to assimilate to the other, but in order to empathise with the other".[52] Also and especially within ecumenism, there can be no real understanding of the traditions of other churches without an elementary em-pathy, which automatically gives rise to a unifying sym-pathy. That becomes evident above all in view of the necessary "eastward expansion" of ecumenism which is so dear to the heart of Pope John Paul II, as he repeatedly calls for European Christianity to learn to breathe with both lungs.

On the basis of mutual acceptance as Christians, such an ecumenical hermeneutic of recognition of the other in his otherness will consist above all in the following building blocks of an ecumenical spirituality:[53] firstly, believing the other and approaching him with a positive attitude; secondly, developing a refined sensitivity towards the other, and always keeping him in view; thirdly, not giving unnecessary and avoidable offence; fourthly, being prepared to learn from the other; fifthly, accepting justified criticism and sixthly, the basic attitude of mutual reconciliation. These building blocks can best be combined in that art which Saint Benedict called "discretio", namely the capacity to engage sympathetically and empathise with each fellow Christian in the trusting awareness of the presence of God, so that one develops a sense for what is best for the other. Thus Benedict expects of an abbot that he should accommodate himself to each individual, so that following the path of discretion, he is able to recognize what is most appropriate for each. In ecumenical encounters too such Benedictine discretion can work wonders.

[52] J. MOLTMANN, *Die Entdeckung des Anderen. Zur Theorie des kommunikativen Erkennens,* in: Evangelische Theologie 50 (1990) 400-414, zit. 409.

[53] Cf. B. NEUMANN, "Nehmt einander an, wie auch Christus uns angenommen hat" *(Rom* 15:7). *Bausteine zu einer Spiritualität der Ökumene,* in: Geist und Leben 76 (2003) 182-196.

6. *Christological unity in baptism*

This fundamental perspective of an ecumenical spirituality must be christologically intensified, according to the words of St Paul in the Letter to the Romans "Receive ye one another as Christ also received us" *(Romans* 15:7). This challenge and encouragement from Paul can serve as the motto of an ecumenical spirituality. Being a Christian depends elementarily on the consolation that Christ has received us. The visible sign of this is baptism. In baptism Christ has turned to us personally and called us by name. As Christ has received us in baptism, Christians are also called to receive one another reciprocally as baptized Christians. For when Christians encounter one another in different churches, they cannot meet one another as "blank pages". Rather they bear the most beautiful badge of identification which binds them together, as Pope John Paul II has stressed so impressively in his personally written book *Crossing the threshold of hope'.* "On further reflection, *christianus* has far greater significance than *episcopus,* even if the subject is the Bishop of Rome".[54]

Mutual recognition as baptized Christians and reciprocal encouragement to live as baptized Christians is the innermost core of ecumenical spirituality. For the ecumenical movement has from the beginning striven to make the baptism which is common to all the starting point and foundation of ecumenical endeavours. This path was also taken by the Second Vatican Council.[55] Today too, ecumenism stands or falls by the mutual recognition of baptism. This obligates all Christians and all churches to take baptism very seriously and to mature in their ecumenical rapprochement upon this foundation.

Mutual recognition of baptism demonstrates that, despite the existing divisions, a fundamental communion already exists, which in turn manifests ''that the divisions have not reached down to the roots and do not reach up to the heavens".[56] At the same time it becomes evident that baptism is only the beginning and the starting point for ecumenical unity and not yet its climax and fulfilment, which according to Catholic understanding is only reached in the eucharist.[57] And just as we do not in baptism actually enter into the church but are received into the church as a pre-ordained reality of salvation, so ecumenical community is not simply the result of human achievement, but rather the gift of the Holy Spirit. It would be rewarding to develop further the ecumenical implications of baptism with an ecumenical spirituality, but it can only be briefly outlined here.

[54] JOHN PAUL II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope,* Jonathan Cape, London 1994 p. 14 *[Die Schwelle der Hoffhung iiberschreiten* (Hamburg 1994) 42.]

[55] *Unitatis Redintegratio*, Nr. 3.

[56] W. Kardinal KASPER, *Ekklesiologische und ökumenische Implikationen der Taufe,* in: A. RAFFELT (Hrsg.), *Weg und Weite. Festschrift für Karl Lehmann* (Freiburg i. Br. 2001) 581-599, p. 581.

[57] Cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio,* Nr. 22.

An ecumenical spirituality therefore consists in taking seriously and fulfilling one further request in the Lords farewell prayer: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" *(John* 17, 3). For Jesus eternal life on the one hand and the knowledge of God and of Christ on the other are practically identical. For the future of ecumenism it is of crucial significance that we discover more profoundly and in greater unity Jesus Christ and his divine mystery. In order to illustrate this perspective for the future, Bishop Paul-Werner Scheele has used the image of the wheel.[58] The closer the spokes of the wheel come to the centre, the smaller the distance between them becomes. So we will only find unity in ecumenism too if we move together towards our spiritual centre, to Jesus Christ. For he is our unity, and today we are called upon to take as many steps as possible towards this unifying centre. Only if we intensify ecumenism in this direction can we also extend it. In ecumenism too Christ has "in all things the preeminence" *(Col* 1:18).

7. *Conversion as the elixir of life of ecumenism*

An ecumenical spirituality must therefore again and again call on all Christians and all churches to shared conversion to Jesus Christ. For there is no true ecumenism without conversion, which includes above all taking constant and self-critical measure against the gospel of Jesus Christ and striving after holiness according to the words of the Apostle: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" *(1 Thess* 4:3). Such a "pedagogy of sanctification", to which all the baptized are called, is indispensable for an ecumenical spirituality.[59] The essence of this daily sanctification and conversion during the process of our whole life is the ratification of baptism, as Martin Luther expressed it so beautifully when he called baptism the "daily garment" of Christians, which "they are to wear all the time": "If you live in repentance, therefore, you are walking in baptism, which not only announces this new life, but also produces, begins and exercises it".[60] In this brief formula I see the definitive ecumenical challenge to Christian repentance in the light of baptism.

In the first instance this does not mean the conversion of the other, but one's own conversion, which presupposes being prepared to acknowledge one's own weaknesses and deficits self-critically. As part of this basic attitude it proves to be much better to consider carefully what steps a church can take towards other churches in the current situation rather than to demand of them that they take steps which are not currently practicable for them. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger has rightly formulated the rule of ecumenical life "not to seek to impose upon the other anything which at this time threatens him at the core of his Christian identity". So Catholics should not attempt to "compel Protestants to recognize the Pope and their understanding of Apostolic succession". And the Reformed should in turn refrain from "urging the Catholic church towards intercommunion on the basis of their understanding of the Lord's Supper". Such "respect for that which is the imperative for division on both sides" will not directly delay unity, but form a "fundamental prerequisite for it".[61]

An ecumenical spirituality is to be guided by such a tactful love. Only then can it also be credible. That is of course the definitive criterion which also suffuses Jesus' farewell prayer. For Jesus prays for unity "so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" *(John* 17:21). True ecumenism is not an end in itself, but exists to serve the credible proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the world today. Far more important within ecumenism than all the goals of ecclesial politics is "the process, renewed each day, of maturing that which is essential: a faith which works through love".[62] That is the most profound basis for spiritual ecumenism to be and remain the soul of ecumenism. The hope that ecumenism may remain vigorous and become more vigorous once again is the real impetus for dedicating ourselves to a more profound ecumenical spirituality. Let us restore to ecumenism, this magnificent work of the Holy Spirit, its living soul!

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[58] Wie Stachelschweine, die sich näher kommen. Ein Gespräch mit Okumene-Bischof Paul-Wemer Scheele über den Kirchentag 2003 in Berlin, in: *Tagespost* vom 28. 02. 2003.

[59] G. AUGUSTIN, *Okumene als geistlicher Process,* in: P. WALTER/ K. KRAMER/G. AUGUSTIN (Hrsg.), *Kirche in ökumenischer Perspektive. Kardinal Walter Kasper zum 70. Geburtstag* (Freiburg i. Br. 2003) 522-550, bes. 544-545.

[60] R. KOLB and T. WENGERT, *The Book of Concord,* translated by Charles Arand et al Fortress Press Minneapolis 2000 *[Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchen* – BSELK (Göttingen 1976) 706].

[61] J. Cardinal RATZINGER, *Zum Fortgang der Okumene,* in: Theologische Ouartalschrift 166 (1986) 243-248, p. 247.

[62] J. Cardinal RATZINGER, *Zur Lage der Okumene,* in: Ratzinger, Weggemeinschaft des Glaubens. Kirche als Communio (Augsburg 2002) 220-234, p. 232.

REPORTS OF ONGOING DIALOGUES AND CONTACTS

ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE EASTERN SECTION

A. ORTHODOX CHURCHES OF BYZANTINE TRADITION

General Situation

Over the last two years, our relations with the Orthodox Churches have intensified at the bilateral level with each individually, a reflection on the way that these Churches understand themselves in autocephalous terms. Dialogue has made notable progress in these bilateral relations, quite unthinkable until recently, which will be discussed later on in this report, particularly with regard to the Serbian Patriarchate, the Greek Orthodox Church of Greece and the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria. The visits of the Holy Father to some of these countries and his visits to local Orthodox Churches have left a lasting trace and have yielded rich ecumenical fruits. We have entered a new phase of the *dialogue of friendship and collaboration* with these Churches, the results of which will be more easily visible in the next few years.

The process of rapprochement between Eastern and Western Christians, the many initiatives already undertaken, the wide range of activities underway aimed at improving mutual understanding and fostering dialogue, together with the achievements already attained enabled Pope John Paul II to raise the question: *"Another aspect interests me. I ask myself if our relations have become sufficiently deep and mature to enable us with God's grace, to give them a solid institutional structure, in such a way as also to find stable forms of communication and a regular, reciprocal exchange of information with each of the Orthodox Churches, and at the level of the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church as a whole. I would be happy if this matter could be the subject of a serious reflection in future dialogues, and if some might suggest some constructive solutions in this regard".*[1]

In contrast with this improvement in relations with individual Orthodox Churches, there are difficulties in the dialogue with Orthodoxy as a whole, due to tensions among the Orthodox Churches themselves, and also to the problem of so-called "uniatism", which aggravates relations between the Catholic Churches and these Churches. There is an increasing conviction, however, that the issue of "uniatism" can only be resolved within a wider context, that of the concept of the universal unity of the Churches and, consequently, of the Petrine ministry. A fruitful dialogue on both these crucial points presupposes a climate of trust that the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity is striving to imbue both in relations with the individual Orthodox Churches and through symposiums at the academic level.

Theological Dialogue with the Orthodox Churches as a Whole

There has not been a meeting of the Joint Commission between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church since the last Plenary Session of the PCPCU (12-17 November 2001). "In spite of our efforts — stated the Holy Father in his speech to the delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarch visiting Rome on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul in 2002 — this theological dialogue is at a standstill. We realize our inability to overcome our divisions and find the strength in ourselves to look with hope to the future. This delicate stage must not dismay us, nor can we be indifferent to this state of affairs. We cannot renounce the continuation of the theological dialogue that is an indispensable step to unity".

The Pope was referring to the situation that developed during the last session of the Joint Commission held in Baltimore (USA) in July 2000 on the theme *"The Ecclesiological and Canonical Implications of Uniatism"*. As is well-known, the Commission at that time was unable to produce any documentation. In view of this impasse in the dialogue, it was agreed that the members would consult with their own Churches in order to seek a way forward. In the meantime, the PCPCU (on the part of the Catholic members) and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (on that of the Orthodox), as well as individual Orthodox Churches in the context of their own bilateral relations, have taken steps towards resuming the dialogue. The Orthodox Churches have not concluded their consultations. Various internal difficulties within some Orthodox Churches do not facilitate a solution. A revision of the Commission could be envisaged, ranging from the number of members to the methodology of approach to the agenda itself. The observation made at the last session in Baltimore — namely, that the question of uniatism is strictly related to that of the primacy of the bishop of Rome — is an important clarification for making progress. In this perspective, promoting a new phase of the dialogue is indeed a true labour. Others have also made a similar observation, including firstly the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but also the Patriarch of Antioch, the Patriarch of Romania, and the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece.

The path of the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue had not always been easy, but it had obtained important outcomes, highlighted by the Holy Father in the Encyclical *Ut unum sint.* "In a positive spirit — expressed the Pope — and on the basis of what we have in common, the Joint Commission has been able

[1] The address of John Paul II to His Beatitude Theoctist [12 October 2002]. See later in this text on relations with the Orthodox Church of Romania for further information regarding the context of this speech.

to make substantial progress". In that Encyclical, he mentioned that the theological dialogue in progress had been able to express that the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church already profess a common faith in the mystery of the Church and the bond between faith and sacraments, as well as the apostolic succession as the fundamental component for the sanctification and the unity of the people of God. "These are important points of references for the continuation of the dialogue", remarked John Paul II.

The fact that the Commission has not been able to meet does not mean that there has been a "void". On a wider level, the search has continued in various contexts, for example, in conferences, in doctrinal debates, and in the more silent research of the theology faculties and ecumenical institutes.

Continuing the reflection commenced after the publication of the Encyclical *Ut unum sint* — discussed at our last Plenary Session — the PCPCU organised a Catholic-Orthodox academic symposium (21-24 May 2003) on the theme of the Petrine ministry. Eight papers were presented on four themes, two for each theme, one each respectively Catholic and Orthodox. The themes were:

a) *The biblical foundation of primacy* (Mons. JOACHIM GNILKA - Revd THEODORE STYLIANOPOLOUS)

b) *Primacy in the thought of the Church Fathers* (Prof. VLASSIOS FEIDAS - Revd VITTORINO GROSSI, osa)

c) *The role of the bishop of Rome in the Ecumenical Councils* (Prof. VITTORIO PERI - Revd NICOLAE V. DURA)

d) *Recent discussions on primacy in relation to Vatican I and on primacy among Orthodox theologians* (Revd HERMANN JOSEF POTTMEYER - Metropolitan JOANNIS ZIZIOULAS)

The proceedings of the symposium will be published in order to facilitate ongoing reflection. Furthermore, there has been a proposal to convene another symposium on the theme of *koinonia/communio.*

RELATIONS WITH THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

There have been regular and warm relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, focusing on fraternity and the mutual commitment to collaborate in order to deepen relations. This twice-annual encounter, marked by the exchange of delegations for the celebrations of the feasts of Saints Peter and Paul in Rome (29 June) and St Andrew at the Phanar (30 November) offers the opportunity for a solid focal point and prayer, in the awareness that "along the ecumenical path to unity, pride of place certainly belongs to *common prayer" (Ut unum sint,* n. 22).

The exchange of visits over the last two years has been undertaken consistently, along the dual lines of festive celebration and conversations on the coordination of relations. Concern for the theological dialogue has emerged in this exchange. In his message to John Paul 11 on the fast of Saint Peter in 2003, Patriarch Bartholomew I wrote: *"The fact that it is not yet possible to achieve the unity of faith, which is the prerequisite of joint worship, casts a shadow on the joy of the feast and saddens our Modesty. However, we are encouraged by the facts that we have achieved the bond of peace and love, which is the necessary foundation for the progress of the Theological Dialogue, which is carried on between our two Churches".*[2]

In his speech during the audience with the delegation, the Holy Father among other things referred to the consultations of the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the Orthodox Churches, in line with the points raised at the last session of the Joint International Commission (Baltimore, July 2000). The Holy Father affirmed: "I am deeply grateful for the Ecumenical Patriarchates' efforts in these past months to coordinate the continuance of the work of the International Mixed Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches. I ask you to assure His Holiness of my fervent prayers that this initiative, which is indispensable for our growth in unity, will be crowned with success". Reference to the difficulty encountered by the dialogue is not omitted: "As we seek to advance in the dialogue of truth and the dialogue of charity, let us not be discouraged by the difficulties we encounter". There is always a way forward if we are committed to fulfilling the Lord's will for the unity of his disciples" *(ibid.).*

As well as the more regular and minor events, there have also been various occasions of collaboration between Rome and the Ecumenical Patriarchate over the last two years.

The Ecumenical Patriarch himself participated in the DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE (24 January 2002) in Assisi, together with the Greek-Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and delegations of almost all the Orthodox Churches, Ancient Churches of the East and World Christian Communities. The common prayer of Christians in the Lower Basilica of Assisi, while the delegations of the other religions gathered in prayer and reflection in various sites, was a visible sign of the existing communion among Christians.[3] The common commitment to peace transformed the evangelical inspiration underlying every Christian community into a concrete reality. The warm welcome of the people reserved for Patriarch Bartholomew was a visible sign of the new feeling among Catholics.

An initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I also provided the opportunity to realise in practical terms the bonds of communion

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[2] *L'Osservatore Romano,* 1 July 2003; reprinted in *Information Service,* N.I 11 (2002/IV).

[3] His Holiness Bartholomew I actively participated in this event. He inaugurated the series of "Witnesses" made during the first part of the day, in Piazza *San Francesco,* and he read his own 'prayer for peace' during the ecumenical celebration in the Lower Basilica (during the second pail of the day). Lastly, the Patriarch introduced the text for the common commitment to peace (third part of the day), in the form of a decalogue, which was then read consecutively in parts by representatives of the other Churches and religions in attendance at Assisi.

between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. The Ecumenical Patriarch organised (5-10 January 2002) a symposium on the theme *"The Adriatic Sea, Sea at Risk, Unity of Purpose"*. The Ecumenical Patriarch is particularly interested in the issue of ecology. He has introduced the commemoration of creation into the liturgical calendar (1 September). The symposium itself took place on board a ship — a traditional symbol of the Church — that took participants from Corfù to Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia, Croatia, and Italy (Ravenna and Venice). In Ravenna, the Patriarch and other Orthodox participants concelebrated the Divine Liturgy of *Saint John Chrysostom* in the Church of Saint Apollinare in Classe, an illustrious fifth century church. The Patriarch was welcomed by the Archbishop of Ravenna, who also participated personally in the symposium. Three cardinals attended the celebration in Saint Apollinare. The symposium concluded in the Doge's Hall of the Ducal Palace in Venice with a Joint Declaration signed by the Pope and the Patriarch via a television link with the private library of the Holy Father in the Apostolic Palace.

This symposium on the Adriatic Sea, within a wider programme known as "Religion, Science and Environment", guided by a committee headed by Johannis, the Metropolitan of Pergamon, was followed by a similar symposium on the Baltic Sea [June 2003]. Cardinal Walter Kasper attended the opening ceremony in Gdansk and delivered a message from the Holy Father to the Patriarch. The PCPCU collaborated with the Ecumenical Patriarch in order to foster Catholic attendance and participation in the event.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate actively participated, with the representation of Johannis, Metropolitan of Pergamon, in the above-mentioned symposium on the Petrine ministry organised in Rome in May 2003.

It is also important to call to mind that this period has been marked by a regular exchange of correspondence between the Holy Father and the Ecumenical Patriarch for the important liturgical feasts and special occasions [saint feast days, anniversaries, etc.] in line with a traditional protocol that has become happily entrenched, and that demonstrates the desire for mutual and fraternal involvement. This exchange remains a fundamental aspect of relations between the Church of Rome, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the individual Orthodox Churches.[4]

THE GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA

The regular exchange of correspondence between the Holy Father and the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, Petros VII, for the important liturgical feasts and special occasions, has been a feature of relations with the Patriarchate of Alexandria during this period. Moreover, during his visit to Belgrade in May 2002, discussed later on in this report, Cardinal Kasper met with Patriarch Petros VII on the occasion of the latter's visit to Pavle, the Serbian Patriarch. As well, on the "Day of Prayer for Peace in the World" [24 January 2002], the Patriarch sent his Patriarchal Vicar, Bishop George [Vladimirou].

THE GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH

The above comments on the correspondence with Constantinople and Alexandria are also relevant with regard to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. The exchange of correspondence between this dicastery and the See of Antioch has been frequent over this period. Patriarch Ignace IV Hazim sent a representative to the above-mentioned symposium on the Petrine ministry in Rome in May 2003, and exchanged correspondence with Cardinal Walter Kasper on various issues of common interest, with a view to deepening collaboration and re-establishing theological dialogue with the Orthodox Church as a whole.

In March 2002, Cardinal Walter Kasper visited Aleppo for the inauguration of a church for ecumenical use, made available to various local communities, both Catholic and Orthodox, for their celebrations. This visit to Syria enabled us to renew contact and dialogue with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and its relevant authorities.

Regular contact with the See of Antioch has also been maintained through special cultural projects undertaken with the *Saint John of Damascene Faculty of Theology* of the University of Balamand in collaboration with the CATHOLIC COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL COLLABORATION, affiliated with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

After the visit of Patriarch Ignace IV Hazim to the Holy Father in October 2001, the invitation of Pope John Paul II to the "Day of Prayer for Peace in the World" in Assisi was warmly accepted. The Patriarch participated personally, accompanied by the Metropolitan for Western and Central Europe, H.E. Gabriel Saliby, and by a Patriarchal Auxiliary, Bishop Lukas El Koury. Together with Patriarch Bartholomew, Ignace IV Hazim played an active role in the day's events.

More recently [September 2003], the President of the PCPCU met His Beatitude Ignace IV Hazim in Aachen, Germany, on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Community of Sant'Egidio on the theme "Men of Religion for Peace". The meeting was characterised by a sense of great cordiality.

THE GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

While a regular exchange of correspondence between the Holy Father and the new Patriarch Ireneos has also been a feature with regard to the See of Jerusalem, relations with this Church are more diffi-

[4] An example of the importance of this aspect in relations between the Bishop of Rome and the Patriarchs of the Orthodox Churches is the *Tomas Agapis,* which gathers the correspondence between Rome and the Phanar and which is a fundamental theological reference point for the *dialogue of charity* between the Christian East and West.

cult given the overall situation in the Middle East and the internal situation within the Patriarchate itself. Elected in August 2001, the Patriarch has not yet received the agreement of the government of the country. These difficult circumstances prevented the Patriarch nominating a representative to the “Day of Prayer for Peace in the World" held in Assisi.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Patriarchate of Moscow

Relations with the Patriarchate of Moscow, which could be defined as positive until 1990, have encountered moments of tension after the political upheaval of 1989-1990, and while they have never been interrupted they have been characterised by stand-offs through the mass media. Relations have been persistently marked by two criticisms of the Catholic Church by the Patriarchate of Moscow: namely, proselytism towards the Orthodox faithful and the destruction, on the part of Greek-Catholics, of the three Orthodox eparchies in Western Ukraine. According to the Patriarchate of Moscow, the *sine qua non* condition for a substantial improvement in relations and for a constructive dialogue with the Holy See is the definitive resolution of these two problems.

After the last Plenary Session of the PCPCU (12-17 November 2001), contacts with the Patriarchate have not taken a better course. Indeed, the Patriarchate of Moscow has become more inflexible in its position towards the decision of the Holy See, made public on 11 February 2002, to elevate to the status of dioceses the four apostolic adminstrations of the Russian Federation. This decision — of an ordinary canonical administrative nature, of which the Patriarchate had been notified — was made with the intention of substituting temporary pastoral structures of the dioceses: that is, the means by which the Catholic Church (similarly to the Orthodox Church) is able to fulfil its ecclesial mission. The outcome of the decision on the part of the Patriarchate was the annulment of the bilateral encounter between the delegations of the Holy See and the Patriarchate of Moscow to be held in the capital of the Russian Federation on 21 February 2002. This same attitude was reiterated after the decision last May of the Holy See to provide for the pastoral needs of the Catholic faithful resident in the eastern areas of the Ukraine through the institution of two new dioceses. A press release of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church dated 17 July 2002 made the accusation that this was a further act of Catholic proselytism in the canonical territory of the Patriarchate of Moscow. The same press release ascribed the *expansion of unitatism* to the decision of the Greek-Catholic Church to transfer its ecclesial centre from Lviv to Kyiv.

More recently, the Patriarchate of Moscow reacted similarly following the establishment of the Holy See on 16 May 2003 of an ecclesiastical province in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Given the impossibility of direct dialogue, contact with the Patriarchate of Moscow has taken place through correspondence or official releases of the Press Office of the Holy See. Moreover, the tension created by the elevation of the apostolic administrations to dioceses, together with the manipulative and distorted interpretations given to this ecclesial act of the Catholic Church, have made it necessary to clarify in theological terms the concepts of "proselytism", "canonical territory", "freedom of conscience", as well as some aspects of history involving the Catholic Church in the territories of the modem Russian Federation.[5]

The Holy See has maintained an attitude of openness and availability towards the Russian Orthodox Church, encouraging — through the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity — local Catholic structures [dioceses, faculties, universities, charity and aid organisations] to continue the positive collaboration with Russian Orthodox institutions. Over the last ten years, this collaboration has characterised relations between the Catholic Church in its many elements and the Russian Orthodox Church. For his part, the new Apostolic Nuncio of the Russian Federation has done his best to improve relations and to alleviate tension. H.E. Monsignor Mennini has continued and expanded his contacts with relevant bodies of the Russian Orthodox Church, and particularly with the *Department for Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations.* Correspondence between the Holy Father and Patriarch Alexis II has remained unvarying, and similarly that between the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the *Department for Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations* of the Patriarchate of Moscow. A number of encounters — both official and otherwise — have also taken place between representatives of the Patriarchate of Moscow and the Holy See, such as the meeting in Geneva on 19 March, the conversations in Aachen on 10 September between Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and the Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Kirill, President of the *Department of Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations* of the Patriarchate of Moscow. These two encounters were characterised by a congenial and friendly atmosphere; during the conversations in Aachen, Metropolitan Kirill expressed the will to *turn the page* and to resume dialogue.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Patriarchate of Moscow

Cardinal Walter Kasper visited Ukraine from 19-25 October 2002. One of the reasons for the visit was the official presentation of the book *Jesus der Christus* in its Ukrainian language translation. The initiative to translate the book was taken following the

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[5]Cf. W. KASPER, *Le radici teologiche del conflitto tra Mosca e Roma,* in: *La Civiltà Cattolica* 153 (2002) 531-541; *Katholische Bistumer in Russland,* in: *Stimmen der Zeit,* Heft 8 - August 2003, Band 221; JOZEF M. Maj, jRe/azżonż *con il Patriarcato di Mosca, L'Osservatore Romano,* 26 January 2003.

first visit to Ukraine in March 2000 of the then Secretary of the Pontifical Council, H.E. Monsignor Walter Kasper. In fact, B. Volodymyr, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine, had at that time discussed the question of the formation of the Orthodox clergy and the lack of good Orthodox publications, raising the issue of the Ukrainian translation of some fundamental Catholic works on dogmatics, Christology, exegesis and history that could also be acceptable in Orthodox seminaries. The presentation of the book, of which 5000 copies were printed — the greater part destined for Catholic and Orthodox seminaries — took place at the *Taras Shewchenko* University of Kyiv.

During the same visit, Cardinal Walter Kasper participated on 21 October in the conference on *Religious Freedom and National Identity,* organised by the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences, with a paper entitled *Religionsfreiheit und nationale religios-kulturelle Identität.* The text had been translated in Ukrainian, and was made available to participants and included in the proceedings of the conference. Moreover, it was entirely reprinted by the Press Office of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Patriarchate of Moscow and published, together with a substantial and positive commentary, by the channels of communication of that Church.

During the visit, the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity met with the state authorities both in Kyiv and Lviv, with the Catholic hierarchy, as well as with representatives of Catholic institutions and communities of the faithful, and with representatives of His Beatitude Volodymyr, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine. The Metropolitan himself was absent from his See. Despite a certain degree of interest in collaboration on the current challenging issues for both Churches in Ukrainian society, the expected dialogue between the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church did not materialise. The dialogue was to have been established through a Joint Commission of representatives of the two Churches, with the participation of observers from the Holy See and the Patriarchate of Moscow, and had been agreed upon during the bilateral conversations held in Moscow between the delegations of the Holy See and the Patriarchate of Moscow on 21 November 1999.

Orthodox Church of Belarus - Patriarchal Exarchate of Belarus

The first visit to Belarus of the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity took place from 14-18 December 2002. The invitation to visit the local Catholic Church was extended by Cardinal Kazimierz Swiatek, Archbishop of Minsk-Mohilev, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference. The programme of the visit included a meeting with the Episcopal Conference, a solemn liturgical celebration with all the Bishops of Belarus, an encounter with seminarians, and also contact with the Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, Filaret, the Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus. Indeed, the Pontifical Council and the Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration have for many years maintained excellent relations with the Metropolitan, who is also the Dean of the Theological Faculty of Saints Methodius and Cyrill of Minsk. Metropolitan Filaret returned this with his own visit to Rome, where he was received by His Eminence in his residence. They conversed in a friendly manner for three hours, discussing beyond the issues relating to Belarus also questions relating to the Patriarchate of Moscow.

During his visit to Metropolitan Filaret, Cardinal Walter Kasper on 16 December participated in an international conference organised on the occasion of the opening of a new *Institute for Religious Dialogue and Interconfessional Communications,* presenting a paper on *Orthodoxie und katholische Kirche.* The visit of the President of the Pontifical Council to Belarus also represented a precious opportunity to undertake a tranquil and constructive exchange on the state of relations between the two Churches, on the need to sustain the theological dialogue and on the expansion of collaboration in the face of challenges presented by the modem world and society to both Churches. The collaboration undertaken to date with the Faculty of Theology was evaluated, with the decision to continue this important undertaking in the field of formation, so vital for the Orthodox Church itself in Belarus. The five encounters over only a few days were not only fruitful, but a living testimony of the dialogue between the Churches, the perception of which was also taken up by the mass media in Belarus and Russia.

RELATIONS WITH THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Events over the last ten years in the ex-Yugoslavian republic have had a negative impact on relations between the local Catholic Church and Serbian Orthodox Church, as well as on relations between the Holy See and this same Church. The main reason for this tension can be traced to the often inaccurate and biased interpretations of the position taken by the Holy See with regard to situations of conflict. The changes that have taken place in the country, accompanied by a more balanced view of the position of the Holy See, have nurtured the conditions and the will for a resumption of relations. This situation made it possible for Cardinal Walter Kasper to visit the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 10-15 May 2002.

There was a dual purpose to the visit. On the one hand, to meet the local Catholic Church in order to promote a wider involvement in the commitment for the unity of Christians; and on the other, to establish contacts with the Serbian Orthodox Church. With regard to the latter, Cardinal Walter Kasper on 11 May met Patriarch Pavle, to whom he addressed a message and offered a chalice as a personal gift of the Holy Father, the sign and expression of his desire to reach full communion. The President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity also extended an invitation to send a delegation of the Holy Synod to Rome.

This invitation was accepted, and a delegation of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church visited the Holy See from 3-8 February 2003. As well as

conversations with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the delegation met and spoke with the Secretary for Relations with the States, the Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Pontifical Councils for the Family, for Justice and Peace, and for Interreligious Dialogue. There was also contact with staff members of the Pontifical Councils for Migrants and Itinerant People, and for Health Pastoral Care, as well as with the Vice President of the Pontifical Academy for Life, with the Rector of the Gregorian Pontifical University and with the Programme Director of Vatican Radio. The delegation also made a pilgrimage to Saint Peters Basilica and to the four Basilicas, and also visited the catacombs and the Oriental Pontifical Institute and the Lateran Pontifical University.

On 6 February the delegation was received in an audience with the Holy Father John Paul II.[6]

The visit marked a new phase in relations between the Holy See and the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate in Belgrade. It provided the opportunity to acknowledge the aspiration and the will for collaboration between the Churches within the context of the current trends towards unification in Europe, to provide a witness to Christians values and to make a contribution to the process of the purification of memories and to the resolution of conflict arising from historical or recent events, in which the manipulation of religion for political ends had produced enduring repercussions.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ROMANIA

The good relations between Rome and Romania were marked in this period by the visit to Rome of Patriarch Theoctist (7-13 October 2002). The visit of the Patriarch was in response to the invitation of the Holy Father extended at the end of his visit to Bucharest in 1999. The Patriarch was accompanied by metropolitans, bishops and clergy. Upon his arrival in Rome, the Patriarch was accompanied to Saint Peters Square during a well-attended public audience, where he was able to greet the Holy Father before the crowd of Catholic pilgrims. On 12 October he met the Holy Father in a private audience, in which a Joint Declaration was signed. On Sunday 13 October the Patriarch participated in the solemn liturgy presided by the Holy Father in Saint Peters. The liturgy was adapted from that used on the occasion of the visit of the Ecumenical Patriarch. The Patriarch — who entered the basilica in procession with the Holy Father — rose to the altar together with him. After the liturgy of the Word, followed by the speeches of the Patriarch and the Holy Father, both proclaimed together the Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol in the Romanian language according to the Eastern tradition. At the moment of the celebration of the Eucharist, the Patriarch descended from the altar. The Patriarch later returned to the altar for the exchange of the sign of peace with the Pope. In conclusion, the Pope and the Patriarch together blessed the faithful. This Eucharistic celebration highlighted the spiritual pilgrimage that Catholics and Orthodox are undertaking together, despite difficulties, towards unity and ultimately concelebration.

The Patriarch visited various sacred sites of Rome. Significantly, he visited the Romanian Pontifical College attended by Greek-Catholic students of Romania, where he was welcomed both solemnly and warmly. In the Church of *San Bartolomeo alVlsola Tiberina,* together with Cardinal Walter Kasper and the Vicar of Rome, Cardinal Ruini, as well as the titular Cardinal of the Church, the Archbishop of Chicago, H.E. Francis Eugene George, the Patriarch presided an ecumenical celebration during which the church was destined as a memorial site to the witnesses of the faith of the 20th century. The celebration echoed the jubilee event on 7 May 2000 at the Colosseum, which was also attended by a representative of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Romania.

In his editorial in the journal of the of the Patriarchate of Romania, Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bucovina made the following comment on the visit to Rome: "In realistic terms from the ecumenical point of view, the visit was an act of encouragement for the efforts to re-establish communion between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church" *(Vestitornl Ortodoxiei,* 15 November 2002).

In Romania, the joint commission comprising members from the Orthodox Patriarchate and the Greek-Catholic Church continues to meet regarding the issue of property rights and the use of worship places. Progress made by the commission is sluggish and agreement is slow to be found.

The Church of Romania participated in the "Day of Prayer for Peace in the World" at Assisi (2002) with the representation of the Bishop of Harghita and Covasna, H.E. Ioan; it also sent experts to the symposium on the Petrine ministry held in May 2003.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF BULGARIA

There have been longstanding relations with the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, marked however by moments of difficulty due above all to the international situation in the country and within the Church itself. It had sent an observer to the Second Vatican Council and over the years had sent a delegation to Rome, often attached to a government delegation, for example, on the occasion of the *Festival of Slavic Literature and Culture,* linked to the memory of Saints Cyrill and Methodius. A period of caution, especially over the last decade, could be attributed to the schism that had arisen within the Church itself. Nonetheless, the Holy See maintained relations with the Holy Synod led by Patriarch Maxim and this fact was greatly appreciated by the Patriarch himself once the major internal problems had been partially resolved.

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[6] For the speech of the Holy Father, cf. *VOsservatore Romano,* 7 February 2003; for the speech of Metropolitan Amfilohije, cf. *L'Osservatore Romano,* 8 February 2003.

The progressive rapprochement in relations between the Holy See and the Patriarchate of Bulgaria made headway during the 2000 Jubilee Year, and has continued to develop more intensely since then. A decisive direction was taken by the apostolic visit of the Holy Father to Bulgaria and by the encounter during that visit with Patriarch Maxim and the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria (24-26 May 2002). On this occasion, Pope John Paul II offered His Beatitude Maxim the liturgical use of a church in Rome for the Bulgarian Orthodox community of the city, namely the church of *Santi Vincenzo ed Anastasio* at the Trevi Foundation.

Following the visit of the Holy Father, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, visited Bulgaria from 8-11 October 2002 in order to accept the *honoris causa* doctorate in theology conferred on him by the *Saint Clement of Ochrida* State University. The degree ceremony took place on 10 October and was attended by many bishops of the Orthodox Church as well as by some ambassadors accredited to Sofia. Cardinal Kasper was received by Patriarch Maxim and members of the Holy Synod. In accordance with the decision of the Holy Synod, Cardinal Kasper was accompanied on all his visits to Orthodox monasteries and seminaries by representatives of Patriarch Maxim and the Holy Synod.

After a year from the visit of the Holy Father to Bulgaria, a numerous delegation of dignitaries of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria visited Rome from 22-27 May 2003. With a solemn prayer, the inauguration of the liturgical use of the Church of *Santi Vincenzo ed Anastasio* took place on 24 May in the presence of the Prime Minister of the Bulgarian government, numerous ambassadors and guests. The delegation was received in an audience with the Holy Father on 26 May. During its stay, the delegation met with various dicasteries of the Holy See and also visited ancient Roman sanctuaries. The delegation visited the Oriental Pontifical Institute, where a number of Bulgarian students sent to Rome by the authorities of the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria currently undertake studies.

The increasing interest in mutual collaboration and the need to provide a common witness in order to enrich the pastoral commitment in a society marked by a growing tendency towards secularisation emerged during the course of the visit. This interest emerged particularly in relation to field of formation in both Orthodox and Catholic academic institutions and in relation to the need to develop a critical approach to both civil and ecclesiastical history, not always interpreted impartially in the past, with the legacy that the faithful maintain certain prejudices that could be overcome through a common effort and commitment.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF GREECE

Relations with the Church of Greece have for years been circumspect, limited to conventional acts and pure courtesy. The Church of Greece did not send observers to the Second Vatican Council. However, over time relations have progressively resumed. A clear change was marked by the succession to the archbishops' chair of Athens of H.B. Christodoulous. On a visit to Veria in the north of Greece in 1999 on the occasion of a Catholic-Orthodox symposium, the President of the PCPCU, Cardinal E. Cassidy, met with Archbishop Christodoulos. Following this, the Church of Greece has sent its delegates to Rome on several occasions, particularly during the Jubilee.

The pilgrimage of the Pope to the Aeropagus of Athens (4-5 May 2001) marks a positive shift, notwithstanding the concern and fears held prior to the visit. The event has been followed by a positive and open development to the future.

For the first time, the Church of Greece sent to Rome an official delegation of the Holy Synod, comprising a metropolitan, two bishops and due archimandrites, all of whom are involved in various departments dealing with dialogue (8-13 March 2002). The delegation, which was received by the PCPCU, met with staff of various dicasteries and offices of the Curia (the Councils for Culture, for Justice and Peace, for the Family, for Interreligious Dialogue, for Migrants, as well as with the Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith, for Catholic Education, and with the Secretary for foreign relations of the Secretariat of State). The delegation was also received by the Holy Father. The concerns raised included cooperation in a renewed modem pastoral care, and in promoting the Christian identity in the formation of the European Union.

In return, the Catholic Church sent a delegation to Athens (10-14 February 2003), led by Cardinal Walter Kasper accompanied by the Secretary, H.E. Mons. Brian Farrell and Mons Johan Bonny, together with the Nuncio. As well as contact with the Archbishop and the commissions dealing with dialogue in the Church of Greece, the delegation was able to visit institutes involved in pastoral care. The delegation remarked upon the spirit of the new pastoral commitment and the interest in cooperation with the Catholic Church. The new challenges faced by the Churches, such as bioethics and problems relating to the Christian identity in Europe, were discussed during the conversations.

In his message to Archbishop Christodoulous, the Holy Father wrote: "I hope that this new contact may inspire concrete forms of cooperation between us. The Church of Rome is available for reciprocal collaboration, conscious of the need to integrate the Greek, Latin and Slav traditions of contemporary Europe, so that they may be joined together in a harmonious whole".

An international symposium held from 1-3 June 2003 in Thessalonika was organised by the Faculty of Theology of the *Aristotle University* under the auspices of Archbishop Christodoulos on the theme: *"Orthodox Theology and Ecumenical Dialogue - Perspective and Problems"*. A round table discussion was held on 3 June on the perspectives of dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic

Church with the presentation of three papers, by the Romanian Bishop Nifon Mihaita, by Professor Petros Vassiliadis of the University of Thessalonika, and by Monsignor Johan Bonny of the PCPCU. The need to resume theological dialogue emerged as a positive sign, while the benefit of fraternal relations between the Churches as an indispensable prerequisite for progress in the theological dialogue was also highlighted.

A particularly significant aspect of relations was the visit to Rome [15-20 September] organised with the blessing of His Beatitude Christodoulos, by a group of 31 priests, all with responsibilities in parishes of other pastoral activities of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Athens, guided by the Vicar General of the Archdiocese, Very Reverend Thomas Synodinos. The group made contact with various levels of the Holy See and Vatican City, and made pilgrimages to the sacred sites of Rome. It also encountered the pastoral reality of the diocese of Rome, including a visit to the parish of the *Trasfigurazione,* where it met with the parish priest and parish community. The delegation also visited the Mariapolis Centre of the Focolari Movement, and was received by the Community of Sant'Egidio. The group asked to celebrate the Sacred Liturgy in the Catacomb of Saint Priscilla on the same day that it was received in private audience by the Holy Father at Castelgandolfo. The group delivered a message from His Beatitude Christodoulos to the Holy Father in which among other things the Archbishop expressed his desire to return the visit of Pope John Paul II to Athens in 2001.

Another opportunity for exchange within the ambit of the Orthodox Church of Greece was presented in the same month of September 2003 by a symposium jointly organised by the Faculty of Theology of the *Aristotle University* of Thessalonika and the Franciscan Institute of Spirituality of the *Antonianum* Pontifical Faculty. The symposium was the eighth in it series, and was attended by the Undersecretary of the dicastery, Monsignor ELEUTERIO F. FORTINO, who delivered a special message of the Holy Father. The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew 1 and the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, Christodoulos, also sent messages. The symposium was held at the Zoannżna, and was hosted by the pertinent Metropolitan, H.E. Theóklitos.

B. ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

DIALOGUE WITH THE ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES AS A WHOLE

In response to a proposal made by the Ancient Eastern Churches as a whole, a new dialogue has been initiated between these Churches and the Catholic Church. A preliminary meeting took place in Rome from 27 to 29 January 2003. All the Ancient Eastern Churches were represented at this meeting: the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicossates of Etchmiadzin and Antelias), the Orthodox Church of Ethiopia, the Orthodox Church of Eritrea, and the Syrian Orthodox Church of Malankar. While belonging to different traditions, these Churches consider themselves to form part of the same ecclesial family. They mutually recognise the validity of their sacraments and allow eucharistic concelebration. Moreover, in the light of the current context in the Middle East, marked by conflict and division, the authorities of these Churches feel the need to intensify their collaboration at the pastoral and social level. There is also a trend to increasing mutual commitment from the ecumenical point of view, particularly with regard to theological dialogues. Thus, after establishing a common dialogue with the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion, these Churches have undertaken a similar initiative with the Catholic Church. The first plenary meeting of the new joint commission will be held at the end of January 2004 in Lebanon. The Orthodox and Catholic delegations will comprise 14 members each. The Catholic delegation will include theologians and bishops of the Latin tradition and various Eastern traditions. The first plenary meeting will dedicate itself to the outcomes of previous dialogues — both official and otherwise — that have taken place since the Second Vatican Council between the Catholic Church and some of the Ancient Eastern Churches. Indeed, the new dialogue aims at following the headway made with the Christological agreements and common declarations signed by the Bishop of Rome and Eastern Patriarchs. On the basis of these developments, the new joint commission hopes to continue this process of rapprochement with all the Ancient Eastern Churches.

THE MALANKARA ORTHODOX CHURCH

The dual structures of dialogue, namely the *Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church* and the *Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church* and the *Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church,* have continued their work. The two commission follow a more or less parallel programme comprising the history of the Church, theology and common witness. With regard to the history of the Church, the *Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church* has studied the effects of the Synod of Diamper on the rupture of the unity of the Church of Saint Thomas, and the attempts at reconciliation in Kerala in the 17th and 18th centuries, with a view to arriving at a common interpretation of these events. With regard to theology, the dialogue has dealt with the relationship between the universal Church and the local Church, a theme approached differently by the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches. Furthermore, the question of the "Petrine ministry in the Church" has also been dealt with separately by the *Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church.* With regard to

common witness, the two commissions have scheduled a programme of encounters and joint initiatives. Some of these initiatives will take place within the overall celebrations to be held for the 1950th anniversary of the arrival of Saint Thomas in India, traditionally dated at the year 53.

The two joint commissions have also taken into consideration the recent developments in relations between the *Syrian Orthodox Church of Malankar* and the *Orthodox Syrian Church of Malankar,* each currently guided by a respective Catholicos. The delegations expressed the hope that mediation, official and otherwise, may further contribute to reconciliation between the two parts of the Malankar Church.

While these two Churches are both represented in the new commission between the Catholic Church and the Ancient Eastern Churches as a whole, the dialogues in India should continue their work along the lines already established. Indeed, the rapprochement between the various Churches originating from the Saint Thomas tradition requires individual study and dialogue. The dialogue with the overall Ancient Eastern Churches cannot deal with the specific details of a dialogue between the different Churches of Kerala, which share a common patrimony in terms of identity and a common Eastern tradition.

Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East

The *Joint Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East* has made its definitive revisions to the "Joint Declaration on Sacramental Life". After an initial discussion on the theology of the sacraments in general, the document deals with the different liturgical celebrations to which the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East attribute a sacramental nature. The document was prepared in line with the principle of *"Lex orandi, Lex credendi",* in the sense that bases itself on rituals, readings and liturgical comments in order to define the faith and the teaching of the Church on the various sacraments. The definitive version of the Joint Declaration was submitted in 2002 for the approval of the authorities of the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has already given its assent; the Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East is preparing its response. With the impending dual agreement of their respective authorities, the "Joint Declaration on Sacramental Life" would represent a new outcome of the official dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, following the Christological Declaration of 1994 and the recognition of the validity of the Anafora of Addai and Mari on the part of the Catholic Church (2001). Its importance is to be understood not only in terms of doctrine, but also from the pastoral and catechetical point of view. Indeed, it is envisaged that the new Declaration will constitute the point of reference for future common texts for the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East regarding their sacramental tradition.

After reflecting upon Christology and the theology of the sacraments, the Joint Commission confronted the third aspect of its programme, namely ecclesiology. The theme of the Petrine ministry in the Church and, in particular the "primacy of Peter" in the canonical and liturgical traditions of the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, was dealt with in the meetings of 2002 and 2003. It has already emerged from initial studies that numerous liturgical and canonical features belong to the two traditions of the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.

Lastly, the Commission has continued its study of the major authors of the tradition of the Church of the East (Church of Babylon) in order to understand more fully their particular contribution to the development of the Christological doctrine of the Church. Following the Christological Declaration of 1994, this study undertakes to appreciate in its just measure a theological tradition that is poorly known both in the East and the West, and to recognise the elements of truth that this tradition aspired to interpret and to advocate in the era of the great Christological debates of the first centuries.

Assisi - Day of Prayer for Peace in the World

The start of the new millennium had enkindled great hopes and new prospects. However, the terrorist attacks of 11 September shocked the whole world. Humanity was revealed to be fragile and threatened. The Day of Prayer for Peace in the World held in Assisi on 24 January 2002 was a response to this challenge. The Day of Prayer was attended, on the part of the Ancient Eastern Churches, by representatives of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, the Armenian Catholicossate of Etchmiadzin, the Armenian Catholicossate of Cilicia, the Orthodox Church of Ethiopia and the Syrian Orthodox Church of Malankar. The Assyrian Church of the East was represented by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.

The Middle East

Without underestimating the value of international encounters and dialogues, it should be highlighted that ecumenism is experienced firstly and above all at the local level, in concrete life. This is particularly true in the Middle East where, over time, the four Christian families have lived side by side, sharing the same joys and the same concerns. Contacts among the four communities (Eastern, Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) in the region have become progressively more intense. With the support of the *Middle East Council of Churches* and the *Leaders of the Middle East Churches,* these communities have discovered new dimensions of collaboration. There has been an increase in the number of initiatives along ecumenical lines in the fields of development, human needs, medicine and social issues. The Churches of the Middle East increasingly speak unit-

edly on their particular social and political issues. Who can forget, for the example, the demonstrations of bishops and other authorities of the various Christian communities of the Holy Land in connection with the siege in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem? Similarly, with regard to religious relations, the Churches of the region have tended to progress at the same pace, particularly in terms of relations between Christianity and Islam. Encounter and exchange has also expanded at the level of theological research and education. Christians in the Middle East now feel themselves — and increasingly act accordingly — to belong to an "Arab Christianity". Clearly, this is emerging as a new ecumenical reality.

In this context, mention should be made of some questions and anxieties of an ecumenical nature. 1) Recent debate on the possibility of the entry of Turkey to the European Community has provoked some controversy regarding the outlook for the various Christian communities in the country; the fact that His Beatitude Mesrob II, the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, has sought the support of the Vatican and Pope John Paul II for the candidature of Turkey must be considered in this light. 2) The new situation in Iraq poses the question of the future of the traditional Churches of the country (among which the Chaldean Church, the Assyrian Church of the East, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Syrian Church); in this regard, one questions under which point of view and according to which criteria the rights of these Churches and Ecclesial Communities will be considered, both at the theoretical and practical levels. 3) The problem of the emigration of Christians from the Middle East has not abated; indeed, the reverse is true. The Christian presence in all countries of the region has continued to diminish. New challenges have compounded well-known difficulties. What will be the impact of the recent interventions in the Middle East, by some Western governments, on the conditions of the various Christian communities? Will such interventions be beneficial for the peaceful co-existence of Christians and Muslims in the region? Such questions, which are not devoid of anxiety, are daily realities wherever Christians in the Middle East gather.

CATHOLIC COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL COLLABORATION WITH THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES AND THE ANCIENT CHURCHES OF THE EAST

The creation of the CATHOLIC COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL COLLABORATION (CCCC) was an initiative of the *Secretariatus ad Christianorum Unitatem Fovendam* in 1963, within the framework of the activities promoted by the Vatican Council II and aimed at developing mutual understanding and relations with the Byzantine Orthodox Churches and the Ancient Churches of the East (Copts, Ethiopians, Syrians, etc.).

The CCCC was officially instituted by an autograph Letter addressed by Pope Paul VI to the first President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Augustin Bea, on 27th July 1964. The letter clearly stated the orientations and goals of the CCCC.

Since its establishment in 1964, the Committee has been carrying out its tasks as part of the *Eastern Section* of the PCPCU. Its main activities, which have further developed over the years, are the following: *a)* granting of scholarships to candidates of Orthodox Churches and Ancient Churches of the East, presented and recommended by their respective religious authorities; these students, who are committed to working in the service of their Churches, undertake specialisation courses in theology or related subjects at Catholic/ Pontifical universities, mainly in Rome, Dublin, Paris, Strasbourg, Brussels, Regensburg; *b)* co-operation with Orthodox educational centres by providing books, dictionaries, series of theology/patristic/history publications etc.; *c)* promotion of special projects of co-operation and exchange at the level of Orthodox Theology Faculties and Research Centres, and common initiatives aimed at deepening the mutual understanding between East and West; *d)* promotion of cultural exchanges (visits, conferences, symposia) organised by the Orthodox partners with the support of the CCCC, aimed at deepening theological aspects but also at sharing personal experiences.

The students are all lodged in religious colleges and institutes so that, besides their university studies, they can concretely experience the life of the Catholic Church and of the communities in which they are welcomed. This aspect of the activity of the Committee is one of the most significant and efficient ways of promoting the *exchange of gifts* between East and West, to which Pope John Paul II has often referred.

The Committee is not a foundation. It raises the funds for its activities yearly. Its benefactors are the Holy Father himself and several institutions and aid agencies, such as *CNEWA, MISSIO, RENOVABIS* and some Bishops Conferences, like the Italian Bishops Conference, the Swiss Bishops Conference, etc. In order to meet the new challenges and develop the possibilities of co-operation with the Orthodox faculties and educational centres, in the new situation of freedom experienced by the Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe, the Committee is looking for support on the part of episcopal bodies in Western Europe.

ANGLICAN-CATHOLIC RELATIONS 2001-2003

A wide range of structures and practices, directed towards formal and informal communication and cooperation, are at the service of relations between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. In the present intermediate context, a clear and direct path to full communion is not yet apparent. While great progress has been made in our relations over the past decades, progress which continues, new obstacles have also emerged. In this context, the commitment of the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion remains two-fold: to the ongoing pursuit of doctrinal agreement, and to incarnating as much as possible, in appropriate aspects of our ecclesial lives, the level of faith we already share. These complementary tasks are taken up most directly by our two international commissions, the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) and the newly formed International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM). In this report we will look to the principal projects of these commissions, and to other significant developments over the past two years — both positive and negative — which shape our current relationship.

I. ARCIC: MARY, PATTERN OF GRACE AND HOPE FOR THE CHURCH

The place of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Church had been addressed briefly by ARCIC I in *Authority in the Church II* (1981), para. 30, and a considerable level of agreement had been registered there. The Marian dogmas of the Assumption and Immaculate Conception and the practice of invoking Mary in intercessory prayer remained as areas of divergence. It was principally with the aim of addressing these latter areas of Marian doctrine and the practice of faith that ARCIC undertook a study of the role of Mary in the life and doctrine of the Church. After over four years of work, ARCIC has almost completed an agreed statement. It should be presented to this dicasteiy and to the Anglican Communion Office early in the new year.

The Commission's aim has been to reconsider the two dogmas in the light of Scripture and Tradition, hence the agreed statement will begin with biblical and historical sections treating the role of Mary in Scriptures and in the life of the Church. In approaching the two Marian dogmas, the text will look both to their doctrinal content and to the authoritative claims of the dogmatic definitions — namely, that they have been revealed by God and require the assent of the faithful. A final section of the document, entitled "Mary in the life of the Church", will treat the invocation of Mary in intercessory prayer. The text on Mary will bring to completion the current mandate of ARCIC. In the near future, discussions will be undertaken with the Anglican Communion Office and Lambeth Palace as to further theological subjects to be addressed by the Commission.

II. IARCCUM

As reported at the last Plenary of the PCPCU, the Mississauga consultation of Anglican and Catholic bishops in May, 2000, under the leadership of Cardinal Edward Cassidy and Archbishop George Carey, resulted in the establishment by the PCPCU and the Anglican Communion Office of a second international commission: the International Anglican — Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM). The new commission, constituted principally of bishops and intended to complement the work of ARCIC, has now met three times (annually since 2001), and taken up the threefold mandate given to it at the Mississauga meeting: the preparation of a draft of a statement articulating as concisely as possible the degree of agreement that exists between Anglicans and Catholics; reflection on ways in which the study and reception of the agreed statements of ARCIC could be fostered and promoted within the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church; and identifying strategies which would translate the degree of spiritual communion that has been achieved into visible and practical outcomes.

An IARCCUM sub-committee responsible for drafting the statement mentioned above has drawn heavily on the work of ARCIC, which has attempted to systematically address the doctrinal issues which are a cause of division between Catholics and Anglicans. The drafting group has also sought to make reference to areas which have not been a source of division, as well as to remaining obstacles to full communion, in their attempt to identify the degree of agreement in faith presently shared by Anglicans and Catholics. The current draft includes three sections. The first (and longest) lays out the extent of our shared faith. The draft then invites an acknowledgment of significant elements of sanctification and truth in each others' ecclesial lives. The final proposed section sets forth commitments which flow from the extent to which we find the essential elements of Church to be present in each other. This is a long-term project, but it is to be hoped that a draft of the statement would be sufficiently mature to be set forward for study and revision as early as next year. Because the text addresses matters of faith, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would necessarily be involved in the process of studying and responding to the text.

In terms of fostering the study and reception of ARCIC documents, IARCCUMs members have initiated or encouraged several projects: developing a closer working relationship between the various national Anglican-Roman Catholic consultations (ARCs) and with IARCCUM; the preparation of a

joint study guide to ARCIC's *Church as Communion',* the preparation of a series of questions concerning *The Gift of Authority* to be sent to Catholic Episcopal Conferences in regions where Anglicans are present in significant numbers; the encouragement of study guides to be produced following the publication of the forthcoming ARCIC statement on the Blessed Virgin Mary; the publication of the collected ARCIC texts late next year; and the possible production of a video for parish use which would assist discussion and reflection on ARCIC statements and what has been achieved in Anglican-Catholic relations over the last 35 years. Finally, IARCCUM has dealt with a number of pastoral and practical strategies and initiatives aimed at helping the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion, especially in local contexts, to do together whatever is possible at the present stage of real but imperfect communion. In receiving the Commission in a private audience in November 2001, Pope John Paul II observed that as an international group of Bishops, they were "especially well qualified to consider the next practical steps which might be taken not only to consolidate the gains already made, but also to lead us to new depths of communion on the way to that fullness of unity which is the will of Christ". Current strategies of IARCCUM include the fostering of closer relations between Catholic and Anglican episcopal conferences in Africa; the inclusion of material geared towards ecumenical formation in various workshops and courses offered for new bishops; and the identification and encouragement of existing practices and initiatives from around the world which have effectively been built on or cultivated practical co-operation at episcopal and local levels.

III. Recent Developments (as of September 2003)

Two recent developments will be addressed: the election of a new Archbishop of Canterbury; and decisions in two Anglican Provinces concerning ministry and those involved in active homosexual relationships.

In June of 2002, then Archbishop of Canterbury Dr George Carey paid a visit to the Holy See in order to bid farewell to Pope John Paul II, and to hold one final set of meetings at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It was the sixth time that Archbishop Carey visited the Holy See during his 111/2 years at Canterbury — more visits than all of his post-Reformation predecessors combined — and the first time that anything akin to a farewell visit had been undertaken. Dr Carey thanked the Holy Father for the warmth and welcome with which he had always been received, and told the Pope: "Your great courage, wisdom and holiness of life have touched and inspired Christians throughout the world". Archbishop Rowan Williams, former Primate of the Anglican *Church of Wales,* was appointed as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury in July of 2002, and was enthroned in Canterbury Cathedral in February, 2003. Cardinal Kasper was invited to speak on behalf of all guests at the banquet immediately following the enthronement. At the time of writing this report, a visit of Archbishop Williams to the Holy See is being planned for October, 2003. One event to be held during his forthcoming visit will be the installation of a new director of the Anglican Centre, Bishop John Flack, who is the third consecutive bishop to be assigned to the post.

The Anglican Communion, meanwhile, is experiencing serious internal turmoil over its teaching and practice concerning homosexuality. Decisions in two of the Anglican Provinces have provoked strong resistance from other sectors of the Anglican Communion. In the diocese of New Westminster in Canada, a rite of blessing for same sex couples has been authorized for use in several parishes, beginning in May, 2003. And in the Episcopal Church of the United States (ECUSA), the diocese of New Hampshire elected Canon Gene Robinson, an openly gay priest living in a homosexual relationship, as their next bishop. The election was confirmed at ECUSAs General Convention in August, 2003. The General Convention also reflected a tolerance for those priests who offer a rite of blessing for same-sex couples. Decisions of this nature were not unanticipated, as tensions have been growing since the Lambeth Conference of 1998, which passed a resolution stating "that there are powerful biblical and theological arguments to justify the historic Christian understanding that sexually active homosexual relationships do not represent a faithful witness in chastity and holiness for disciples of Christ". At the September 2002 meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, a resolution was passed calling for "dioceses and individual bishops not to undertake unilateral actions or adopt policies which would strain our communion with one another without reference to their provincial authorities", and for "provincial authorities to have in mind the impact of their decisions within the wider Communion". Immediately prior to the ECUSA General Convention, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to the Anglican Primates, noting that communion "means that we have ways of being accountable to each other, so that decisions in any one local church are not taken without consultation and awareness of the consequences a decision may have for other churches". Within the Anglican Communion, however, the Archbishop of Canterbury has no legislative authority, and the resolutions of Lambeth Conferences and of the Anglican Consultative Council are not binding on individual Provinces. Reaction from many Provinces in the Anglican Communion to the decisions in the Diocese of New Westminster and ECUSA, however, have been strong and incisive, many suggesting that the Communion cannot absorb these decisions. In early June, the Primate of Nigeria, Archbishop Peter Akinola, issued a statement indicating that the Anglican Church in Nigeria (the largest Province of practicing Anglicans) had severed relations with the Diocese of New Westminster. Fourteen Primates issued a statement indicating that the decision "has brought the Anglican Communion to a defining moment in which the clear choice

has to be made between remaining a communion or disintegrating into a federation of churches". The reaction in response to the ECUSA decision was stronger still. The Primate of West Africa, Archbishop Bernard Malango, identified the decision as "a serious departure from the faith and the agreed principles that have held the Church together for centuries", and noted that it has "shattered the Anglican Communion.... We are now experiencing an overwhelming sense of loss of direction of the Anglican Communion". Other Primates and Anglican leaders, most especially from the Evangelical wing of the Anglican Communion, have stated that the decision will undoubtedly create a significant realignment of relationships within Anglicanism. Some have noted that ECUS As decision will also have a detrimental impact on relations with the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

Archbishop Williams has called an emergency meeting of all Anglican Primates for the middle of October, and has requested that no drastic measures be taken prior to then. The episcopal ordination of Canon Robinson is scheduled to take place on November 2nd. While no statement has been issued by the PCPCU, the Catholic position has been clearly stated in this regard, and in the context of the IARCCUM Commission and in private communications with Lambeth Palace, the fact that this would be a substantial new obstacle in our relations has been forthrightly communicated.

RELATIONS WITH THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION FROM 2001-2003

INTRODUCTION

Ecumenism is currently characterised by a profound if not yet complete unity. While retaining its central importance, the ecumenism of love and truth must be complemented by an ecumenism of life. This means that the communion attained so far through dialogue and mutual relations must be translated into the concrete reality of life. This means attaining a renewed ecumenical spirituality that is able to spiritually deepen our mutual understanding. Such an ecumenism of life already exists, not only in many religious communities and ecumenical groups, but also at the diocesan and parochial level. In these contexts, Catholics and their ecumenical partners have understood how important it is to enrich each other through common prayer and the sharing of life experiences. It is upon such a basis of spiritual communion that we may be able in the future to approach successfully, at the ecumenical level, questions such as the concept of the Church, ecclesial ministry and sacramental life.

The issue that currently highlights the major differences among the various traditions, forms of Christian life and theological discussion, and one that bears the most repercussions for members of the two communions, is that relating to "Nature, Position and Task of the Church" and to its ecclesial ministry. In this perspective, it is very important to call to mind the original underlying force of the ecumenical movement and to draw from it a new spirit of openness and willingness to authentic dialogue. The ecumenical movement from the outset has been inspired and nurtured by spiritual ecumenism, which for many decades has found expression in the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.* This ecumenism of life, or spiritual ecumenism, must permeate all dimensions in absolute terms, from the theological to the pastoral. If ecumenical interaction were able to create more extensive and more numerous "spaces of encounter of unity in diversity", a greater possibility for understanding and mutual exchange would be made available to all Christians. This is what is meant by reconciled unity, a unity that enriches and enables Christians to anchor themselves steadfastly to the fulcrum of their common faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Following the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of the Justification of Faith in Augsburg in 1999 as well as the great celebrations and ecumenical encounters held in the 2000 Jubilee Year, relations between Catholics and Lutherans have continued to develop. Although it may not be possible each year to encounter such impressive milestones on our journey towards full and visible unity, it is also true that it is no longer possible to speak of the "winter of ecumenism" as in the past. On the contrary, the ecumenical movement has become more mature, more adult and more balanced. The most significant consultations and encounters over the last two years have highlighted how important it is for the faithful to gather together in prayer and liturgical celebration, in personal encounters and in theological consultations, without ever losing sight of the common goal of the full and visible unity of the Church.

2. LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

The eighth session of the fourth phase of dialogue of the Lutheran-Catholic International Commission for Unity was held at Würzburg (Germany) from 30 August to 6 September 2002. The dialogue is held between the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The two Co-Presidents of the Commission are Bishop Béla Harmati of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hungary and Archbishop Alfons Nossol, Opole, Poland.

From the outset of its undertakings, the dialogue has set as its objective the achievement of the full unity of the Church. The first phase of the dialogue (1967-1971) focused on the Gospel and the Church; the second (1973-1984) on the Eucharist and Ecclesial Ministry; the third (1986-1993) on Church and Justification.

The central theme of the current phase is the Apostolicity of the Church. In its last meeting, the Commission continued its work on the biblical, historical and theological contributions regarding this theme. The Commission based its work on draft texts

revised by the editorial committee at the beginning of 2002 at Speyer, Germany. The Commission discussed the following points:

—a revised chapter on Scriptural foundations;

— a provisional appraisal *^Zwischenbilanz")* of the theme of the apostolic Gospel and the apostolicity of the Church;

— the ordained ministry from the Lutheran point of view and a provisional appraisal *("Zwischenbilanz")* of the theme "Apostolic Succession and the Ordained Ministry";

— Scripture and ecclesial doctrine from the Reformers' point of view; concept of magisterium and an understanding of this concept in Catholic theology from the Council of Trent until the Second Vatican Council;

— the ecclesial ministry of the apostolic doctrine from the Lutheran point of view and the endeavours towards an ecumenical understanding of the theme "Ecclesial Doctrine that remains within the Truth".

At the invitation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran World Federation, the next meeting of the Commission will be held in the United States in 2004. While it would be unrealistic to expect a fundamental consensus on the issue of apostolic ministry by its conclusion (not before 2005), a most positive outcome for the continuation of the dialogue — from the theological point of view — will consist of clearly identifying in the Final Report of the Commission the points of divergence and convergence in the understanding of the concept of apostolicity and ecclesial ministry.

Both the meeting of the Commission in 2002 in Lutherstadt Wittenberg and the Plenary Assemly of the Lutheran World Federation in 2003 in Winnipeg adopted the same theme "For *the Healing of the World".* Great attention has been placed in ecumenical consultations on the "Follow-Up Program" of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of the Faith.

Staff members of the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity meet regularly for consultation, at least once a year, alternating between Geneva and Rome. The themes discussed at these meetings include issues of current interest, planning for the Lutheran-Catholic International Dialogue Commission, and ecumenical relations in general.

Another expression of the excellent relations between Lutherans and Catholics is represented by the exchange of visits between senior representatives of the two Churches.

3. Regional dialogues

A Nordic Lutheran-Catholic dialogue involving Sweden and Finland was held for the first time in 2002. A Commission of experts, co-presided by H.E. Monsignor William Kenney, Auxiliary Bishop of Stockholm, for the Catholic side, and Bishop Eero Huovinen of Helsinki for the Lutheran, discussed the following issues: justification in the life of the Church from an historical, pastoral and hermeneutic point of view; an overview of contacts between Lutherans and Catholics in Sweden and in the Lutheran-Catholic International Dialogue Commission; role of the Church for the justification of humanity through God; continuity in liturgy, spirituality, sacramental life, ecclesial doctrine, magisterium, community of saints, religious communities, diakonia and ecumenical relations. This new dialogue will continue in the future on a twice yearly basis.

Other regional dialogues, for example in the United States (on the theme of Church as salvific community: its structure and its ministers) and in Germany (on the theme of ecclesial community from the Protestant and Catholic perspectives; ecumenical efforts to attain a common understanding of the apostolic succession; episkopé in the service of the apostolicity of the Church; exegetical research on the apostolate and apostolocity) make a contribution to furthering development in dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans.

One of the documents published in 2000 by the Bilateral Working Group of the German Episcopal Conference and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany, entitled "Communio Sanctorum" has been recognised by Catholics as a fundamental contribution to the promotion of ecumenism on the following issues: "Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture", "Concept and number of sacraments", "Relationship between the priesthood of all the faithful and the ecclesial ministry", "Petrine ministry", "Mariology", and other ecclesial themes such as "interaction of various elements of witnesses (scripture, tradition, magisterium, *sensus fidelium)* in the search for and proclamation of the Gospel" and "the community of saints beyond death". The document has great importance also outside Germany (and has been translated into Italian and English), as from the ecumenical point of view it deals with, for the first time successfully, fundamental questions relating to the concept of Church and faith.

It becomes clear that after attaining a differentiated consensus on the issue of justification, the central theme of all dialogues now focuses on the concept of Church and ecclesial ministry.

4. Examples of ecumenical spirituality

For Lutheran Christians of Scandinavia, the commemoration of saints such as Bridget, Henrik and Olav has a great importance and represents a precious opportunity for ecumenical encounter through recalling the examples of these witnesses to the faith. The saints could be a model for unity for Lutherans and Catholics and an ideal example of healthy ecumenism.

Each year on the feast of Saint Henrik, the patron saint of Finland, a Finnish ecumenical delegation is received by the Holy Father and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The

highlight of this encounter is the shared liturgy celebrated on 19 January in the Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.

In 2002 Pope John Paul II commemorated the 700th anniversary of birth of Saint Bridget of Sweden with an ecumenical vespers service, reaffirming an appeal to dialogue among divided Christians. In the presence of many Lutheran bishops and representatives of the Orthodox churches in the Basilica of Saint Peter, the Holy Father referred to the saint, founder of the religious order, mother and mystic, as a "witness of ecumenism", "an example of a holy woman" who dedicated "her whole life to the promotion of the unity of faith and the Church". His Eminence Cardinal Kasper, as President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, gave the homily at the Lutheran liturgy for the anniversary of Saint Bridget in 2003 celebrated in Vadstena, Sweden, in the presence of bishops, the royal couple and representatives of various Scandinavian countries.

A delegation of deans of the Lutheran diocese of Nidaros/Trondheim (Norway), led by the Lutheran bishop of Nidaros/Trondheim, Finn Wagle, visited Rome in 2002 on the occasion of the Feast of Saint Olav, patron saint of Norway. The celebration took place at the altar of Saint Olav in the church of San Carlo al Corso. In 2003 in Norway, Cardinal Kasper participated in and gave the homily at the ecumenical liturgy on the occasion of the 850th anniversary of the foundation of the episcopal see of Nidaros/Trondheim, which was attended by Lutheran and Catholic bishops of Scandinavia.

Shortly after the conclusion of the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* — during which Christians of the East and West gave witness in Rome, together with the Holy Father, to their common faith in the one Lord through prayer, ecumenical celebrations and various other encounters — on 1 February 2003 in the Basilica of San Bartolomeo allTsola Tiberina a moving ecumenical celebration was organised by the Comunita` di Sant'Egidio to commemorate the Lutheran pastor Paul Schneider, who was killed in the Buchenwald concentration camp. Cardinal Walter Kasper, Dr Ishmael Noko (Secretary General of the Lutheran World Federation), Nikolaus Schneider (President of the Church of Renania) and other ecumenical representatives of Roman parishes attended the ceremony. The witness borne by Paul Schneider to the Risen Christ, who defeated sin and death, together with that of the many other witnesses to the faith, continues to unite Lutherans and Catholics today. As the Holy Father has stated, this witness "speaks louder than the things which divide us" (Apostolic Letter, *Tertio millennio adveniente,* 1994, n.37). In the Encyclical on ecumenism *Ut unum sint* (1995, n.84) John Paul II spoke of a community in the witness to the faith that goes beyond the institutional boundaries of the various Churches and referred to the saints as our common heritage. Thus we can speak of the saints as not only Catholic, but also Evangelical or Protestant. The witnesses to the faith make the Church credible, convincing and engaging. The blood of witness to the faith such as Paul Schneider is the seed of the unity of Christians. The ecumenical movements traces one of its roots back to the collective persecution of Christians of the various confessions. The memory of so many witnesses cannot but bear ecumenical fruits. Indeed, if the blood of martyrs is the seed of new Christians (Tertullian), then we can be sure that the blood shed by the many witnesses of the divided Churches will become the seed of the unity of these same Churches. The ecumenical movement itself is like the grain of wheat, that only by falling into the earth can bear much fruit (cf. *Jn* 12,24).

A further expression of the more extensive level of ecumenical spirituality is represented by the participation of the Secretary General of the Lutheran World Federation, Ishmael Noko, and the Lutheran Bishop in Palestine, Jordan and Israel, Munib A. Younan, in the Day of Prayer for Peace celebrated in Assisi on 24 January 2002.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the theological point of view, the dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans has undergone significant developments after its first fundamental rapprochement, followed by a normalisation of relations and, in more recent times, an important consensus on the fundamental questions on the doctrine of justification relative to the issues concerning an understanding of the concept of Church and ecclesial ministry. On the one hand, Lutherans continue to nurture fresh aspirations concerning "eucharistic sharing" in relation to the Catholic Church. On the other hand, the question of ecclesial ministry requires further clarification. There are divergent points of view within the Lutheran World Federation that find expression, for example, at the level of ecclesiology and ministerial theology, in ecumenical agreements such as Leuenberg and Porvoo.

Ecumenism continues to develop at the spiritual level, the dimension of which should be deepened. A "purification of memory" will be necessary in order to attain this — as the Holy Father has stated — whereby the diverse Churches and Ecclesial Communities will need to make amends for a past burdened by many failures. It is likewise important to moderate the still existing prejudices. In spiritual ecumenism, each community seeks above all to understand the language and the ecclesial life of the other and to share the richness of its own tradition. Such an ecumenism of life has a significant impact in relation to "wild ecumenical developments", uncontrolled initiatives, or pastoral and theological undertakings that are quite contrary to norms, rising from attitudes that are devoid of serious reflection and understanding of reality. Such an ecumenism must also react againt false interpretations and ecumenical apathy. Ecumenism finds its authentic and profound underlying motive in the effort to live the common faith in Christ, our Lord, in increasing unity and together with our ecumenical partners.

REFORMED - CATHOLIC RELATIONS

For relations with Reformed Churches, the Pontifical Council works primarily with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, based in Geneva. An alliance of about 220 churches throughout the world, WARC includes a diversity of member churches of presbyterian, and congregational forms of government, and some union churches, such as the Church of South India which is the result of a union of very different Christian traditions, including Anglican, Methodist and Congregational, and the Church of North India, whose several parent bodies included Anglican as well as Baptist churches. Ongoing relations with WARC include invitations to one another to important events in their respective communities. Thus WARC invites the PCPCU to send a fraternal delegate to its annual Executive committee meeting and to its General Council (held every seven years, the next will be in Accra, Ghana). In turn invitations have been extended by the PCPCU to WARC over the years. For example, the General Secretary of WARC, Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi accepted the invitation to take part in the World Day of Prayer for Peace, January 24, 2002, in Assisi, organized at the initiative of Pope John Paul II.

There have been other types of invitations this past year. In 2002 the task force on Minorities of the European Section of WARC invited an official of the PCPCU to address its third consultation on the theme "Dialogue or Confrontation. Exploring Ways for Minority Churches and Majority Churches to work together and to Relate to the State". Another invitation has come to an official of the PCPCU, this time to the next meeting (Nov.28-Dec.l, 2003) of the series of "Prague Conferences" organized by WARC, the Lutheran World Federation, and the Mennonite World Conference. These conferences, held periodically since 1986, have explored the question of whether the "classical reformation" churches (Lutheran and Reformed), the pre-reformation communities (Waldensians, and followers of John Hus) and the "radical reformation" communities (Mennonites, Quakers, Brethren) are all part of a Common Reformation. The theme of the next meeting will concern the role of reform and prophecy in the Church. Events such as these are also important in building relations between Reformed and Catholics.

THE REFORMED CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

The third phase of International Dialogue between WARC and the Catholic Church began in 1998. Reports of the first (1970-1977) and second (1984-1990) phases had been published previously.

The third phase is working under the theme "the Church as Community of common witness to the Kingdom of God" and has begun to work on its report. This phase has continued to explore two paths opened up in the report of the second phase *(Towards a Common Understanding of the Church,* (TCUC 1990), those of ecclesiology and common witness. This third phase is exploring the biblical notion of the Kingdom of God, to see if this theme can shed light that would be helpful in dealing on the one hand with ecclesiological differences between Reformed and Catholics, and on the other hand whether it could be helpful in supporting efforts of common witness between the two. Over the course of this phase, the dialogue has explored the notion of the kingdom of God in the New Testament, how it has been used in the history and tradition of theology, especially from the time of the 16th century reformation as well as in contemporary theology. I will give one example of each of these two areas to illustrate how this notion of the kingdom of God is helpful in our Reformed Catholic dialogue.

A particular aspect of ecclesiology studied has been that of the convergence claimed in the 1990 TCUC report, between the Reformed notion of the Church as *Creatura Verbi* and a Catholic view of the Church as *Sacramentum Gratiae.* TCUC, after long discussion of these two visions of the Church (N°s 95-111) spoke not of opposition between them, but of convergence in this way: The two conceptions "The creation of the Word" and "sacrament of grace", can in fact be seen as expressing the same instrumental reality under different aspects as complementary to each other or as two sides of the same coin. They can also become the poles of a creative tension between our churches" (TCUC, 113). If this convergence could be verified and deepened this would build some common ground between Reformed and Catholics on the understanding of the Church, a notion over which they have been strongly divided.

The exploration of the notion of the Kingdom of God has helped the dialogue to affirm and build on this convergence. The present draft of the emerging report, illustrating discussion on this point, indicates that both expressions are necessary components of the way in which the church should serve the establishment of the kingdom of God in the world. Concerning *Creatura Verbi,* since the church's mission is to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God as reflected in scripture, this is an event of the Word in two senses. First the Community exists because it has heard the Word of God. Jesus who is the Word has proclaimed that the Kingdom is at hand, and the community of disciples that forms are those who, under the influence of grace, have responded in faith. Second by this response of faith not only is a saving grace for those who believe, but transforms them into a people charged with the mission of proclaiming the word of salvation in Christ, and of witnessing by word and deed to the kingdom values which Jesus taught. Thus in its mission as servant to the kingdom, the church shows itself to be a creature of the Word in these two senses.

Concerning the Church as Sacrament of grace, Scripture presents the Kingdom as the effect of God's powerful activity in and beyond history. It is therefore the result of grace and not of human efforts. To the extent that the church is an instrument intended

by God to serve in making known the kingdom by implementing its values, it must then be an instrument of grace. This is what is meant by the expression *sacramentum gratiae.*

Further, in the post-biblical church, the phrases *creatura verbi* and *sacramentum gratia* relate the church both to the Word of God and to the Grace of God, themes of great importance to patristic authors. For example, the disernment of the canon of the scripture, the presence of commentaries or individual books of the bible , the use of scripture in dogmatic treatises and magisterial decisions in the patristic era, are all of significance for an understanding of the church as *Creatura Verbi.* At the same time texts from the patristic era about baptism, the eucharist and other sacraments, especially those preserved in liturgical texts can be seen in relation to an understanding of the church as *Sacramentum Gratiae.*

Thus, exploration of the biblical notion of the Kingdom of God and the patristic literature tends to confirm the convergence and give strong support to the idea that important aspects of common ground are emerging between the Reformed notion of the Church as *Creatura Verbi* and the Catholic notion of the Church as *Sacramentum gratiae.* A "Sacramental" church without the word of God is unimaginable, and a church which is truly a creation of the Word will celebrate the Word liturgically and sacramentally.

The second example concerns common witness. To explore the notion of common witness, the methodology of case studies has been used. In the first meeting a case study was presented from a Catholic perspective, concerning Reformed-Catholic relations in Canada showing where common witness has been possible and also some of the obstacles to common witness. In later meetings case studies on other contexts were provided. In 2001, the dialogue asked for case studies on the "Church as an Instrument of the Kingdom of God in the South African context", one from a Catholic perspective, the other from a Reformed perspective; and in 2002, case studies from each side concerning the "Church and an Instrument of the Kingdom of God in Northern Ireland".

One purpose of these case studies was to explore the life of Christians and their struggles to live the values of the Kingdom of God in particular local contexts. This has been useful. But there are two areas of tensions between Catholics and Reformed on the question of contextuality. One, to put it sharply, is the question of the relative importance of contextual vis à vis universal or classical theology. For some of the Reformed participants, contextual theology standing on its own, seemed to be the priority. Theological doctrine developed previously on the "universal" or classical level tended to be not as important for them. On this question there were significant tensions between the Reformed themselves. Another question that emerged can be expressed as a tension between "doctrine and experience". Some of the Reformed participants asserted that "Christian experience" here and now is more important than "Christian doctrine" which may have originated in the past. This is a false dichotony since both are important. Nonetheless this juxtaposition of experience and doctrine was the subject of discussion initiated on the Reformed side.

An initial evaluation of the case study approach shows that the case studies have illustrated on the one hand in some important ways, how Christians in local contexts have struggled to live the values of the kingdom of God and to bring decisive witness in confronting moral and ethical problems such as apartheid in South Africa and the forms of violence in Northern Ireland. The case studies have also pointed to the possibilities of common witness, and to the limits of common witness as well, in the situations when Christians are still divided.

But the case studies focusing on particular Contexts have also illustrated the ecclesiological differences between Reformed and Catholics, especially concerning the understanding of the relation between the particular and the universal aspects of the Church. For example in each of the national situations studied, the ecumenical commitment expressed by the Catholic Church was rooted especially in the experience of the universal church at the Second Vatican Council, and to the ecumenical mandate the Council gave, as seen in the *Decree on Ecumenism.* There is a mutual exchange between the local and the universal expressions of the Church. They share strong bonds of communion between them. Each of these expressions of the church brings something to the other. Each expression is somewhat reflected in the other. But in the Reformed churches these strong bonds of communion between local and universal do not exist in the same way. The struggle of the Catholic Church with Apartheid in South Africa, was assisted by the strong stands on Justice and Peace taken at Vatican II which influenced or supported some of the ways in which the local church dealt with the situation. For the Reformed, WARC as representative of the worldwide Reformed family took a strong stand against apartheid which significally influenced its member churches in South Africa. But the bonds of communion between WARC and its member churches are usually not strong. Authority lies in the member churches only, rather than in the Alliance. There are different ways therefore in which local and universal interact in that tradition, as compared with the Catholic Church.

There are many other aspects of ecclesiology being explored in this third phase of the international dialogue besides those mentioned here. Those will be presented in a report when this phase is completed in 2004 or 2005.

METHODIST-CATHOLIC RELATIONS, 2001-2003

While receiving less attention than many bilateral dialogues, relations between the World Methodist Council (which brings together 76 mem-

ber churches with roots in the Methodist tradition) and the Catholic Church continue to grow stronger in various ways. In this Report we will focus on three recent developments in these relations: a process hopefully leading to a Methodist statement of adherance to the agreements reached in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification; an overview of the work currently being undertaken by the International Methodist-Catholic Dialogue Commission; and a brief look at other contacts and developments, notably a Catholic reassessment of John Wesley on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of his birth.

1. Affiliation with the JDDJ

The 1999 signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) was bound to have repercussions for other dialogue partners of both signing parties. At the time of the signing of the JDDJ, the World Methodist Council's Executive Committee adopted a short statement of congratulations and appreciation, which was sent to the signing partners.

The World Methodist Council (WMC) then took the initiative to propose a meeting with representatives of the Catholic Church and the LWF in order to discuss how the JDDJ could have favourable consequences for others. The idea developed into a consultation, hosted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the LWF, which included representatives from the WMC and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

The Consultation was held in Columbus, Ohio, USA, from November 27 to 30, 2001, and focused on theological and procedural issues involved in a possible formal adherance of the Methodist and Reformed ecclesial families to the agreements reached in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. The Columbus consultation built upon the considerable measure of agreement on the doctrine of justification that had already been demonstrated in earlier bilateral dialogues involving the participating partners; these previous dialogues provided encouragement for the exploration of ways in which the JDDJ might be more widely affirmed.

The Methodist representatives at the Columbus meeting included the individuals most directly responsible for the WMC's ecumenical initiatives: Reverend Dr George Freeman (the General Secretary of the WMC), Professor Geoffrey Wainwright (Methodist Co-Chair of the Methodist-Catholic dialogue) and Bishop Dennis Dutton (WMC representative to the World Council of Churches in Geneva). The Methodist delegation, speaking with a unified voice, identified the signing of the JDDJ as a highly significant moment in Church history, and indicated their desire to be a part of any movement forward based on what it has achieved. At the Columbus meeting, a proposal was adopted for a small commission to draw up an initial draft of a text wherein the Methodist understanding of justification and its relationship to the agreements reached in the JDDJ would be theologically explained and substantiated.

After the meeting, a first draft of a Methodist statement was prepared by Professor Wainwright and Methodist Bishop Walter Klaiber, and sent to the PCPCU and LWF for an initial response. The text was clarified in light of those conversations, and a revised text has now been prepared. The Methodist statement is now in the process of being submitted to the member churches of the WMC, and will hopefully culminate in an endorsement of the text by the latter at the WMC Conference of 2006, and an acceptance and welcome of the text by the Catholic Church and the LWF. In its final form such a statement would allow the WMC and its member churches officially to become associated with the Joint Declaration in such a way as to enter the new relationship that had been established between the original partners.

The current draft indicates that Methodists accept the basic consensus stated in the common confessions made in the Joint Declaration (15-17, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37). It proceeds to state Methodist acceptance of the explanations which Lutherans and Catholics give in paragraphs 20-21, 23-24, 26-27, 29-30, 32-33, and 35-36 concerning their respective positions on key aspects of the doctrine of justification, noting that these diverse emphases are not considered sufficient cause for division between either party and Methodists. The largest section of the text presents distinctive Methodist emphases on the doctrine of justification and related doctrines. The text concludes by a formal statement of fundamental doctrinal agreement with the teaching expressed in the JDDJ by the WMC and its member churches, on the terms that the text makes clear. The process has significant implications not only for Methodist-Catholic relations, but also as an exploration of the means by which a bilateral agreement could lend itself to a formal acceptance by new dialogue partners.

2. The International Methodist-Catholic Dialogue Commission

2002 marked the 35th anniversary of the formation of the International Methodist-Catholic Dialogue Commission, and the beginning of a new and promising round of dialogue. The Commission is the principal means of fostering closer relations between the Catholic Church and the WMC. The dialogue works in 5-year cycles, each culminating in a report which is subsequently presented to the Catholic Church and the WMC. The most recent reports have each explored foundational ecclesiological issues. They have treated the Apostolic Tradition (1991), Divine Revelation (The Word of Life, 1996) and teaching authority in the Church (Speaking The Truth In Love, 2001), and reflect a hopeful trajectory, showing convergence that could lead to a deepening of the partial communion already uniting us, and to a corresponding degree of communion in mission.

While significant differences between Methodists and Catholics remain, and the reports thus far pro-

duced carry only the authority of the Commission members themselves, the Commission is reaping the benefits of its years of experience. It is marked by the maturity and stability of dialogue partners who have grown in respect and in friendship, and who can increasingly undertake potentially awkward or divisive topics with ease and in a spirit of peace. This constructive working relationship will be of great assistance as the Commission now undertakes a topic which has never been addressed quite so directly by a bilateral dialogue: a study of how the dialogue partners interpret each other ecclesiologically. What place do Methodists claim for themselves in the Church, and what place do they see Catholics as having? How might Catholics locate Methodism ecclesiologically? This would include an exploration of how we ecclesiologically interpret both our shared and separate histories, and our present relationship.

The foundations for the present research have been laid by the Commission's previous work, especially the reports cited above. The present subject also grows out of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith's recent text Dominus Iesus and the WMC's response to it. In introducing the subject of investigation for this round of dialogue, Catholic Co-Chair Bishop Michael Putney, of Townsville, Australia, suggested that Dominus Iesus "brought into sharp relief a number of questions for all in dialogue with the Catholic Church". The text expounded the Second Vatican Council's teaching that the one Church of Christ 'subsists' in the Catholic Church; and it repeated the Council's conviction that many elements of that one Church of Christ are also found outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church.

Bishop Putney proceeded to note that Methodists speak of the Church somewhat differently and recognise the presence of the Church of Jesus Christ according to criteria not identical to those of Catholics. When the WMC issued a response to Dominus Iesus, it welcomed the text's "reaffirmation of Jesus Christ as the one Savior of the world", and proceeded to recognise the importance of ecclesiological self-understanding for our future relations: "In its continuing dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, the World Methodist Council looks forward to further exploration on the question of how each partner can come to a fuller recognition of the churchly character of the other".

Bishop Putney noted that this was precisely the goal motivating the current round of dialogue being undertaken. It will require a rigorous investigation into both Catholic and Methodist definitions of what essentially constitutes the Church of Jesus Christ, each of the dialogue partners identifying the relative weighting and configurations of these constitutive elements. It will then proceed to explore the degree to which each of the dialogue partners are prepared to say that the one Church of Christ is present in the other, identifying both the elements of Church that can be jointly affirmed, and those elements which Catholics and Methodists find less than fully present in the other. Methodist Co-Chair, Professor Wainwright, noted his hope that the Commission's work might "consolidate and take further the convergent vision of ecclesial reality that has been developing between us over four decades of dialogue".

A brief reference to three aspects of the Commission's present work will serve to communicate something of the scope of the joint investigation. Firstly, the Commission's work began with an historical survey of past assessments of each other, with special attention given to key defining moments in our histories. The task involved a strong element of what Pope John Paul II has frequently referred to as the purification of memory (n.b. Novo Millennio Ineunte, n.6), as the survey contained numerous instances where Catholics and Methodists had depicted each other in ways that were both unkind and inaccurate. Secondly, since Methodism grew out of the Anglican tradition, there is no history of formal separation between Catholics and Methodists; therefore another of the interesting challenges which the dialogue commission will face concerns the interpretation which each side gives to the English Reformation, and to the subsequent separation of Methodism from the Church of England. Can these interpretations, especially pertaining to the origins of Methodism, find common ground in pointing both to the dangers and the potentials of reform movements in the Church? Finally, the Commission's findings in terms of the degree of ecclesial recognition which is reciprocally possible between Catholics and Methodists will have practical implications for the possibility and scope of engaging in joint mission and common witness. The Commission's work will conclude by proposing some practical proposals for living our partial communion, proposals reflective of the degree of shared ecclesiological foundations being posited.

3. Other contacts or recent developments

While the international theological dialogue and the work on a possible Methodist adherance to the JDDJ have been the principle joint undertakings of the WMC and the Catholic Church, there are other contacts on an international level. For example, both the General Secretary of the World Methodist Council, Rev Dr George Freeman, and the WMC President, Bishop Sunday Mbang, took part in the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, Jan. 24, 2002. Dr Freeman noted that "it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for a non-Catholic".

In turn, on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the birth of John Wesley, in June of 2003, Cardinal Kasper was invited to preach at local Methodist Church in Rome. Cardinal Kasper used the opportunity to offer a positive assessment of various aspects of the ministry and leadership of John Wesley, noting that at least in part, Catholics can now look to John Wesley through eyes educated by our dialogue, and by our experience of Methodists today. Address-

ing the congregation of Methodists, and indirectly addressing also our Methodist dialogue partners, he noted that just as Methodists "continue to turn to the ministry of John Wesley for inspiration and guidance, we can look to see and find in him the evangelical zeal, the pursuit of holiness, the concern for the poor, the virtues and goodness which we have come to know and respect in you". Cardinal Kasper's reflections were very well received both by Methodists in Rome and by our dialogue partners abroad.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CATHOLIC DIALOGUE 2001-2003

1. INTRODUCTION

This report on the dialogue with Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) covers the period from 2001 to 2003. It first gives a brief survey of the dialogue and then outlines the significant points in the joint statement of the third phase. In addition, the report indicates some proposed topics for future discussion and concludes with a number of observations regarding the status of the dialogue. This dialogue is co-chaired on the Catholic side by the Archbishop of Indianapolis, The Most Reverend Daniel M. Buechlein, OSB, and on Disciples side by the Reverend Dr. William Tabbernee, President, Phillips Theological Seminary, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

2. A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE DIALOGUE

The first phase (1977-1981) on the theme *Apostolicity and Catholicity in the Visible Unity of the Church* focused attention on common rootedness in baptism, the importance of spiritual ecumenism, the nature of unity and the relation between faith and tradition.[1] Continuing the same theme on the unity of the Church, the second phase (1983-1992) studied the theme: *The Church as Communion in Christ.*[2] [3] The third phase of the dialogue started in 1993 by focusing on a topic identified in the second phase for future discussion, namely "the rule of faith *fregula fidei)* expressed in the teaching of the Church down the ages". The Commission concluded this phase in May 2002 with an agreed statement entitled *"Receiving and Handing on the Faith: The Mission and Responsibility of the Church"}* The statement begins by confirming the aim that the two dialogue partners agreed upon in 1977, namely, the visible unity of the one Church of God. Cardinal Avery Dulles in a comment on the joint statement views the dialogue with satisfaction, particularly for the convergence achieved.[4] [4]

3. SIGNIFICANT POINTS IN THE THIRD PHASE

a) There are several significant points to be noted in the joint statement. While the statement shows remarkable general convergence on the mystery of the Triune God, the incarnation, the apostolic faith, Scripture, the early councils, the Creeds, Word and Sacrament, Baptism and Eucharist and the primacy of evangelization, nevertheless it also reveals a number of areas in which the two partners differ. For example the agreement on the normative nature of the apostolic faith for all generations (N. 3.2), Scripture and councils centres on the importance of Scripture and Tradition in the teaching authority of the Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit down the ages.

b) It is equally significant that Catholics and Disciples "agree in recognizing the theological definitions of the first seven councils as part of the common history of the Church" (N. 3.12). Moreover Disciples confirm that they "never held the theological positions condemned by the early ecumenical councils. Disciples hold that the conciliar christological and Trinitarian definitions belong to the providential *oikonomia* (ordering) by which the Church of God is kept within the path of the Gospel and preserved from grave distortions in its confession of Christ Jesus, the Savoir. To the extent that they have accepted the decisions of those councils, Disciples have acknowledged their authority" (N. 3.15). The significance of the above statement lies in the fact that it prepares the way for further discussion on such topics as Mary, which by implication Disciples seem to accept without saying so. In other words, more explicit discussion on early councils of the Church would be necessary.

c) Another significant point concerns the different positions held by Disciples and Catholics regarding freedom of conscience and the teaching authority of the Church. For Catholics "the discernment of the authentic meaning of the revealed Word is expressed especially in the charism of the ordained ministry" (N. 4.10) whose unity is found in the communion of the Bishop in union with the Bishop of Rome. For Disciples, "the teaching of the Church is in the hands of ministers of local congregations and the whole community" (N. 4.13), but ecclesial oversight (episcope) ultimately rests with the General Assembly or General Conference (consisting of ordained and non-ordained members of the Church). The decisions of such gatherings are not binding on the conscience of individual members. At the centre of the difference between the two partners on this question is the fact that while Catholic authority readily provides guid-

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[1] Cf. *Apostolicity and Catholicity* in *Information Service,* 1982 (II-III), pp. 65-73.

[2] Cf. *The Church as Communion in* Christ in *Information Service,* No. 84, 1993 (III-IV), pp. 162-169.

[3] Cf. *Receiving and Handing on the Faith: Mission and Responsibility of the Church* in *Information Service,* No. Ill, 2002/IV, pp. 241-251.

[4] *Ibid.,* pp. 252-255.

ance to its faithful by defining certain important teaching, Disciples are reluctant to provide official teaching on a wide range of matters (cf. 4.13). This divergence of pastoral practice would warrant further discussion in the future.

4. WHERE ARE WE AND WHERE DO WE GO IN THIS DIALOGUE?

1. *Where are we?*

Over 25 years the dialogue between the Catholic Church and Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) has proceeded carefully in a theologically responsible manner. In its three agreed statements so far, the dialogue continues to pursue its goal agreed on in 1977, "to develop the relation between the Disciples Churches and the Roman Catholic Church that the unity willed by Christ may be attained and given visible expression". The commission has consistently kept this goal in mind, not only in the dialogue of truth but also in the dialogue of life and worship on the occasion of each meeting. Members of the commission have each year attended each other's Sunday worship in due respect of each other's discipline. These have been moments of deepening understanding of each other's worship traditions as well as making the dialogue known locally.

2. *What Issues have been discussed so far?*

In the first phase, the agreed statement managed to establish certain common fundamental affirmations on the unity the two partners seek. In the agreed statement the commission accepted as a principle of ecumenism that there can be only one Church of God *(unica Ecclesia)* and that this Church already exists. Furthermore the statement said that the two partners saw themselves "as having a communion in via" and they now had "the task of giving expression to the communion in via" *(Apostolicity and Catholicity,* 11). These outlines have been very important establishing a fundamental basis for a relationship of "a real though incomplete communion" between the two partners.

The agreed statement of the second phase on *The Church as Communion in Christ* helped the two partners speak about their differences in a more explicit manner, while at the same time managed to achieve a general concept of the Church. The commission acknowledged that while on the one hand there were different conceptions of the Church, on the other hand there was a convergent vision of the Church as communion in Christ, on the basis of Scripture and Tradition.

The third phase — on receiving and handing on the faith: mission and responsibility of the Church — seems to have taken the dialogue a step further in picking up themes from the previous two phases: the goal of dialogue, the one Church of God, faith and tradition, Word and Sacrament, canons of Scripture, councils of the Church, and mission of the Church in relation to Christ. In taking up these themes, the commission tried to identify together the authentic means of receiving and handing on the faith in every generation.

3. *What are the major points of agreement?*

During the three phases, one finds a number of agreements on the goal of unity and the fact that there "can be only one Church of God *(unica Ecclesia)* and that this Church already exists" *(Apostolicity and Catholicity,* 56). The second phase affirms that, "we become convinced that the Spirit of God has already brought us into Christ and continues to move us towards full visible unity" *(The Church as Communion,* 19). In view of this goal, the commission has affirmed that "the Church is a communion" and has gone on to claim that it had "come to a very important agreement concerning the nature and mission of the Church" *(The Church as Communion, Al),*

The significant points of agreement in the third phase concern the mystery of the Triune God, the incarnation and the abiding efficacy of Christ's work through the Holy Spirit. Other points touch on the apostolic faith as normative through the ages, Scripture, councils of the Church and creeds as authentic instruments of communicating the faith; Sacraments as integral part of the life and nature of the Church; Sacraments as efficacious instruments of God's grace; and the primacy of evangelization as an essential task of the Church.

4. *Points of further discussion*

- While the goal of the unity which the two partners seek in this dialogue seems to be clear, the means of achieving it seem to elude the commission. Part of the reason appears to be the fact that it has taken a long time to lay the cards on the table. In a certain sense *Dominus lesus,* to which Disciples responded quite favourably and recognized the hard issues, offers the key for further discussion. In his evaluation of the third phase, Cardinal Avery Dulles calls attention "to some remaining areas where the agreement is incomplete".[5] All the details of what the Catholic Church understands by the Church are included in what remains so far to be discussed.

5. LOOKING AHEAD

1. Where is the dialogue going? The dialogue needs first of all to be more deliberate in its focus on the themes listed above, all of which take an aspect of the Church as mystery and instrument of salvation in Christ. Moreover, the dialogue needs to deepen the convergence vision on the Church as communion in Christ by going from vision to actual explication of what that vision is about concretely. Thus the ecclesi-

[5] AVERY DULLES, "Receiving and Handing on the Faith", in *Information Service,* No. Ill, 2002/IV, p. 253.

ology of communion will continue to be the focal point in the coming years. The commission would need to be aware that " communion ecclesiology is a term which can mean several different things. It is used in quite different ways in the eucharistic ecclesiology of the Orthodox churches, in the Anglican interpretation of communion, in the Congregationalist model of unity, and in the ideas about conciliar unity held by the World Council of Churches".[6] As the Holy Father has often affirmed, "the goal is nothing less than fullness of communion in visible organic unity. The ecumenical way cannot be one of reduction. It is rather a journey of growth into the fullness of Christ, the fullness of unity" (Pope John Paul II, Address in the Catholic Cathedral in Christchurch, New Zealand, *[Information Service,* No. 62, 1986/IV, p. 189]). In this context it would be helpful as the dialogue starts the fourth phase in 2004 to give full attention to certain aspects of *Dominus Iesus,* which continue to be a challenge in bringing ecumenical dialogue to a deeper spiritual level of communion. For unless a spiritual conversion of heart and mind takes hold of dialogue partners it becomes difficult to enter into any authentic dialogue (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio, 7).*

2. Phase four of the dialogue. From 20-21 May 2003, a planning sub-commission of the international commission consisting of four members from each side met in Indianapolis to plan and shape the theme and content for the fourth phase of the dialogue. The sub-committee agreed that the general theme will be *"The presence of Christ in the Church, with special reference to the Eucharist".*[7] It also produced an outline of the programme for the years 2004-2009.

The first session of the fourth phase is planned to take place probably in Venice, Italy, from 5-12 December 2004. The session will aim first of all to give an introductory background to the dialogue for the new members of the commission. Secondly, the commission will listen to a paper on the general question of "why the presence of Christ is so important for all Christians" as a *starting* point. This will be followed by two responses, one from each side, before opening the floor for discussion. The initial session will provide an opportunity to further clarify the theme with help from biblical and patristic sources.

The commission hopes to hold the second session from 4-11 December 2005, possibly in the United States. The session is planned to deal with two main topics. The first topic will be on "The presence of Christ in the Church: the Church as the visible form of God's grace" (cf. *Apostolicity and Catholicity,* N. 55), with particular attention to sacramentality, baptism and Eucharist. The second topic will focus on "The presence of Christ in the Church: the Church's visible shape in history (cf. *Apostolicity and Catholicity,* N. 53), with particular attention to the community of faith, the ministers of the Eucharist, and the unity of the Church in time and space. The discussion of both papers will aim to identify points of agreement and points for further work.

RELATIONS WITH THE PENTECOSTALS

1. DESCRIPTION

What gives rise to Pentecostalism in particular and characterises "pentecostality" in general is a "fundamental, constitutive and unique" experience called *"Baptism in the Spirit".* Even if long lasting, its effects are not necessarily definitive. It was this spiritual experience that led to the emergence of Pentecostalism, not a theological and/or dogmatic *novum.*

The first people who received this "new outpouring of the Spirit" experienced a lack of understanding, refusal, persecution, condemnation and expulsion on the part of the Christian communities to which they belonged, due to the very peculiar manifestations of this outpouring. The isolation from the outside world and the inner cohesion of these new groups led to the development of independent communities, each with its own ecclesial structure (episcopal, congregational, and assembly structures) and its own characteristics according to the cultural and ecclesial background of its leader. What, at the beginning, was just a movement grew into, without realising it and — according to some- without even wanting it, new Christian communities that developed into Church communities, although still insisting on their character as a movement. The communities linked to this "first wave" belong to the *classical Pentecostalism.*

Over the centuries, the Pentecostal experience has not only given rise to new Church communities. On the one hand, it has developed within the existing Churches and Church Communions — the so-called *confessional Pentecostalism* ("second wave") — and, on the other, has taken on new forms and features different from the original. For the latter we speak of *non confessional/ non denominational Pentecostalism* or *neo-Pentecostalism* ("third wave").

Pentecostalism and the current pentecostalization of Christianity have significant theological and ecclesial consequences for the unity of the Church, which cannot be overlooked. The classical Pentecostals, the Charismatics and the neo-Pentecostals clearly state that "there is a real, visible and full *unity in the Spirit* among them".

2. INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC/PENTECOSTAL DIALOGUE

A. *General Features*

The dialogue started in 1972 with a group of leaders and communities of *Classical Pentecostals.* Its goal is not visible or structural unity, but the "promotion of mutual respect and understanding between Catholics and Pentecostals". Thus, the dialogue aims

[6] Cardinal WALTER KASPER, "Church and Theology" in Chapter III, *Communion of the Churches, Eucharist and Episcopate,* 1992, p. 159.

[7] Cf. *Receiving and Handing on the Faith* op. cit., 250.

at encouraging a better knowledge of the different confessional expressions, pointing to the convergences and divergences, and highlighting the fields requiring further discussion. Four documents have been published so far: *Final Report* 1972-1976; *Final Report* 1977-1982; *Perspectives on Koinonia* (1984-1989); *Evangelization, Proselytism and Common Witness* (1990-1997).

B. *Fifth Phase*

After reaching a certain degree of understanding about the Church as *koinonia* (third phase) and comparing the legitimate ways of carrying out mission (fourth phase), the dialogue studied the following topics from a *patristic and biblical* perspective: *Baptism in the Spirit and Christian Initiation* (1998); *Faith and Christian Initiation (*1999); *Conversion and Christian Initiation* (2000); *Christian Experience in the Community* (2001); *Christian Discipleship and Formation* (2002). These topics are fundamental for both communities. The real novelty of this fifth phase is the attempt to get more familiar with the patristic perspectives.

One of the principles at the basis of this series of conversations is the conviction that the way in which each Christian community assumes the heritage of the past affects its capacity of discerning the possible convergences of the future. Catholics and Pentecostals have a different way of understanding and living the Tradition. The dialogue members underlined both continuity and discontinuity in the study of the biblical and post-biblical thought on the chosen topics of discussion. The process is not simple. Besides the difficulties due to the little familiarity with the patristic writings, there are those created by discussions around specific themes, which remain open both within the Catholic Church and among Pentecostal communities (especially concerning the *Baptism in the Spirit and Christian Initiation).* Explaining the continuity from the biblical period to the post-biblical one could help to overcome an *extreme restorationism* which affirms that there is a "vacuum of the Spirit" in the Church, although not among Christians, from the apostolic time to the appearance of Pentecostalism (20th century).

There are also deep discrepancies concerning the intrinsic value and the authority that patristic writings have on the life of the Church. Pentecostals could admit that "the Holy Spirit spoke through the Fathers" but would never affirm that there is a difference between the value of the interventions of the Fathers of the Church and "the interventions realised by the Spirit in recent years, through the Pentecostal fathers and mothers". The intrinsic authority of patristic writings depends on the context in which such writings were presented.

The 2003 meeting entirely focussed on the preparation of the first draft of the *Final Report,* on the basis of the papers prepared by some members and by the *Drafting Committee* gathered in February 2003. Another Plenary session is needed to finalise the *Report.*

C. *Tasks and Challenges: Some Proposals*

Thirty years after the beginning of the International Dialogue, which remained unique until 1996, it is fundamental to bear in mind the following realities in order to meet the current challenges:

— The suspicion of some Pentecostal communities towards being membes of the dialogue. In this respect, it would be important to widen the participation basis to the Pentecostal Churches. For that purpose, contacts with their leaders, also through exchanges of visits, are needed.

— The scant geographical representativity. Currently, the absolute majority of the Pentecostal members of the dialogue come from the United States. The fact that the positions of the Pentecostals from the other continents are not expressed has an impact also on the *Final Reports* and their reception.

— The importance of the promotion of the dialogue at the local level. So far, the relations through the international dialogue have been privileged. Recently, continental Pentecostal structures have developed and settled; these are structures with which we should start and promote contacts, encouraging exchanges. Local realities are extremely important, especially since the Pentecostal communities are deeply affected by the context in which they live. There is no organisation representing them at the international level.

— The increasing demand of contacts and the creation of working groups including Pentecostal representatives. It is important to follow closely the developments in this field.

— A group of Latin American Pentecostals is in the process of establishing a *Consejo de Iglesias Pentecostales de América Latina y el Caribe* (planned for 2005).

— During a meeting between Catholics and Latin American Pentecostals (October 2002), attended by an *officiate* of the PCPCU, the importance of establishing, keeping and/or strengthening the relations with the Catholic church in Latin America was repeatedly underlined. A proposal was made for the creation of a permanent Working Group between Catholics and Pentecostals in the continent, co-sponsored by CELAM and by the *Comisión Evangélica Pentecostal Latinoamericana y Carabeña* (CEPLA).

— The demands for information and assistance on behalf of some African bishops, in the light of the challenge represented by the Pentecostal communities for the Catholic church in this continent.

3. CONTACTS WITH CHARISMATICS AND NEO-PENTECOSTALS

Over the last two years contacts were kept with continental bodies such as the *European Charismatic Consultation* (ECC) and the *Comisión Evangélica Pentecostal Latinoamericana y Carabeña* (CEPLA).

An *officiate* of the PCPCU participated in the international congress on "Prayer for healing and Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church" promoted by the Pontifical Council for the Laity together with the *International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services* (ICCRS), with which we have regular contacts. Delegates from different Churches and Church communions participated in this meeting.

As for the *non denominational Pentecostalism,* the participants in the second international meeting organised by the *Centro Pro Unione* were received by this Pontifical Council in May 2003.

MENNONITE - CATHOLIC RELATIONS

Since the last PCPCU Plenary in November, 2001, the international dialogue between the Mennonite World Conference and the Catholic Church, which began in 1998, has continued and is now completing its report. There have also been important bilateral contacts. Just before the regularly scheduled annual meeting of the dialogue on November 28-December 3, 2001, which took place in Assisi, a delegation of Mennonite participants in the dialogue visited Rome. They came to the PCPCU for discussion with Cardinal Kasper, and visited also the Pontifical Councils for Justice and Peace, and for Interreligious Dialogue. The President of the MWC, Dr. Mesach Krisetya, also accepted the invitation of Pope John Paul II and took part in the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, January 24, 2002.

THE DIALOGUE

The report for this five year phase of International dialogue is entitled *Called Together to Be Peacemakers.* After an Introduction which discusses the origin of the dialogue, its purpose, scope and participants, the report is divided into three sections.

The first section, "Considering History Together" discusses the first of the two major tracks followed over five years, that of church history. Attention is given to three aspects of history. The first concerns the rupture between Catholics and Anabaptists (Mennonites) in the 16th Century. While this must be understood in the larger context of the Reformation, Anabaptist positions such as the rejection of infant baptism, and the separation of church and state also led them to reject positions not only of the Catholic Church, but also of other Protestants, Lutherans and Reformed. In the 16th century, Protestants, Anabaptists and Catholics all experienced persecution and martyrdom. Anabaptists' martyrdom at the hands of both Protestants and Catholics is a factor which has marked their identity even to modem times.

A second aspect of historical study focused on the "Constantinian Era". The Mennonite interpretation is that after The Emperor Constantine gave public status of the Church in the fourth century, the Church changed in a way that led it to lose a great deal of its apostolic heritage. Catholics explained, rather, that this new situation gave the church the freedom for its apostolic mission. Also, since Mennonites perceived that the "Constantinian Era" favored the established church and therefore led to violations of religious freedom of others, mutual reflection on the *Declaration on Religious Freedom* of Vatican II helped very much in discussion of these issues.

A third historical aspect was common study of the middle ages. Looking at this period together suggested the need to modify interpretations of the middle ages which each developed previously in a more polemical style. The middle ages were not as consistently Christian as Catholics had envisioned, and not as grossly violent as Mennonites had said. Mennonites can identify with various medieval traditions of spirituality and discipleship as sources for their Christian life. Mennonites and Catholics share the fifteen centuries of common history before the Reformation.

Chapter II "Considering Theology Together" comprises the second track followed over the years, that of our reflections on some basic theological themes. Each side extensively explained its understanding of the nature of the Church, baptism, the Eucharist/ Lord's Supper, and the meaning of a "peace-church". Convergencies which emerged, as well as divergencies between the two, are stated. For example, concerning the nature of the Church, Catholics and Mennonites agree on conceiving the Church as the people of God, the body of Christ, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, images that flow from the Scriptures. They agree that the Church is called into being, sustained and guided by the Triune God. Both affirm the Scriptures as the highest authority for the faith and life of the Church (though for Catholics this is never without relationship to Sacred Tradition as indispensible to the interpretation of the Word of God). On the other hand, Catholics and Mennonites diverge in their understanding of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition/tradition, and the authority of tradition. Catholics speak of Scripture and Tradition as forming one sacred deposit of the Word of God. Mennonites view tradition as the post-Biblical development of Christian doctrine and practice. It is subject to the critique of Scriptures.

Both agree that the Church is a visible community of believers originating in God's call to be a faithful people in time and place. But they differ in regard to the structure of the church. For Catholics the visible Church consists of particular churches united around the bishops in communion with one another and with the Bishop of Rome. For Mennonites, the primary manifestation of the Church is the local congregation and the various grouping of congregations variously named conferences, church bodies and or denominations.

In this second chapter, each explained also their respective views on Sacraments and/or Ordinances (the Mennonite preferred designation), particularly on baptism and the Eucharist/Lord's Supper. Concerning baptism, both Catholics and Mennonites agree that baptism and the Eucharist/Lord's Supper

have their origin in Jesus Christ and in the teachings of Scripture. Both regard these as extraordinary occasions of encounter with God's offer of grace revealed in Jesus Christ. But, while acknowledging sacraments/ordinances as outward signs instituted by Christ, they differ in their understanding of the power of signs. For Mennonites, ordinances as signs point to the salvific work of Christ and invite participation in the life of Christ, but for Catholics, in addition to this, signs also communicate to those who receive them the grace proper to each sacrament. Mennonites and Catholics agree on the necessity of the profession of faith in reference to baptism, but differ in part in their understanding of the role of a personal confession of faith.

Catholics and Mennonites agree on significant aspects of the meaning of the Eucharist or Lord's Supper, for example, that the celebration of the Eucharist is rooted in God's grace made available to all by virtue of the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, and recalls those saving events. Both agree that the risen Christ is present at the celebration of the Eucharist: Christ invites to the meal, he is present in the faithful gathered in his name, he is present in the proclaimed Word. On the other hand they diverge in their understanding of how Christ is present in the Eucharist/Lords' Supper. For Mennonites, the Lord's Supper is primarily a sign or symbol that points to Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection and keeps this memory alive until His return. For Catholics, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole life of the Church, in which Christ's sacrifice, made once and for all on the cross, is made really present under the species of the consecrated bread and wine.

This same second chapter discusses also "our commitment to peace". This issue relates to one of the unique aspects of this international dialogue, since Mennonite churches are listed among the "historic peace churches", and Catholic social teaching presents the Catholic Church as a peace-making Church. The peace witness of both Mennonites and Catholics is rooted in Jesus Christ "who is our peace" (cf. *Eph.* 2:14-16). The Church is called to be a peace church, a peacemaking church because, founded by Christ, it is meant to be a living sign and an effective instrument of peace overcoming every form of enmity and reconciling all peoples in the peace of Christ (cf. *Eph* 4: 1-3).

Both can say that reconciliation, non-violence and active peacemaking belong to the heart of the Gospel. On the other hand, there is some divergence because Mennonites, including nonviolence as an essential component of discipleship, in principle refuse to use violence in any situation. And, in certain situations both Catholics and some Mennonites acknowledge that when all recourse to non-violent means has failed the state or international authorities may use force in defence of the innocent. But according to Mennonites, Christians should not participate in this kind of action. According to Catholics disputes should be resolved peacefully, but Christians may take up arms under legitimate authority in exceptional circumstances for the defence of the innocent.

The title of a third chapter, "Toward a Healing of Memories", reflects the intention of this dialogue from its beginning. The healing of memories involves four aspects which build on both the several tracks which the dialogue has followed, but also on the new contacts between Mennonites and Catholics in recent years. First, *the purification of memories* requires understanding as precisely as possible the difficult historical events which marked our divisions. This requires a rigorous historical-theological judgement which enables us to understand precisely what actually took place during those historical events over which we had conflict. We need to purify our memory of prejudiced readings of those times in order to heal our memories. Second, in light of past conflicts with the other partner, and the continuing conflict over the centuries which have damaged the cause of proclamation of the Gospel, *there is need for a spirit of repentance* and asking God's forgiveness for this and for the harm done to one another. The Catholic delegation, in the spirit of the "Day of Pardon" of the Jubilee Year, the universal prayer of repentance led by Pope John Paul II, expressed a spirit of repentance for the conflicts between Catholics and Mennonites in the sixteenth century, asking forgiveness for any sins that were committed against Mennonites, and God's blessing for a new relationship with Mennonites today. The Mennonite delegation in the spirit of the MWC statement "God Calls us to Christian Unity" (1998) confesses that Mennonites have not done all they could to work toward unity with other brothers and sisters. They regret Anabaptist words and deeds that contributed to fracturing the body of Christ. They confess that they have frequently failed to demonstrate love towards Catholics, have thoughtlessly perpetuated false stereotypes of Catholics and the Catholic Church, and for this they express regret and ask forgiveness.

Third, another way of contributing to a healing of memories is *by ascertaining the degree to which they have continued to share the Christian faith* despite separation. Chapter II "Considering Theology Together" has helped to ascertain the amount of the Apostolic faith held in common. There are still divergencies, but the dialogue has uncovered common perspectives on the church, on baptism and the eucharist/Lord's supper, in shared views on the role of the Church in matters of peace and justice. Fourth, *by improving our relationships today,* finding ways to collaborate and, for example, to act in common on certain causes, we will create new memories for future generations, to replace the bitter memories of the past.

We believe that this first phase of dialogue with the Mennonite World Conference has created a good atmosphere in helping to foster reconciliation between Mennonites and Catholics.

BAPTIST-CATHOLIC RELATIONS

In international contacts with Baptists, the Pontifical Council works with the Baptist World Alliance whose central headquarters is in Falls Church, Vir-

ginia (near Washington D.C.) USA. The BWA includes a worldwide network of Baptist churches and conventions comprising some 40,000,000 baptized persons (When families including unbaptized children are counted this would include about 100,000,000 persons). The largest numbers of Baptists are in North America.

There has been one phase of international dialogue between the BWA and the Catholic Church, 1984-1988 which published a report entitled "Summons to Witness to Christ in Todays World (1990)". Since then, because there has been a certain amount of opposition to the dialogue within the BWA constituency, they have not been able up till this time to co-sponsor another phase of dialogue with us. However, good relationships exist between BWA headquarters and this PCPCU. Over several decades the BWA has invited the PCPCU to send a fraternal delegate to its World Congress which meets every five years. In turn the PCPCU has invited the BWA to take part in various events of the Catholic Church. Thus, Dr Denton Lotz, General Secretary of the BWA accepted the invitation to take part in the "World Day of Prayer for Peace" in Assisi, January 24, 2002. A delegation of leaders of BWA, including its President, visited the PCPCU in 1997.

CONSULTATIONS

Although not able to begin a second phase of official dialogue, the leadership of the BWA has wanted to keep close contact with the PCPCU. To do this, they have suggested to have brief consultations of an informal nature. This began when they requested us to receive a BWA delegation in Rome, December 3-4, 2000. The important discussion that we had at that time was reported in our last PCPCU plenary in November 2001. (cf. *Information Service* 109 (2002) 67-68). It was mutually agreed that this type of consultation continue for the time being. Therefore another meeting was organized in Buenos Aires, Argentina, December 6-7, 2001, at the Baptist Seminary there.

For this meeting both sides organized small delegations from several different countries in Latin America. The Catholic side was led by Walter Cardinal Kasper and included also the Secretary of the PCPCU Bishop Marc Ouellet and two staff, Msgr. John A. Radano and Fr. Juan Usma Gomez. Other Catholics included Bishop Julio Terán Dutari (Equador), Rev. Jorge Scampini, OP, Rev. Carlos Schickendantz, and Rev. Francesco Ballarini (all from Argentina), and Rev. Gabriele Cipriani (Brazil). The BWA was led by its General Secretary Dr Denton Lotz and Rev. Tony Cupit from BWA headquarters, and included Baptist leaders from Argentina and various other countries.

The first day was set aside for presentations by Latin American Baptists and Catholics on the theme of "the theological issues between Baptists and Catholics in Latin America". There were four presentations on each side. I will give examples only of one of each.

Fr. Jorge Scampini o.p. of Buenos Aires presented one of the Catholic papers, in two parts. The first part referred to the report of first phase of International Baptist-Catholic dialogue (mentioned above), and lifted up three issues. First, it is important to continue the study of *Koinonia,* already begun in that report, as a context for approaching the theme of the Church in general and various related issues. For example, the notion of Koinonia can help for working to overcome the divergent understandings between Baptists and Catholics concerning the way the human and divine elements of the Church are articulated, of the differences relating to congregational and episcopal type structures of the church. Second he recommended that discussion take place on baptism, not only to reach a reciprocal recognition of its validity, but also to approach the ecclesial value of baptism, which in turn could lead to discussion on the sacramental dimension of the Church. Thirdly, for the sake of common witness, dialogue on the vairety of ethical issues must take place.

In the second part of his paper he addressed matters concerning Argentina that justify a new phase of dialogue. He spoke of three levels of encounter. At the *fraternal level* a more precise understanding of the other is necessary in order to allow a spiritual process of "reconciliation of on own histories", referring to judgements Catholics and Baptists in Latin America have made on each other. At the *level of theological dialogue* it is necessary to move toward a comparative ecclesiology, going beyond stereotypes that have been dragged along from the past. Finally, if full communion is not yet possible, there should at least be the possibility of a period of *"mutual help".*

On the Baptist side, Professor Josué Fonseca of Chile spoke first about the background that gave some theological aspects to our relationship. He recalled as did Scampini, the first phase of Baptist Catholic dialogue but also the previous report of the Evangelical and Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission 1978-1983, and the recent Baptist/Catholic meeting in Rome in 2000. At the latter, the Baptist presentation of Professor James Leo Garret has outlined some of the issues over which Baptists and Catholics are divided: the Petrine office, Marian dogma, sacraments and others. To these Fonseca added further issues, from a Latin America perspective.

While Baptists can agree with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that the Church is the work of the Holy Trinity, bom in the heart of the Father, instituted by Jesus Christ, and manifested by the Holy Spirit, at the same time Baptists would not agree with the Catholic view that the Church is a society organized in a hierarchical way, which governs everything. For them the Church of Christ is the Church of all believers, and one finds the Church of the Lord where they are present.They can undertake the responsibilities and celebrate the ordinances without the presence of the ministers.

Concerning Mary, for Baptists she represents a model of faith and Christian spirituality which they affirm clearly and seek to imitate. But Baptists resist a mariology which competes with Christology. They

see terms applied to Mary such as "co-redemptrix and intercessor" as a problem. They resist assertions such as the "Immaculate Virgin lives now immerced in the Mystery of the Trinity", which they believe introduces confusion. Fonseca concluded by urging Baptists and Catholics to encounter one another. They need to listen to the spirit who can give correction or light by means of believing persons.

On the second day Cardinl Kasper addressed the group on the theme of "the concept of 'communio' as a framework within which to discuss issues of concern". He illustrated some of the ways the use of the matter of Koinonia could help in responding to some of the difficulties between Catholics and Baptists expressed by Professor Garrett in 2000 and Professor Fonseca at this meeting. The Baptist respondant, Rev. Harold Segura reflected also on the nature of Koinonia from the Baptist perspective. He agreed that this notion of Koinonia is the best approach for interchurch relationships. But he stressed, more than once, that in the New Testament there is no Koinonia without Martyria, without commitment, and suggested that in Latin America, ecumenical encounters should focus on witness to human dignity, the search for justice, the construction of peace and the defense of life. He asked whether Baptists and Catholics could accomplish this, even with the differences on issues such as the Petrine ministry, Marian dogma, sacraments, and the document *Dominus Jesus.* He said that to work towards the unity of the body of Christ is a spiritual task. He admitted that Baptists in Latin America do not always give the best example for seeking unity among Christians. They are known for their denominational exclusivism. He stated that the nature of the communion of saints calls Baptists to leave their denominational confinement and meet with other evangelicals and Catholics.

In fact this spirit of repentance that he conveyed, was reflected during the meeting by persons on both sides, Catholic and Baptist.

A highlight of the meeting was a prayer service held at the Baptist seminary. Both Cardinal Kasper and Dr. Denton Lotz preached. It was open to the public and many persons of different Christian communities came. An ecumenical service at the Baptist seminary was very unusual. So much so that when the press release for the meeting was written the Baptists asked that no mention be made of this ecumenical prayer service lest Baptists elsewhere misunderstand why it was held.

These two days of Baptist-Catholic encounter in Latin America proved very fruitful.

RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

1. The term *evangelical* came into widespread use only in the early eighteenth century, in relation to the so-called *Evangelical Revival* associated with John Wesley and George Whitefield. But the term was applied to the Puritans in England and to the Pietists in Germany (XVII century), and to the Reformers (XVI century). The Evangelical Movement has developed throughout the world, and also diversified. At present, the term *evangelical* refers to a great variety of Christian groups with different traditions. Prof. Beyerhaus, after the *Lausanne Congress* (1975), distinguished six different evangelical groupings: the New Evangelicals; the Strict Fundamentalists; the Confessing Evangelicals; the Pentecostals and the Charismatics; the Radical Evangelicals; and the Ecumenical Evangelicals. Packer affirms that "evangelicalism is *practical* Christianity; *pure* Christianity; *mere* Christianity; *unitive* Christianity and *rational* Christianity". There are six evangelical fundamentals: 1. Supremacy of the Holy Scripture; 2. the Majesty of Jesus Christ; 3. the Lordship of the Holy Spirit; 4. the Necessity of Conversion; 5. the Priority of Evangelism; 6. the Importance of Fellowship. However, J. Stott, an Evangelical English theologian, affirms that "one of the main problems is the uncertain evangelical identity and their debilitating evangelical disunity".

2. The WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE is a global network of 120 national/regional evangelical church alliances, 104 organizational ministries and 6 specialized ministries serving the worldwide church through WEA. In a spirit of "servanthood" to national and regional Evangelical Alliances, WEA aims at fostering Christian unity and providing a worldwide identity, voice and platform to Evangelical churches and Christians. Seeking empowerment by the Holy Spirit, they want to extend the Kingdom of God to all nations by proclaiming the Gospel and by bringing about a Christ-centered transformation of society. WEA claims to represent 150 million Evangelical Christians out of 200 million. The WEA *Statement of Faith* is a condition to become members.

3. A series of specific events led to the present WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE/CATHOLIC CHURCH CONSULTATION. The presence of two Catholics as observers during the General Assembly of WEA (then WEF) in 1980 stirred a heated debate, after which the *Italian Evangelical Alliance* withdrew its membership and the *Spanish Evangelical Alliance* placed its participation in abeyance. The WEF Theological Commission responded by creating a seventeen member Ecumenical Issues Task Force that produced a statement entitled *Roman Catholicism: A Contemporary Evangelical Perspective.* A private conversation on this book between representatives of both sides took place during the meeting of the general secretaries of *Christian World Communions* (CWC) of 1988. They decided to hold a short meeting to discuss issues raised in the book (1990). It was clear that more time was needed to explore the different questions, and a longer consultation was proposed.

4. No formal dialogue was established between WEA and PCPCU. Instead, a series of Consultations developed becoming increasingly regular over the years, and allowing the participants to identify and discuss the issues, which tend to divide Evangelicals

and Catholics, namely *the nature of the Church as communion* and *the nature and practices of mission and evangelism.* A new methodology was adopted: after the initial reflection on the specific questions of clarification, the group focused on the topic of *Revelation: Scriptures and Tradition* and then studied ecclesiological issues, on which two collaboratively written papers were produced. These papers were later used as the basis for an initial draft of the Final Report which was finalized in 2001-2002.

5. The Report, entitled *Church, Evangelization, and the Bonds of Koinonia,* is a study document produced by the participants in the Consultation. The permission for publication was given by the authorities that appointed the participants, so that the Report could be widely discussed. It is not an authoritative statement of either the Catholic Church or the WEA. The purpose of the Consultation has been to overcome misunderstandings, seek better understanding of each other's Christian life and heritage, and promote better relations between Evangelicals and Catholics.

The Report is divided into two parts. In Part I the participants present the convergences and differences between Catholics and Evangelicals on the Church; Part II is a reflection on evangelization and the related issues of religious freedom, proselytism and common witness in the light of koinonia.

6. The Report *Church Evangelization, and the Bonds of koinonia* begins with a presentation of different biblical perspectives on koinonia. It also points out the Catholic and Evangelical emphases on interpretation of the New Testament, particularly with reference to the concept of *communio sanctorum.*

"Catholics and Evangelicals anticipate perfect communion in the Kingdom to be ushered in with the final coming of Jesus. In the light of this expectation, Catholics and Evangelicals should look to a deeper communion in this world, even if they disagree, between and among themselves, on the means by which this might be achieved, and on the extent to which it can be realized prior to the return of Christ" (9).

7. As for the understanding of the Church and of other Christians, the Report presents the respective Catholic and Evangelical positions on issues such as: Church as sacrament/Church as *creatura verbi;* the criteria used to determine the degrees of communion between Christians: the *elementa Ecclesiae/* the living faith in Jesus Christ; visible/invisible Church (Evangelical concept adopted from Luther's theology) and the Church as *unam realitatem complexam* (LG 8); relation between the local and universal Church: Catholics speak of a reciprocity between the universal and the particular church, but they do not view the universal Church as a federation of local churches (cf. LG 23)/Most Evangelicals agree that the universal Church, not being a visible institution, is concretely expressed in the visible churches in particular times and places (and the translocal bonds they cultivate) and understand the universal Church as being all those who believe and trust in Christ for salvation everywhere and in all ages (33); questions about the Church as a personal/institutional reality (hierarchical communion, ministries/services); different patterns of the Church (the disagreement between the Catholic Episcopal pattern and the Evangelical diversity); and the importance of order and discipline.

8. In Part II of the text, the Consultation adopts a different methodological approach in presenting its contribution to the discussion on evangelization, proselytism and common witness in light of koinonia, drawing on both Catholic and Evangelical official documents and other ecumenical sources . "Evangelicals and Catholics agree that every Christian has the right and obligation to share and spread the faith" (48). After a presentation of the Catholic and Evangelical views on Evangelization/evangelism, the document addressed the tensions and possibilities for a new future using a threefold schema: repentance (proselytism, persecution, disobedience to the Gospel), conversion (growing in koinonia, promoting religious liberty), and commitment (prayer for unity, efforts for reconciliation, giving common witness).

9. RECEPTION PROCESS. The presentation of the Final Report to the *WEA International Council* gave the opportunity for discussing internally the actual state of Catholic/Evangelical relations at world level. An initial hesitancy was followed by a proactive position. The WEA IC decided to circulate this discussion document, facilitating its release within the WEA community. In doing so, they also expressed thanks to those who worked on it and urged all interested persons to engage in candid, constructive analysis.

On the Catholic side, the document will soon be published in the official bulletin of the PCPCU *Information Service/Service d'Information,* together with a commentary written by Bishop Basil Meeking.

10. A Steering Committee Meeting is to be held in order to decide the future of the Consultation.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

Informal Consultations with the Seventh Day Adventists began in 2001 and represent the newest series of discussions which the PCPCU has undertaken with another Christian Communion. There have been contacts on the international level between Seventh Day Adventists (with international headquarters near Washington D.C., USA) and the Catholic Church over the years, primarily in the annual meeting of the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions (CWCs). The Secretary of the PCPCU and the Director of the Council for Interchurch Relations of the General Conference of the Seventh Day Adventists have met and exchanged information at those meetings. They have sometimes

exchanged correspondence concerning conflicts between the two constituencies in different locations. Over recent decades the General Conference has also invited the PCPCU to send a fraternal delegate to its world assembly which meets every five years. But these recent informal consultations represent the first such effort between the two.

The Seventh Day Adventists stem from the Reformation heritage, and began in the 19th Century in the USA in the midst of Protestant Advent revival-movements. Some of these movements interpreted the scriptures, especially the Book of Daniel 8 and 9, in a way that led them to calculate the time of the second coming of Christ to be in 1844. Even after the disappointment experienced when Christ did not come, many refused to abandon their faith in his second advent. From these the Seventh Day Adventist Church was bom, formally organized as a denomination in 1863. They believed that the second Advent of Christ in glory will take place soon (though now they no longer set the date). They believed also that the seventh day, the Sabbath and not Sunday, was according to God's commandment, the proper day to set aside especially for divine worship. Like other Protestants in the 19th Century the SDA interpretation of Catholicism was influenced by the memory of the clashes of the 16th Century Reformation in Europe. The anti-Catholicism that is characteristic even today of many who follow this tradition is rooted in that period and its complicated aftermath.

The SDAs have experienced phenomenal growth in recent decades. In 1863, their members were about 3,500. A century later in 1960 they numbered about one million. Four decades later in the year 2000, they counted about eleven million baptized adherents (they baptize only adults; this figure does not include children in SDA families). They are found in 200 countries. A recent figure they cite is that if the same process of growth continues, by 2030 they could number about fifty six million members.

This growth includes proselytism, the tarketing of other Christians, especially Catholics for conversion to the SDA church, and here begin ecumenical problems. Missionary outreach such as this is necessary, they say, in light of preparing for the Christ's Advent, which will take place soon, and the fact that those Christians whose day of worship is Sunday and not Saturday, are not following Gods commandment. In terms of growth, Adventist officials would also admit that they lose a certain percentage of converts, perhaps ten percent, who might go back to the Christian Communion from which they come.

The Adventists are somewhat negative towards the ecumenical movement, and are not members of the World Council of Churches. However they have had bilateral conversations or dialogues, with the Lutheran World Federation, with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, with representatives of the World Evangelization Fellowship, the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the Salvation Army, the Church of God (Seventh Day) and with the Assemblies of Yahweh). They take part in the annual meeting of the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions and over the last 35 years, the secretary of this Conference has been an Adventist.

Consultations between the Catholic Church and the SDAs are delicate on both sides.

THE CONSULTATIONS

These consultations began with a brief visit to the PCPCU by a small delegation of the Seventh Day Adventists for one day in 2000, who met with Bishop Walter Kasper, then Secretary of the PCPCU, and Msgr John A. Radano. From this meeting came the agreement to have a small brief consultation the following year, in Geneva. The dates and place were chosen in relationship to the meeting of the working group of the CWCs which meets each year in May in Geneva to plan for the annual CWC meeting in October. The International Reformed Center John Knox, would be the venue. Three consultations have now been held in Geneva on that same occasion and in the same place.

The first consultation, April 8-9, 2001 included 4 Catholics and 4 Adventists. It focused on the "27 basic beliefs" of the Seventh Day Adventists. These 27 beliefs include traditional Christian beliefs, such as the Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection of Christ, beliefs which are common to Christians. We started with this in order to find some common ground.

In the second consultation, May 20-22, 2002, on the theme of Sabbath/Sunday, two papers were presented. The discussion indicated common ground and divergencies. As to common ground, we agreed that (1) Christian faith identifies the principle that a day of rest is a biblical injunction and serves as a weekly witness to the glory of God as our Creator and Redeemer in Jesus Christ, and is for the sanctification of humanity by the public assembly of believers to worship God; (2) in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Sabbath was not abolished but fulfilled; (3) we acknowledge all of this on the basis of obedience to the Word of God communicated in Holy Scripture, which is authoritative for the Church and normative for its teaching; (4) we both continue to heed the divine imperative for human life as embodied in the ten commandments.

There is *continued divergence on:* (1) our respective theologies of the day; (2) the distinction in days (Saturday versus Sunday); (3) our approaches to Scripture. While both see the fulfillment of Sabbath in Jesus Christ, Adventists emphasize the affirmation and purification of existing seventh-day sabbath observance by Jesus and the rest that Jesus promises to those who come to him, while Catholics understand that fulfillment as a transformation of seventh day Sabbath into first day observance by the redemptive power of the paschal mystery in the Lord Jesus' resurrection and his continued presence as risen Lord in the Holy Spirit. The creation emphasis of the Adventist tradition, including Christ as creator of Sabbath by virtue of being the eternal Son of the Father, contrasts with the eschatological emphasis of Catholic tradition, which envisions Christ as author

of the new creation initiated by his resurrection. The respective doctrinal emphases are formative for ecclesial life and Christian discipleship of our communities.

The focus of the third consultation, held in Geneva, May 19-21, 2003, was "Principles of Biblical Interpretation". The discussion indicated the following. While both speak of the scriptures as the inspired word of God, we have different ways of approaching the role of human agency in the writing of Scripture and in its interpretation. For Catholics this warrants, due to the limitations of human beings, the necessary use of historical-critical method to fully appreciate the revelation of the Word of God in Scripture. However, historical-critical method is limited and not sufficient alone to adequately interpret the Bible. Adventists, on the other hand, while attributing a similar importance to human agency, prefer the utilization of a historical-biblical method to interpret Scripture so as not to allow biblical hermeneutics to be usurped by the secular assumptions of historical-critical method. In their view, any critical judgment upon the face value — or literal but not literalistic — sense of the biblical texts including the biblical account of history and cosmology diminishes its authority as the Word of God. Catholics argue that the literal sense of the text is important and necessary as well and ought not to be contravened. Nevertheless, they believe that the nature of the biblical text itself calls for historical-critical investigation, not in order to give it a secular reading but rather to clarify precisely the historical and secular aspects reflected in the Scriptures and thereby to deepen its religious meaning with respect to matters pertaining to salvation. In this respect the use of that method enhances our receptivity to the Word of God. For Catholics any hermeneutic that may lead to questioning or rejection of dogma confirmed by the Magisterium must be restricted. Adventists on the other hand believe that only the Scriptures should reaffirm, modify, or correct any doctrine or dogmatic statement.

Since both sides agree that the Word of God must interpret and address us if we are to take divine revelation seriously, this led to discussions about the principle of *sola scriptura* to which the Adventists adhere, in contrast to the Catholic adherence to the principle of Scripture and Tradition as the two distinct modes of the transmission of the Word of God. By the Word of God alone — Jesus Christ the incarnate Word — is the Catholic response to *sola scriptura,* a response that cannot isolate Scripture from tradition and the life of the Church.

Adventists dispute the role of post-apostolic tradition that is not clearly present in the Scriptures. They argue that the Church is beholden to the canon of Scripture rather than vice-versa, that the Church is the child of the canon and not its mother. But Catholics stated that the canon emerged from the womb of the Church and the Church discerns the authenticity and scope of the canon even as it envisions itself subservient to the Word of God.

In this context, matters such as purgatory, the veneration and the efficacious intercession of the saints, indulgences, and Mariology were questioned by Adventists and defended by Catholics. Adventists insisted there was no biblical warrant for them while Catholics admitted they emerged in the tradition of the Church but were biblically rooted. Again, this illustrated the principle that Catholics insist on the interpretation of Scripture within the "living tradition of the whole Church" and Adventists interpret Scripture only by other scripture passages, the principle of biblical intertextuality.

The conversation also manifested differences in fundamental theological issues between our two traditions. Paramount among them is the relationship between faith and reason, based upon the Catholic principle that grace perfects nature. Perhaps the Catholic inclusion of historical-critical method stems from the confidence that true reason and faith are complementary whereas Adventists distrust the use of unaided reason. This could lead to other issues for discussion such as our views on Christian anthropology.

RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES 2001-2003

1. NATURE OF THE RELATIONS

Relations between the Catholic Church and the WCC are conducted principally in the framework of the Joint Working Group (JWG), a body set up in 1965 at the end of the Second Vatican Council. The JWG has an advisory function and serves as an instrument for promoting cooperation between the two unequal partners, one being a Church and the other a council of churches. The group receives its mandate every seven years from its parent bodies (the PCPCU and the WCC) to which it gives an account of its activities at the end of the mandate. Currently the group consists of 17 members from each side. At present the Catholic chairman of the JWG is the Archbishop of Glasgow, The Most Reverend Mario Conti, and the WCC chairman is Bishop of Strängnäs , The Right Reverend Jonas Jonson (Lutheran Church of Sweden). The Secretary of the PCPCU is an ex officio member of the JWG.

The JWG has a two-fold purpose. On the one hand it engages in joint studies that help to deepen understanding between the Catholic Church and the WCC, and on the other hand it encourages and evaluates bilateral relations between the two partners. Both aspects are an on-going feature of the JWG's mandate.

Given the importance of this relationship, the Catholic Church commits 12 Catholic theologians as members of the Faith and Order Commission, 17

members of the JWG, 3 members of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), about 9 experts invited regularly to different WCC programmes, and 2 full-time Catholics appointed by the PCPCU to work on the staff of the WCC. The PCPCU is continuously in touch will all Catholics involved in this collaboration.

2. Mandate and Agenda of the JWG 2001-2003

At the plenary of 2001, attention was drawn to the present mandate proposed by the JWG to the PCPCU and the WCC for the years 1999-2005. In that proposal, the JWG had recommended *two general priorities* for this period, namely a) commitment to a common integrated vision of the one ecumenical movement; and b) attention to tension that may threaten the coherence of the ecumenical movement particularly in the social ethical field. In addition, the JWG had recommended *two general concerns* for future studies during this period, namely a) issues that affect *koinonia;* and b) common concerns facing member churches of the WCC and the Catholic Church. The current work of the JWG thus involves several study themes as well as bilateral activities in view of responding to the above general priorities and particularly to issues that affect *koinonia.*

During the period under review, the JWG met in plenary three times: in Dromantine, Ireland (2001), at Stjämholm, Sweden (2002); and at Cassano delle Murge, Bari, Italy (2003).

3. Study Themes of the JWG 2001-2003

1. *Ecumenical Dialogue*

In the report to the plenary in 2001 a brief overview was given on the study theme on ecumenical dialogue. Since that time the JWG through a small sub-commission of 3 persons on each side has developed the theme into a draft study document entitled “The Nature and Purpose of Ecumenical Dialogue". The purpose of the study has been to reflect anew on the aims, methods and character of ecumenical dialogue. At its last meeting in May 2003, the JWG examined the draft and hopes to finalize it in May 2004.

Why is this study important? Since the publication in 1970 by the PCPCU (then Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity) of the document “Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue" *(Information Service,* N.I2, December 1970/IV), and an earlier study by the JWG in 1966-67 on “Ecumenical Dialogue", the context of ecumenical dialogue has changed. The impact of ecumenical dialogue is felt more than ever before. The study raises the question of what we have learnt from the experience of over 35 years of ecumenical dialogue. What is the nature and purpose of ecumenical dialogue, its philosophical, theological and anthropological foundations? What are the presuppositions of dialogue? The study tries to answer these questions as well as examine the current configurations of dialogue partners (both with the Catholic Church and between churches and ecclesial Communities not in communion with the Bishop of Rome), the topics studied, the methodologies and more particularly the reception of ecumenical dialogue, giving some specific case studies, for example, the multilateral dialogue on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM).

2. *The second study theme of the JWG is entitled “Ecclesiological Implications of Baptism”.*

In the modern ecumenical movement, the growth towards acknowledging a common Baptism has been one of the most basic reasons for separated Christian to speak of “a real though incomplete communion". That theological principle is founded on the often used phrase “our common Baptism". But its very use raises deep theological implications. In his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint,* Pope John II acknowledges that the rediscovery of a new relationship among separated Christians “is rooted in recognition of the oneness of Baptism and the subsequent duty to glorify God in his work”. He repeats the hope found in the 1993 *Directory for the Application and Norm on Ecumenism* in the Catholic Church “that Baptisms will be mutually and officially recognized" (UUS, 42). The JWG has taken up the theme on Baptism because of its centrality in relations among Christians today in the interim period consisted of “a real though incomplete communion". Some of the issues raised by the study are complex but not new. Is Baptism entry into the Body of Christ or a consequence of entry into the Church? Regarding mutual recognition of Baptism (a theme whose interim report was presented to the plenary of 2001), the question raised by the JWG concerns the precise meaning of “recognition". The study also seek to find out what are the ecumenical implications of the growing convergence on Baptism and the acknowledgement of “a real though incomplete communion".

3. *Councils of Churches*

During this period, the JWG has also addressed a study theme on national and regional councils of churches. The purpose of the study has been to reflect together on a number of questions related to participation or non-participation of the Catholic Church in national and regional councils of churches. At its last meeting in May 2003, the JWG examined a draft document on this theme prepared by a small mixed sub-commission. The draft is entitled “Inspired by the Same Vision: Roman Catholic Participation in National and Regional Councils of Churches”.

In 1975, after a long process of study, the PCPCU (then Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity) published an informative document on “Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional, National and Local Levels" (cf. *Information Service,* N. 29, 1975, pp.8-31). This document included a chapter on “Councils of

Churches and Christian Councils", in order to offer some theological evaluation and clarification of such phenomena, since more and more Conferences of Bishops were becoming members in councils of churches at various levels. In view of offering some guidelines to increase the number of Bishops' Conferences participating in such bodies the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (1993) included in its Chapter V several paragraphs on the question of "Councils of Churches and Christian Councils" (nn. 166-171). The JWG had recommended to carry out another study on this question, in order to find out the facilitating circumstances, concerns, successes and failures. The study also seeks to discover some of the models used in councils of churches and Christians councils in which the Catholic Church is a member. The study thus intends to show the actual situation of Catholic participation in councils of churches around the world. Of the 103 known councils of churches today, the Catholic Church is a full member in 58 of them. The regions where the Catholic Church more frequently participates in these bodies are: Europe, Africa, Oceania, Middle East, Caribbean and Pacific. In the United States where the Bishops' Conference is not a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ USA, Catholic dioceses are members in 13 out of 41 state councils and participate as observers in at least 6 other state councils. In Canada, the Canadian Catholic Bishops' Conference is a member of the Canadian Council of Churches. In Latin America the Catholic Church in Brazil and Uruguay are members of councils of churches at the national level. 12 councils of churches in Africa have Catholic membership, while in the Middle East, even though there are no national councils, Bishops' Conferences and Synods of Oriental Churches are members of the Middle East Conference of Churches.

The importance of the research is not so much to know the actual situation, but to become deeply aware of the theological issues raised by such participation. At the centre of such participation is the question of ecclesiology in relation to membership in such ecumenical bodies. There arise, for example, questions of who makes decisions in these bodies and how such decisions are made when important theological and moral issues are involved. There is also the question of making public statements on specific national or regional matters. What is the authority of such statements and who takes responsibility? These are a few of the issues behind the study. This study like the other two mentioned above is still in the drafting stage and hopefully the JWG will examine and finalize the draft in May 2004.

4. *A fourth study under consideration but no document is currently being prepared is on the question of "theological anthropology"*

The study focuses on three questions: *a)* What theology-anthropology informs different churches? *b)* Why do churches, on the basis of common anthropological assertions draw different conclusions on specific issues? c) Is it possible to speak of Christian anthropological foundations for global ethics? Both questions obviously challenge the JWG to search for answers towards the possibility of common ecumenical ethics. The starting point of the study was in 2001 when two papers were presented to the JWG plenary. The first paper by Bishop Marc Ouellet was entitled "John Paul II and the Biblical Anthropology of Imago Dei", while the second by Prof. Nicholas Lossky (Russian Orthodox, France) was entitled "Theological Anthropology", presenting an Orthodox perspective. In 2002 Archbishop Jozef Zycinsky (Lublin) and Bishop Donal Murray (Limerick) prepared a paper entitled "The human person as the Image of God and Universal Ethics". In 2003, Archbishop Zycinsky presented another paper entitled Theological Anthropology and Ecumenical Ethics" that focused on the theological foundations of anthropology, the imago Dei as the basic concept in ecumenical anthropology, ecumenical ethics and human values in such areas as globalization, for which Christians could find some convergence in certain area of discussion. The JWG intends to keep this topic on its agenda for the coming years.

4. Bilateral Relations

One important aspect of the JWG activities is to encourage and evaluate bilateral relations between the WCC Geneva office and the PCPCU in Rome. Over the years, the two offices have developed a pattern of organizing such bilateral relations along several levels.

a) *Mutual Invitations*

The first level of bilateral relations involves mutual invitation to each others' major events. The main event to which the Catholic Church through the PCPCU was invited to send observers was the 158-member WCC Central Committee meeting that took place in Geneva from 26 August to 3 September 2002. Two officials of the PCPCU attended the meeting. One major item at the meeting was the final report of the "Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC". This 60-member commission (30 Orthodox and 30 from other WCC member churches) had been set up by the WCC Assembly in Harare in 1998 with the mandate to study the problems facing Orthodox participation in the WCC, and to propose possible solutions including structure changes, style and ethos of the WCC. The final report of the commission consisted of five major areas studied: ecclesiology, social and ethical issues, common prayer, consensus model of decision-making, and membership in the WCC.

Regarding ecclesiology, the report stated clearly that there were two basic ecclesiological self-understandings in the fellowship of the WCC. While the Orthodox identify themselves with the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the churches of the Reformation identify themselves *as parts of* the One,

Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. The report therefore concluded that, "these two ecclesiological positions affect whether or not churches recognize each others' baptism as well as their ability or inability to recognize one another as churches". Likewise, such divergent positions, the report concluded, "affect the way churches understand the goal of the ecumenical movement, its instruments — including the WCC and its foundational documents". The report implies here the constitutional Basis of the WCC and the "Toronto Statement" of 1950 on "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches". In relation to these conclusions, the Central Committee had anticipated two separate sessions on ecclesiology and on mutual recognition of Baptism, which were found helpful but did not resolve the deep ecclesiological issues involved.

The PCPCU has also been represented as an observer at the WCC Bossey Board in 2002 and 2003, as well as at a consultation of the WCC on Councils of Churchs in Geneva in August 2002. In July 2003, the PCPCU was invited to take part in a seminar organized by Bossey Ecumenical Institute on "Nature and Purpose of the Ecumenical Movement", at which an official of the PCPCU read the paper on behalf of Cardinal Kasper.

It is also important to point out that the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) has an ongoing positive relationship with the WCC office for Interreligious Relations, and during the period since the last Plenary there have been many exchanges and meetings between them.

b) *Appointment of Catholic Staff*

A second level of relationship concerns the appointment of Catholics at the request of the WCC to work in some of its programmes. Currently there are two Catholics appointed by the PCPCU to the WCC. Sister Elizabeth Moran, a missionary of St. Columban works in the WCC programme on Mission and Ecumenical Formation, while the Reverend Father Gosbert Byamungu works as a full-time professor at the WCC Ecumenical Institute of Bossey.

c) *Exchange of Visits*

The following is an outline of the exchange of visits between Rome and Geneva from 2001 to 2003.

- October 25 2001: official visit to the WCC by Bishop Marc Ouellet, (then Secretary, PCPCU);

- June 9-13 2002: study visit to Rome by 5 WCC youth interns;

- November 5-7 2002: visit to Rome by Dr. Carlos Ham, staff person, WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism for an exchange of information;

- November 12-19 2002: study visit to Rome by 39 students of the WCC Bossey Ecumenical Institute;

- March 31 2003: visit to the WCC by Father Gérard Tronche, Apostleship of the Sea, Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerants, along with members of the Executive of the International Maritime Association (ICMA);

- April 1 2003: official visit to the WCC by Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary, PCPCU.

4. EVALUATION OF THIS RELATIONSHIP

a) Generally speaking relations with the WCC have been positive and the presence of Catholic experts in various programmes and activities has been quite extensive. There are 12 Catholic members of Faith and Order Commission, 17 members of the JWG, 3 members of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism, 2 full-time Catholic staff appointed by the PCPCU to the WCC and about 9 other Catholic experts invited regularly by the PCPCU to various WCC meetings.

b) At the same time there have been moments when the Catholic Church was either unfairly criticized or misunderstood by the WCC.

c) The report draws attention to three major studies of the JWG that will be concluded in 2004: Baptism, Dialogue and Councils of Churches. These studies need to be seen in the context of one of the two concerns outlined in the present mandate, namely issues that affect *koinonia.* The texts in preparation will have the status of study documents when completed. Nevertheless they touch on significant themes in the ecumenical movement.

d) In the context of mutual invitation between the Catholic Church and the WCC, this report speaks about an invitation of the Catholic Church through the PCPCU to send a delegation to the WCC World Mission and Evangelism that will take place in Athens, Greece from 12-19 May 2005. The letter of invitation asked for a delegation of 50 Catholics, but the PCPCU is aware that 50 is too many. Rather a delegation of 20-25 would be more reasonable.

e) As we look ahead in this relationship, it would be important to bear in mind the present crisis in the WCC. It is mainly a crisis of identity, and is affected by the problem of Orthodox participation in the WCC and serious financial difficulties. Any requests from the WCC at this moment for further collaboration beyond our present forms would need to be evaluated in the light of these difficulties.

FAITH AND ORDER

During the period since the last Plenary of the PCPCU in November 2001, the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches has continued with a vast range of study projects. These include studies on question of authority and authoritative teaching in the Church, theological anthropology, baptism, ecumenical hermeneutics, the theology of peace a study on Ethnic Identity, National Identity and the Search for the Unity of the Church, another on an ecumenical approach to physical disabilities,

questions of liturgy and worship. There is a project on ecclesiology to which, in a sense, all of these relate. We will return to this later.

Faith and Order along with the PCPCU has continued to prepare the materials, used throughout the world, for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In September 2002, the commission sponsored one of its periodical consultations on United and Uniting Churches, supporting those Churches from Reformation families which have taken significant steps toward unity, usually on the regional or local levels.

The 75th Anniversary of the first World Conference on Faith and Order, held in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1927 was celebrated in August, 2002, also in Lausanne. This was a major event which included both a scholarly Conference at the University of Lausanne where the first World Conference was held and a major worship service in the Cathedral at Lausanne, where worship took place at that 1927 event. The scholarly Conference included a presentation sent by Walter Cardinal Kasper which was read on his behalf when he was unable to attend. The Cardinal emphasized the importance of Faith and Order and briefly illustrated how it has made a difference in the life of the Church. The Faith and Order paper 111, *Baptist Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM) 1982, for example, has been an important theological resource helping separated churches in different parts of the world to create new relationships, new realizations of unity (for the Cardinal's address and details on the celebration see *Information Service* 110 (2002/III) pp. 173-176.

The Study of the Church

We return now to the project on ecclesiology. With the publication in 1998 of Faith and Order paper 181 *The Nature and Purpose of the Church,* the Commission reached a new stage in the multilateral dialogue on ecclesiology, publishing a substantial treatment of the Church for the first time. In a sense this was the logical sequel to BEM, since many of the official responses to BEM called for deeper exploration of ecclesiology as a way of providing the right context for understanding the sacraments and ministry. It was clear however that F&O paper 181 was an initial step, because it was subtitled *"A stage on the way to a common statement".*

Faith and Order invited comments and suggestions asking how F&O paper 181 might be improved. Over the years some forty responses have come, including a lengthy theological analysis by a group of Catholic theologians organized by the PCPCU. This was not an official Catholic response, but a contribution to the process. A Faith and Order drafting committee on ecclesiology has now worked on this for several years and has now redrafted the text considerably. Work will continue but the evolution of the text can be seen by placing side by side the flow of the text for F&O 181 and the flow of the revised text.

The Nature and Purpose of the Church

F&O Paper 181 (1998)	*Provisional Revision (2003)*
Introduction	Introduction
I. The Church of the Triune God	I. The Church of the Triune God
A. The Nature of the Church	A. The Nature of the Church
	(i) The Church as a Gift of God: Creation of the Word and of the Holy Spirit.
	(ii) Biblical Insights
	(a) The Church as the People of God
	(b) The Church as the Body of Christ
	(c) The Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit
	(d) The Church as Koinonia (Communion)
B. Gods Purpose for the Church	B. The Purpose of the Church
	C. The Church as Sign and Instrument of God's Design
II. The Church in History	II. The Church in History
A. The Church in Via	A. The Church in Via
B. Sign and Instrument of God's Design	B. Communion Real but not fully Realized
	C. Communion and Diversity
	D. The Church as Communion of local Churches
III. The Church as Koinonia Communion	III. The Life of Communion in and for the World
A. Commnion Real but Not Fully Realized	A. Apostolic Faith
B. Communion and Diversity	B. Baptism
C. The Church as a Communion of Local Churches	C. Eucharist
	D. Ministry
	E. Oversight: Personal, Communal, Collegial
	F. Conciliarity and Primacy
IV. Life in Communion	Conclusion
A. Apostolic Faith	
B. Baptism	
C. Eucharist	
D. Ministry	
E. Oversight: Communal, Personal Collegial	
F. Conciliarity (Communality Synodality) and Primacy	
V. Service In and For the World	
VI. Following our Calling: From Converging Understandings to Mutual Recognition	

It is possible to point immediately to several factors which illustrate the evolution of the text as it has begun to take place. (1) the 1998 version was divided into six major areas, whereas the 2003 version has three major areas, having linked together more coherently into one section some of the elements previously in different sections. (2) One of the major changes has been to move the section on "The Church as Koinonia (Communion)" from Chapter III (in 1998) to Chapter I (in 2003). This is important because this change gives more priority to the notion of the Church as koinonia which is a primary area of the discussion on ecclesiology in ecumenical dialogue today. But also, as the 1985 Synod of Bishops in Rome said, the notion of koinonia communion was the primary ecclesiological notion of the Second Vatican Council. (3) There is much more attention given in the revised version to the notion of Primacy, than had been seen in F&O paper 181. I would mention here that these three factors were proposed by the response of the Catholic theologians mentioned above.

Evolution of the Discussion on Primacy

To illustrate one particular area where significant development has taken place, we can look at the evolution of the treatment of the Primacy. The 1998 text has little to say on Primacy. Section IV F "Conciliarity (Communality, Synodality) and Primacy", includes four numbers (107-110) and stresses conciliarity. It does speak of the interconnectedness of the life of the Church, expressed "at the different levels of the Church's life", saying that "a life of interdependence is sustained by a ministry in the service of unity ... exercised in communal, personal and collegial ways" (#108). But a ministiy of unity at the universal level is not specifically mentioned. In fact the main text itself doesn't deal with the latter. It says that "whenever people, local communities or regional churches come together ... there is need for someone to summon and preside over the gathering", (109) but the universal level is not addressed. The question is referred to in a box (F&O paper 181 discusses differences in boxes, while convergences and agreements are explained in the text itself). There it simply states that "there is much work to be done to arrive at something like a consensus between those who do not believe that conciliarity or primacy at a world level are necessary and those who believe that full communion cannot exist without this link among all the local eucharistic communities".

The revised text of 2003 expands the discussion significantly, giving it seven numbers 113-119. First of all, it brings the discussion into the text itself, and not only in a box where differences are mentioned. The text states that while ministiy and oversight are exercised locally and regionally, ecumenical dialogue has also "led the churches to ask whether and, if so, how they may function within the church as a communion existing/united throughout the whole world" (113). The conciliar dimension "is also expressed at wider instances of Christian communion, some more regional and some even seeking to draw in the participation of the whole Christian community" (113).

Secondly, the treatment of primacy brings in an historical and classical perspective saying that "the word primacy was used by the first ecumenical council (Nicea 325, see the title of Canon VI), to refer to the ancient practice whereby the bishops of Alexandria, Rome and Antioch exercised a personal ministry of oversight over an area much wider than that of their individual ecclesiastical provinces" (116). It draws conclusions from this "that primacy concerns the personal exercise of the ministry of oversight", but also that "since this exercise was affirmed by a council ... such oversight is not opposed to conciliarity, which expresses more the communal and collegial service to unity" (116). Thus, "Historically, forms of primacy have existed at various levels, some wider, such as those of patriarchates, and some more restricted" (116). And, in showing an ancient way in which it has worked, "according to Canon 34 of the apostolic canons, the first among the bishops would only make a decision in agreement with the other bishops and the latter would make no important decision without the agreement of the first" (116).

Thirdly, it makes clear the complexity of the issue of primacy and some of the ecumenical challenge in dealing with it. Thus, "even in the early centuries, primacy in the service of mission and unity became complicated by questions of jurisdiction and even competitiveness between patriarchates. The issues became more polarised as the papacy developed and further claims were made for the direct immediate and universal jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome over the whole Church" (117). Still the recent ecumenical rapproachement and external factors such as globalization have created a new climate in which a universal primacy can be discussed (cf. 117).

Fourthly, the text roots the discussion also in a recent decision of Faith and Order itself. The Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order (1993) raised the question "of a universal ministry of Christian Unity". This F&O statement was cited by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Ut unum sint* 1995 as he invited leaders and theologians of other churches to discuss his ministry, an invitation which has initiated a frank exchange of ideas (118).

Fifthly, referring briefly to some aspects of the state of the discussion today, it says frankly that "many disagreements remain, but also several avenues of agreement seem to have opened up. One is that "there seems to be wide agreement that a personal "universal ministry of Christian unity' needs to be exercised in a communal and collegial way, resembling Faith and Order's viewpoint about ministry in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* 1982". Another is that "the very historically conditioned exercise of such a ministry is often being distinguished from what is essential to it, leaving room for possible changes from ways in which this ministry has been exercised in the past" (118).

These five points of the emerging revised text are new as compared to that of 1998. They represent a significant, even if limited, evolution beyond the 1998

text. Even the "box" on "Conciliarity and Primacy" in this revised draft, while indicating differences, gives more attention than did the corresponding box of the 1998 document to a ministry of unity on the universal level, saying "the ecumenical movement as a whole" as reflected in classical F&O formulations received by Assemblies of the World Council of Churches at New Delhi, Nairobi and Canberra concerning the unity we seek, "has made possible a new discussion of the Church's world wide unity and of the possible ecclesial order which may express and serve it".

The discussion will continue. Perhaps some of this 2003 version will change. But the evolution in a few short years of the F&O text "The Nature and Purpose of the Church", and of the section on primacy, is very significant.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (YMCA) AND THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (YWCA) — 2001-2003

I. THE YMCA

The form of relationship with the World Alliance of YMCAs has continued on the level of bilateral contacts and sharing of information. One major event of the World Alliance of YMCAs during the period from 2001-2003 was the 15th World Council that took place in Oaxtepec, Mexico, from 14-20 July 2002, under the theme *Building Community - Transforming the World.* The Argentinian Methodist theologian, José Miguez Bonino was the keynote speaker. Attended by about 650 participants, the assembly provided an opportunity to evaluate the YMCA's activities and structures, with a view to meeting new challenges in the future. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity was represented as an observer at the Conference by a priest from the Archdiocese of Mexico City. The assembly, elected a new 30-member Executive and a new Secretary General, Mr. Bert Shaha, a Catholic from Bangladesh.

The second event was the Executive Committee meeting of the World Alliance of YMCA's that took place in Geneva from 26-30 March. Among the Executive officers, there are two Catholics — the Secretary General and the Treasurer (Mrs. Dorothy de Sing, Panama). The agenda consisted of: an evaluation of the movement, the Secretary General's report of activities of the Alliance; reports from different regions of the world; and a review of the financial situation of the Alliance. The Executive had invited Father John Quigley, OFM, Co-ordinator of "Franciscan International" (FI), to address the Executive on the engagement of the FI particularly in education around the world on "the right to development", in view the UN current debate on "The Declaration on the Right to Development".

Before the above meeting took place the Secretary General, Mr. Bert Shaha had requested PCPCU to arrange an official visit to Rome for himself and the President of the YMCA, the Rev. Caesar Molebatsi (South Africa). The programme of the visit from 2-4 April 2003 included a private audience with the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II on 4 April.

2. THE YWCA

The World Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) is a global ecumenical Christian movement of women working for justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment in over 100 countries. During this period, the relations with the World YWCA have remained inactive. In the past, the organization invited the PCPCU to send a representative on the occasion of its World Council in the capacity of an observer. The last World Council of the World YWCA took place in Brisbane, Australia, from July 3-13 2003, but no invitation was received.

3. OBSERVATION

Over the years, the World Alliance of YMCAs has shown deep respect for the Catholic Church and has remained open to relations with the PCPCU. The PCPCU sends an official every year to attend the Executive Committee meeting of the YMCA as an observer mainly because the association has expressed the need for such presence, since the number of Catholics in the YMCA has continued to grow particularly in countries with a Catholic majority. Both organizations receive the *Information Service* as well as other publications of the Holy See.

While the YMCA includes women in its membership and leadership, the YWCA is strictly a women's movement.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS

The official mandate of the new Secretary for the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews commenced in November 2002. This role had remained vacant since May 2001, and the work of the Commission had been temporarily entrusted to various persons. This report refers to the activities aimed at promoting Jewish-Catholic dialogue in the period ranging from last November until to date. His Emi-

nence Cardinal Walter Kasper was appointed President of the Commission in March 2001; H.E. Monsignor Brian Farrell has been its new Vice President since January 2003.

1. Activities of the Commission

As in the past, many Jewish associations have shown interest in entering into contact with our Commission. From the inception of the Commission, regular conferences have been convened in collaboration with the *International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations* (IJCIC), an organisation that gathers various Jewish entities, mainly American. In this context, mention should be made of the meeting to be held in Buenos Aires at the beginning of 2004 on the theme of "Justice", organised by the *International Jewish-Catholic Liaison Committee.* Our Commission has been in close contact with Rabbi Israel Singer, appointed the new President of the IJCIC in summer 2002, regarding the organisation of this event.

Another important international organisation is the *International Council for Christians and Jews* (ICCJ). The Secretary of our Commission participated at both the *Executive Board Meeting* held in Heppenheim (Germany) from 16-18 March 2003 and at the annual conference held in Utrecht (Holland) from 29 June - 2 July 2003 on the theme *"Imagining the Other".*

Tackling the question of the *"Theology of Partnership",* our Commission participated in the *Second Catholic Jewish Scholar Conference* held in London from 18-20 March 2003, organised together with the *World Union of Progressive Judaism,* the *Reform Synagogues of Great Britain,* and the *Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues.*

The Secretary of our Commission had the opportunity to gain deeper insight into the experience of dialogue in the United States during his visit to Washington from 5-11 May 2003, upon the invitation of the *American Jewish Committee* to attend its annual meeting. This occasion enabled him to meet with staff members of the Committee for Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. With regard to the situation in Austria, the Secretary visited Vienna from 3-6 June 2003 upon the invitation of the bishop responsible for interreligious dialogue. In France, our Commission participated in the conference held in Paris from 10-11 March 2003 by the *European Jewish Congress.* With regard to dialogue in Italy, the Secretary of our Commission attended the *"Colloqui di Camaldoli"* held from 4-5 December 2002 on the theme *"Siate santi, perché io, il Signore, Dio vostro, sono santo"* (You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy") *(Lev* 19, 2) and also participated in the sympsosium on "Family and Procreation" organised jointly by the Lateran University of Rome and the Hartmann Institute of Jerusalem from 26-27 March 2003. The Secretary has also maintained regular contact with the Jewish community of Rome, including a visit to the Chief Rabbi Riccardo di Segni and the preparation of an audience with the Holy Father for a delegation of the community on 13 February 2003.

Over twenty institutes and centres in the United States dedicated to Jewish-Catholic dialogue have formed a "Council of Centers" in order to collaborate more effectively. Such centres also exist in Europe, although they do not have such an extensive network (with only the Institutes of the Sisters of Sion working in close collaboration with each other). From 1-3 June 2003, a meeting was held for the first time of various European centres (Rome, Paris, Vienna, Cambridge, Brussels, Lucerne) aimed at fostering mutual understanding and promoting possible means of collaboration. This initiative constituted an impetus towards an extended participation of other centres (the next meeting will be held in Cambridge from 6-8 June 2004), leading hopefully to the creation of a "Council of Centres in Europe". Within this context, it would be important to cast a more attentive glance at the situation in Eastern European countries, where there is a particular need to promote dialogue.

2. Commencement of an official dialogue with the Great Rabbinate of Israel

Within the time frame under consideration, the most significant event has undoubtedly been the dialogue commenced with the Great Rabbinate of Israel, made possible also due to the visit in Israel of the Holy Father in March 2000, and the subsequent visit of Cardinal Kasper in November 2001. The two delegations met at Grottaferrata, within the vicinity of Rome, from 23-27 February 2003.The Jewish delegation was presided by the Head Rabbi of Haifa, Shar Yishuv Cohen; the Catholic was guided by His Eminence Cardinal Jorge Mejia. Initial contact between the two delegations had taken place in summer 2002 in Jerusalem, at which time the decision was taken to commence this important dialogue. The dialogue itself was undertaken in an atmosphere of mutual goodwill, and was characterised by the effort to highlight the common aspects of both traditions. Two main issues were raised, namely "The Sanctity of Life" and "The Values of the Family". At the end of the session, the heads of the delegations signed a common declaration.

This event should be considered an historical breakthrough, given that until this time there had never been an official dialogue between our Commission and institutes in Israel. That this dialogue was even possible is even more astonishing in the light of the complex political situation in Palestine.

3. Current theological questions

The dialogue with Judaism is a *religious* dialogue aimed at exploring theological questions. In order to achieve success, each partner must be firmly ingrained in its own tradition in order to open itself to the other and to enrich itself in so doing.

In recent times, some Christian groups in the

United States have raised new theological challenges for the dialogue. Last summer, a document was published in the United Stated entitled *"Reflection on Covenant and Mission",* confronting both the theme of the salvific value and importance of the Old Covenant for the Jewish people, and that of the meaning and direction of the mission of the Catholic Church in its relation to Judaism. Another document was also published entitled *"A Sacred Obligation",* presenting ten points regarding how Judaism should be considered by Catholics. However, both documents require further discussion; there is a need to deepen this question both at the academic and theological levels.

In relation to these documents, further aspects should be considered: the old covenant and the new alliance in Jesus Christ; the theological significance and soteriological implications of the affirmation of the Holy Father (Mainz 1980) whereby the ancient alliance with the people of Israel has never been abrogated; the relationship with Judaism in the light of the fact that our Church is by nature a missionary Church; the interpretation of the concept "People of God' and the relationship between the "chosen people' and the Catholic Church. These issues are also linked to questions relating to the so-called "theology of substitution', which has been considered to be obsolete since the Second Vatican Council.

In the light of these theological questions, it is necessary to develop and promote a "Christian theology of Judaism'.

4. Problems and difficulties

An overall problem is represented by the fact that the dialogue with Judaism does not have a centralised religious interlocutor at the international level, but a fragmented body of various groups, associations and lobbies that are quite distinct in various ways (the classical distinction between Orthodox, conservatives and liberals is merely one). The various groups, often in competition with each other, are themselves internally divided along different lines. The situation varies from one country to the other, with a similar variability in the willingness to confront specific religious or theological issues. Indeed, Orthodox Jews seldom have little difficulty in discussing theological questions, while they are quite open to more general issues of a social or cultural nature.

An obvious problem is that of maintaining the dialogue at the religious level, given that the political dimension has such a great influence. In the Old Testament itself, the prophets did not operate merely within a religious framework, but also within a concrete social and political context. Thus, there is the danger of the dialogue being manipulated for political ends. In this perspective, any possible political implication should always be borne in mind.

The starting point for dialogue between Jews and Catholics has been, fundamentally, the conciliar declaration *Nostra aetate* (no. 4) of 1965. Since then, many individuals have committed themselves to widening debate and to providing decisive contributions. The dialogue brought forward by this generation has been in large measure focused on the theme of the holocaust. It should nonetheless be observed that the tendency now, on both the Jewish and Catholic parts, should be to sensitise and involve new individuals, young people who have experienced a different historical era and who could provide a new impetus to Jewish-Catholic relations.

5. Long-term perspectives and objectives

The task of our Commission is to follow and promote dialogue between Jews and Catholics at the international level. To this end, collaboration with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities is also underway.

It should nonetheless be recalled that a true and proper institutional dialogue with Judaism does not exist (as Judaism itself does not exist as a uniform reality), or rather there is not a dialogue that produces official ongoing documents and declarations that relate to each other in time and scope (often, the contents of meetings with the 1JCIC deal with themes that are quite independent from each other). The work focuses mainly on projects to be undertaken in concrete social and political conditions.

With regard to future perspective, the following priorities could be considered:

- Realisation of the affirmations of the conciliar declaration *Nostra aetate* (no. 4) through "internal work': education, formation and updating of individuals involved in line with the guidelines of the documents of our Commission (""*Guidelines and Suggestions",* 1974; '"*Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism",* 1985).

- Promotion of the dialogue already underway, particularly with the IJCIC and ICCJ.

- Promotion of the dialogue with the Great Rabbinate of Israel through the organisation of further meetings (in Israel and Rome).

- Coordination and collaboration among Jewish-Catholic centres for dialogue in Europe (a long-term perspective is necessary with regard to the situation in Eastern Europe).

- Sensitive development of the "Christian theology of Judaism' in its fundamental passages, particularly at the academic level.

- Involvement in the dialogue of a younger generation.

Such objectives are certainly not attainable in the short-term, although they should be borne in mind in the daily undertakings of the Commission. It is a question of translating into practical terms, in a wider and deeper dimension, the affirmations of *Nostra aetate* (N.4), which inscribe our relations with Judaism also within an eschatological perspective: "That all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve him with one accord" *(Zeph* 3:9).

ECUMENICAL NEWS

MESSAGE OF CARDINAL WALTER KASPER TO THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL GATHERING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERCHURCH FAMILIES MONDO MIGLIORE (CASTEL GANDOLFO)

July 24-28, 2003

Grace and peace to you in the Father, who has made marriage a covenant of life and love, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is present in that love, and in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of unity who draws that human love into the divine life of the Trinity.

I wish I could have been present to greet you in person, but unfortunately that is not possible. I must commend you for your courage at the outset, for it is only courageous souls who come to bear the heat of Rome in July.

I noted in your preparatory paper for this conference the statement that "in the past, interchurch families were often treated as a problem?' You probably know Gabriel Marcel's famous statement that "life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived." I assure you that I do not greet those of you today who are in mixed marriages as a "problem", but as people who in your marriages live — in many different ways — a concrete experience, an experience of sharing in the covenant between husband and wife which binds you ever more deeply in unity, while at the same time holding something of the painful divisions of Christianity within that unity.

On the one hand, each of your families is "a community of love and life", a "school of communion", the "primary place in which unity will be fashioned or weakened each day." Many of you share in what the Catholic Church understands to be a sacramental marriage; in this you share in a 'great mystery', which expresses the spousal love of Christ for the Church, and which is called to radiate the Gospel of Christ. On the other hand, in your marriages, husband and wife have been formed in and belong to different ecclesial communions, which are not in full communion with each other. You are not a problem, but you are living in the midst of the serious problem of the divisions within Christianity; in your marriages you have to face this problem daily, and face it with integrity.

I know that this experience you are living carries both opportunities and struggles. Where both husband and wife strive to be faithful to their respective Christian communities, the importance of our Churches and ecclesial communities growing together, the pain of our division, the sense of urgency to recover full visible unity, and the hope and prayer which sustain the ecumenical movement, are all experienced in their depths.

Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Exhortation Familiaris Consortio (n.78), wrote that "marriages between Catholics and other baptized persons... contain numerous elements that could well be made good use of and developed, both for their intrinsic value and for the contribution that they can make to the ecumenical movement. This is particularly true when both parties are faithful to their religious duties." While not turning a blind eye to the serious challenges which can be faced by interchurch families, the main thrust in this text looks to your marriages in terms of their intrinsic value, and invites reflection on the contributions you can make to the respective churches to which you belong — by being who you are, and living that identity faithfully and creatively.

Your preparatory paper speaks of families embodying "a love that is not simply content with a parallel separate existence, but which yearns for, and therefore promotes, growth into deeper and deeper unity." Interchurch couples provide an ongoing impetus to the ecumenical movement, and keep us from acquiescing in our differences. Mixed marriages have an important role to play in ecumenical relations, and in our ecclesial lives.

The Ecumenical Directory (n.66 b) speaks of mixed marriage families as having "the delicate task of making themselves builders of unity." In this regard, permit me to offer you three brief thoughts. Firstly, it seems to me that interchurch families have something to teach us in terms of an ecumenical exchange of gifts. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (n.1634) speaks of the importance of placing in common what you have received from your respective communities, and learning from each other "the way in which each lives in fidelity to Christ." You are uniquely situated to help the churches better see the authentic gifts which are to be found in and received from each other.

Secondly, you have an important contribution to make in terms of spiritual ecumenism, which is the heart of the ecumenical movement. In addressing mixed marriage families during his visit to England in 1982, Pope John Paul noted: "You live in your marriage the hopes and difficulties of the path to Christian unity. Express that hope in prayer together, in the unity of love. Together invite the Holy Spirit of love into your hearts and into your homes." Praying together, reading and pondering the Scriptures together, encouraging others to do so, will have an effect within and beyond your families.

Thirdly, in our present ecumenical context, wherein we have achieved a great deal over the last forty years and yet still have a long way to go in the

restoration of full visible unity, we speak increasingly of the importance of communion in mission, to the extent that our shared faith makes that possible. As interchurch families, you are already engaged in a common mission, the mission of living deeply the covenant of love which binds you together. As churches and ecclesial communities seek increasingly to engage in common mission, we would have much to learn from the communion in mission reflected in your marriages and families.

Finally, I would take this opportunity to speak a special word of encouragement specifically to those mixed marriages where either the husband or wife is a Catholic. I want to assure you that the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has an ongoing and heartfelt concern for all of you. The Ecumenical Directory's section on mixed marriages, lacking in the previous edition of the Directory, is one expression of that concern. Faithfulness to the guidelines set forth therein, especially pertaining to Eucharistic sharing, will at times mean that you will feel more intensely the pain of division. The pain arises not from the current norms, but from the fact that the separation of Christians has not yet been overcome. Our ongoing dialogues, however, do give us grounds for hope. If they can broaden the foundations of our common faith, this would help us to take further steps towards the full visible unity we seek. While we continue to strive for that unity, it is our hope and prayer that your faithfulness, your patience, your efforts, will be an integral part of the healing process of the reconciliation which Christ calls us to and desires.

We appreciate that one of the aims of the Association of Interchurch Families is to work with the churches for Christian unity, and are encouraged that you see yourselves as called to become signs and instruments of the visible unity we seek. At the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, we would be most pleased to receive a report of your Gathering, and will study the issues and concerns you discuss with care.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Cardinal WALTER KASPER

REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION FOR THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Cairo, Egypt, 27-30 January 2004

Catholic and Oriental Orthodox representatives, delegated by their Churches, met 27-30 January 2004, as members of the International Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, under the co-chairmanship of His Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and His Eminence Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette, General Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

The meeting was held in Nasr City (Cairo, Egypt) at the Saint Mark Centre, hosted by H.H. Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark. Letters of invitation to this meeting, signed by both co-chairmen, were sent to the Heads of the Oriental Orthodox Churches: the Coptic Orthodox Church, Syrian Orthodox Church, Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicosate of all Armenians), Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicosate of Cilicia), Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and Eritrean Orthodox Church. The same invitation was sent to the Catholic members through the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

In their opening address the co-chairmen underscore the importance of the meeting marking the beginning of a new official theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches as a family.

In the name of H.H. Pope Shenouda III, Metropolitan Bishoy welcomed the participants, who on Wednesday evening 28 January had the opportunity to take part at the weekly sermon of Pope Shenouda III at Saint Mark's Cathedral in Cairo. His Holiness greeted all delegation members and recommended the new dialogue to the prayers of the faithful. In response, H.E. Cardinal Walter Kasper conveyed the brotherly greetings and presented a gift of H.H. Pope John Paul II. The Cardinal confirmed that Catholic and Oriental Orthodox faithful are united in the same faith in the Triune God and in the Saviour Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, that they venerate in common the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and that they share as common Fathers and Teachers of the Church Saint Athanasius and Saint Cyril of Alexandria. On Thursday afternoon 29 January, H.H. Pope Shenouda III came to Saint Mark Centre to greet and bless the Joint Commission, wishing full success for the dialogue and presented personal gifts to all participants.

The first part of the meeting was dedicated to a consideration of the many studies and activities which have taken place over the past thirty years. In this context were presented and discussed the following issues: (1) Unofficial Consultations held between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches (paper by Prof. Dr. Dietmar Winkler and presentation by H.E. Archbishop Dr. Mesrob Krikorian), (2) The official dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church (papers by

H.E. Metropolitan Bishoy and Rev. Father Frans Bouwen); (3) The official dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (paper on the official dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church by Rev. Father Mathew Vellanickal; paper of Rev. Father John Mathews, read in his absence by H.E. Archbishop Dr. Mesrob Krikorian); (4) The official declarations made by the Catholic Church and any Oriental Orthodox Church (paper by Rev. Father Johan Bonny; presentations by H.E. Archbishop George Saliba, H.E. Archbishop Dr. Mesrob Krikorian, H.G. Bishop Nareg Alemezian). Rev. Father John Long distributed the booklet sponsored jointly by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches in the USA concerning various aspects of their dialogue. These papers and presentations showed that considerable work has been done, which may be helpful for the future dialogue of the commission.

In the second part of the meeting, the Workplan and Agenda for the Dialogue as established in the Preparatory Committee Report were considered. It was decided that the next meeting will deal with the first part of ecclesiology "Church as communion" (items 1-6 and 8). Item 7 of the first part of ecclesiology (Oriental Churches in communion with Rome, their ecclesial and canonical implications) will be studied in a later stage. From each side, one paper will be prepared on the following topics: (a) Understanding of communion, Constitutive elements of communion; (b) Particular and universal communion; Meaning of sister churches and of church families; (c) Full communion and degrees of communion, Common ecumenical goal.

Second Meeting of the Commission

1. Preparations for the second meeting will be undertaken under the leadership of the co-chairs;

2. This meeting will take place from 25 January (arrival) to 30 January (departure) 2005, with the option of spending the weekend at the venue; the members of the Oriental Orthodox delegation will arrive on 24 January;

3. H.E. Cardinal Walter Kasper extended an invitation to have the second meeting of the Commission in Rome;

4. Papers will be sent to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in the Vatican, by November 1st, 2004, for communication to the members of the Commission;

5. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity will offer co-ordinating facilities for the work of the Commission.

The sessions of the first meeting were held in the context of daily morning and evening prayer, and in a very cordial atmosphere. Separate meetings of the members of the two delegations enabled the co-ordinated contribution to the dialogue and sharing other concerns.

The members expressed their gratitude to the Coptic Orthodox Church and to the Director and staff-members of the Saint Mark Centre for providing accommodation and hospitality.

The members of the Commission were:

Representatives of the Oriental Orthodox Churches

Coptic Orthodox Church: H.E. Amba Bishoy (co-chair), Metropolitan of Damiette, General Secretary of the *Holy Synod, of the Coptic Orthodox Church;* H.G. Bishop Suriel, Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Melbourne (substitute of Mr. Yoftahe Dimetros, representative of the Eritrean Orthodox Church), Rev. Fr. Dr. Shenouda Maher Ishak;

Syrian Orthodox Church: H.E. Mor Theophilus George Saliba, Archbishop of Mount Lebanon, Secretary of the *Holy Synod of the Syrian Orthodox Church;* H.E. Thomas Themotheos, Metropolitan of Kottayam (India);

Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicosate of all Armenians): H.E. Dr. Mesrob K. Krikorian, Archbishop of Vienna; Rev. Fr. Gabriel Sargsyan (substitute); Rev. Fr. Dajad Tsaturyan (observer);

Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicosate of Cilicia): H.E. Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy in the U.S.A.; H.G. Bishop Nareg Alemezian, Ecumenical Officer of the *Catholicosate of Cilicia;*

Eritrean Orthodox Church: Rev. Fr. Kaleab Gebreselassie, Co-ordinator for Foreign Affairs; Mr. Yoftahe Dimetrios, General Director of the Eritrean Orthodox Church (prevented);

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church: H.E. Philipos Mar Eusebios, Metropolitan of Pathanamthitta (prevented), Rev. Dr. John Mathews (co-secretary), Secretary *Committee on Inter-Church Relations* (prevented).

Representatives of the Catholic Church

H.E. Cardinal Walter Kasper (co-chair), President of the *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity;*

H.E. Mons. Paul-Werner Scheele, Bishop-em of Würzburg (Germany);

H.E. Amba Kyrillos William, Coptic Catholic Bishop of Assiut, President of the *Ecumenical Commission of the Catholic Church in Egypt;*

H.E. Mons. Jules Mikhael Al-Jamil, Procurator of the *Syrian Catholic Patriarchate* to the Holy See and Apostolic Visitator in Europe (prevented);

H.E. Mons. BOUTROS MARAYATI, Armenian Catholic Archbishop of Aleppo, President of the *Ecumenical Commission of the Catholic Church in Syria;*

H.E. Mons. WOLDETENSAE GHEBREGHIORGHIS, Apostolic Vicar of Harar (Ethiopia), President of the *Ecumenical Commission of the Catholic Church in Ethiopia and Eritrea;*

Rev. Fr. MATHEW VELLANICKAL; Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Changanacheny (India);

Rev. Fr JOHN LONG SJ, Consultant to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; New York;

Rev. Fr. FRANS BOUWEN M. Afr.; Consultant to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; Jerusalem;

Rev. Fr. PHILIPPE LUISIER SJ; Pontificio Istituto Orientate, Rome;

Rev. Fr. MARK SHERIDAN, OSB; Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, Rome;

Rev. Fr. BOGHOS LEVON ZEKIYAN; Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Rome;

Rev. Fr. PAUL ROUHANA, OLM; Universite Saint-Esprit, Kaslik, Jounieh;

Prof. DIETMAR W. WINKLER; School of Theology, Boston University, USA;

Secretariat: Mgr JOHAN BONNY (co-secretary), staff-member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Metropolitan BISHOY Cardinal WALTER KASPER

ANGLICAN - ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

January 28 - February 3, 2004

The Anglican — Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) met from 28 January — 3 February at the Palisades Retreat Center, Seattle, under the co-chairmanship of the Most Revd Alexander J. Brunett, Archbishop of Seattle, and the Most Revd Peter Carnley, Archbishop of Perth and Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia. The Commission is extremely grateful for the generous hospitality of Archbishop Alex Brunett, who welcomed the Commission to his Archdiocese and diocesan Retreat Center. A special welcome was extended to Archbishop Peter Carnley, who had been appointed as Anglican Co-Chair following the resignation of the Most Revd Frank Griswold in November 2003.

The Commission completed work on the text of the Seattle Statement, "Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ", which it is now submitting to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and to the Archbishop of Canterbury together with the Anglican Consultative Council. The Commission hopes that the sponsoring bodies will be able to move towards the publication of the document in due course.

The publication of "Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ" will bring to completion the second phase of work of the Anglican — Roman Catholic International Commission, which was mandated in 1982 by Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Robert Runcie. In the course of the last twenty years, the Commission has published four agreed statements — Salvation and the Church (1987), The Church as Communion (1991), Life in Christ (1994) and The Gift of Authority (1999). In 1999, the Commission began work on a consideration of the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life and doctrine of the Church.

The Church's understanding of Mary has been a subject of deep controversy between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Discussion at Seattle has placed the Roman Catholic dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of Mary, and how they may relate to any future restoration of Communion, within the broader context of Scriptural and theological reflection on Mary. Following its established methodology, the Commission has sought to go behind entrenched positions, and to articulate a common approach to the subject under discussion.

The meeting concluded with an ecumenical Celebration of Vespers for the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (the Presentation of Christ in the Temple) in St James' Cathedral, Seattle.

Bishop Brian Farrell and Canon Gregory Cameron, speaking on behalf of Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and Canon John L Peterson, Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council, expressed heartfelt gratitude to current and former members of the Commission for their devoted and sustained hard work over a period of twenty years on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. They also expressed the commitment of the Pontifical Council and the Anglican Communion to the ongoing theological dialogue, and looked forward to the establishment of a new Commission in the near future.

The Commission expresses its gratitude to Professor Rozanne Elder for her work over several years in the preparation of worship resources at Commission meetings. It would also like to thank not only Archbishop Alex Brunett, but also the staff of the Palisades Center and the Archdiocese of Seattle for the bountiful and generous hospitality which had been extended to it.

The members of ARCIC are:

ANGLICANS

The Most Revd PETER CARNLEY (Archbishop of Perth and Primate of Australia, Co-Chair)

The Rt Revd JOHN BAYCROFT

Professor ROZANNE ELDER

The Revd CANON JONATHAN GOUGH

The Revd Professor JACI MARASCHIN

The Revd Dr JOHN MUDDIMAN

The Rt Revd MICHAEL NAZIR-ALI

The Revd Professor NICHOLAS SAGOVSKY

The Revd Dr CHARLES SHERLOCK

The Revd CANON GREGORY CAMERON (Anglican Communion Office, Co-Secretary)

ROMAN CATHOLICS

The Most Revd ALEXANDER J BRUNETT (Archbishop of Seattle, Co-Chair)

Sister SARA BUTLER, MSBT

The Revd Dr PETER CROSS

The Revd Dr ADELBERT DENAUX

The Most Revd BRIAN FARRELL LC

The Rt Revd MALCOLM MCMAHON OP

The Revd Professor CHARLES MOREROD OP

The Revd Professor LIAM WALSH OP

The Revd CANON DONALD BOLEN (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Co-Secretary)

CONSULTANT

Dom EMMANUEL LANNE OSB

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Mrs CHRISTINE CODNER (Anglican Communion Office)

Ms GIOVANNA RAMON (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity)

ARCHBISHOP RAMON TORRELLA CASCANTE

1923-2004

His Excellency the Most Reverend Ramon Torrella Cascante, Archbishop Emeritus of Tarragona, (Spain) died on 22 April at the age of 80. Msgr. Torrella had served as Vice President of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity from 1975-1983 before being named Archbishop of Tarragona in 1983.

Ordained as Auxiliary bishop of Barcelona in 1968, Bishop Torrella was appointed in 1970 as Vice-President of the Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax" and of the Pontifical Councils for the Laity and "Cor Unum", where he served before coming to the SPCU.

When Msgr. Torrella left in 1983 to take up his responsibilities in Tarragona the SPCU expressed its thanks in this way: "this Secretariat owes him an enormous debt of gratitude for his day-to-day work in the office here and for his personal involvement in collaboration with other Christians, particularly as co-chairman of the Joint Working Group with the World Council of Churches and also of the coordinating committee of the Catholic/Orthodox Theological dialogue" *[Information Service* 51 (1983)1]. Later, in 1993 Msgr. Torrella took part in the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, held at Santiago di Compostela, giving a homily at one of the major prayer services.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity remembers him in Prayer, and expresses its deep gratitude for the service he gave to this office.

COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS

CONCERT OF RECONCILIATION

January 17, 2004

On Saturday evening, 17 January, the Holy Father attended a Concert of Reconciliation in the Vatican's Paul VI Audience Hall. The performance was co-sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the respective Commissions for Religious Relations with the Jews and with the Muslims. On the programme was the work HAbraham", written specially for this concert by the American composer John Harbison, and Gustav Mahler's (Resurrection) Symphony N. 2. Sir Gilbert Levine, KCSG, conducted these musical works that were performed by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Kraków Philharmonic Choir, the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, the London Philharmonic Choir and the Ankara State Polyphonic Choir. The following is a translation of the Pope's Address at the conclusion of the concert, which was given in Italian.

THE POPE'S ADDRESS

1. I have taken part with deep emotion in this evening's concert dedicated to the theme of reconciliation among Jews, Christians and Muslims. With deep participation 1 listened to the splendid musical performance that gave us all an opportunity for reflection and prayer. I greet and cordially thank the sponsors of this initiative and everyone who helped to organize it.

I greet the Presidents and the members of the Pontifical Councils that sponsored this very important event. I greet the well-known figures and representatives of various Jewish International Organizations, of the Churches and Ecclesial Communities and of Islam; they have made our meeting even more evocative with their participation. A special "thank you" goes to the Knights of Columbus who gave the concert their concrete support, and to RAI (Italian Radio and Television), represented here by the directors who have ensured its proper broadcast.

I then extend my greeting to the distinguished conductor, Maestro Gilbert Levine, the members of the "Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra" and the choirs from Ankara, Kraków, London and Pittsburgh. The choice of pieces for this evening has brought to our attention two important points which, despite the different treatment they are given by the respective sacred texts, bind together in a certain way all those who refer to Judaism, Islam and Christianity. These two points are: veneration for the Patriarch Abraham and the resurrection of the dead. We have heard the masterly comment in the sacred motet "Abraham" by John Harbison, and in Gustav Mahler's Symphony N. 2 that was inspired by the dramatic poem "Dziady" [celebration of death] written by Adam Mickiewicz, the distinguished Polish playwright.

2. The history of relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims is marked by patches of light and shadow and has unfortunately known some painful moments. Today we are aware of the pressing need for sincere reconciliation among believers in the one God.

This evening we are gathered here to give concrete expression to this commitment to reconciliation, entrusting ourselves to the universal message of music. We have been reminded of the recommendation *"I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless" (Gn* 17:1). Every human being hears these words echoing within him: he knows that one day he will have to account to that God who observes his pilgrimage on earth from on High.

The unanimous hope that we express is that people may be purified of the hatred and evil that threaten peace continuously, and be able to extend to one another hands that have never been stained by violence but are ready to offer help and comfort to those in need.

3. Jews honour the Almighty as *protector of the human person* and the God of the *promises of life.* Christians know that love is the reason why God enters into relations with human beings and that love is the response he demands of them. For Muslims, God is good and can fill the believer with his mercies. Nourished by these convictions, Jews, Christians and Muslims cannot accept that the earth be afflicted by hatred or that humanity be overwhelmed by endless wars.

Yes! We must find within us the courage for peace. We must implore from on High the gift of peace. And this peace will spread like a soothing balm if we travel non-stop on the road to reconciliation. Then the wilderness will become a garden in which justice will flourish, and the effect of justice will be peace (cf. *Is* 32:15-16).

Omnia vincit amor!

ORE, January 21, 2004

CARDINAL KASPER'S GREETING

Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, introduced the evening by addressing the following greeting to the Holy Father:

Most Holy Father
Distinguished Guests
Eminences, Excellencies
All those here tonight!

"You will be the father of a multitude of peoples".

This is the promise of the Almighty. This promise has gathered here tonight representatives of the multitudes of peoples, children of Abraham, belonging the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam. We are all descendents of the one father in faith; before the Almighty we are a single family, with a diversity of children — sadly, with a painful history, but also a family based on a shared promise, the promise of life and peace; a family that is becoming increasingly aware of its common origin and destiny.

On behalf of all of us gathered, I would like to greet first of all the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, who has worked tirelessly during his 25 years of pontificate for the reconciliation of the children of Abraham. Some of the 'steps' along this journey come to mind: his visit to the Synagogue of Rome and his prayer at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem; the visit to the Al Azhar University in Cairo and to the mosque of the Ommaiad in Damascus. We thank you, Holiness, for your courageous example in the midst of contempt, hatred and violence; we thank you for your message of mutual respect among all people and all religions; we thank you for your contribution to peace in the world.

We are different in our faith and we speak different languages, but we are all capable of listening and understanding the message of music, to that wonderful musical poem composed by Gustav Mahler, which embodies the struggles, the challenges and the setbacks of humanity, but also of the burning desire of the soul: "I come from God", it tells us, "and I will return to where I have come from. God will show me the light, which will lead me to eternal life". This is promise that encourages, supports and comforts us: this is the message we must together convey to a world that often loses the meaning of life. We, Jews, Christians, Muslims, share the hope of Paradise in the Lord. The music of Mahler, inspired by the great poet and dramatist Adam Mickiewicz and by the German Romantic poets Arnim and Brentano, will tell us shortly: "Nothing that you have suffered, nothing that you have borne, has been in vain. We live to be resurrected".

I extend greetings to Maestro Levine, to John Harbison, the composer of the first part of the progamme, and to the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, to the Choirs of Ankara, Krakow, London and Pittsburgh, who will convey this message of hope and reconciliation among the people of our common Patriarch, Abraham. Peace, Shalom, Salaam.

TO THE CHIEF RABBINATE OF ISRAEL

January 16, 2004

On Friday, 16 January, the Holy Father received in his Private Library the two Chief Rabbis of Israel, Jonah Metzger and Shlomo Amar and Mr Oded Wiener, General Director of the Chief Rabbinate, who had come to Rome to attend the Concert of Reconciliation at the Vatican. The following is the Holy Father's Address to the delegation.

Distinguished Gentlemen,

I am pleased that you have come to Rome to attend the Concert of Reconciliation at the Vatican, and I am happy to extend to you today my warm and cordial greetings. In the 25 years of my Pontificate I have striven to promote Jewish-Catholic dialogue and to foster ever greater understanding, respect and cooperation between us. Indeed, one of the highlights of my Pontificate will always remain my Jubilee Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which included intense moments of remembrance, reflection and prayer at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial and at the Western Wall.

The official dialogue established between the Catholic Church and the Chief Rabbinate of Israel is a sign of great hope. We must spare no effort in working together to build a world of justice, peace and reconciliation for all peoples. May Divine Providence bless our work and crown it with success!

ORE, January 21, 2004

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TO THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTRE

December 1, 2003

On Monday, 1 December, the Holy Father met in his Private Library with members of the European Branch of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre of Paris. The following is the Pope's Address to the delegation.

Dear Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican today and I thank you for your good wishes and for the gift that you have presented to me on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of my election to the See of Peter.

In these difficult times let us pray that all peoples everywhere: will be strengthened in their commitment to mutual understanding, reconciliation and peace.

ORE, December 10, 2003

DOCUMENTATION SUPPLEMENT

PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2005

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

It gives me great pleasure to send you the resources prepared for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 2005.

For many years, the material for the Week of Prayer has been prepared jointly by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the World Council of Churches' Commission for Faith and Order. I am delighted to inform you that this year, for the first time, we are also jointly publishing these resources. You will note that the title page reads 'Resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity *and throughout the year* 2005', communicating our shared hope that the enclosed material will be of assistance in promoting prayer for Christian unity, publicly and privately, both during and beyond the designated 'Week of Prayer'.

The central theme of the proposed worship service and meditations for the eight days is 'Christ, the one Foundation of the Church'. The central biblical text is *1 Cor* 3:1-23, in which St Paul calls the Corinthian community to rise above its divisions and come to a spiritual maturity and a unity of mind and purpose rooted in Jesus Christ.

The initial draft of the enclosed material was prepared by members of the Theological Committee of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Slovakia. In September of 2003, the Slovakian draft was presented to an international preparatory group comprised of representatives of the Catholic Church and of the Faith and Order Commission. The international group met at the Jesuit Retreat House in Piestaňy, Slovakia, and revised the text for international distribution.

As always, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity requests that you bring this material to the attention of those responsible for coordinating Prayer for Christian Unity events. Our intent is that these materials be adapted to reflect the diverse liturgical traditions, and to address the social and cultural context and the reality of ecumenical relations in each country. The process of adapting the materials should normally take place ecumenically, thus providing a valuable opportunity for collaboration between Christians at the local level.

With best wishes and sincere thanks for your efforts in seeking the unity which Christ desires for us, I remain

Yours sincerely,

+ BRIAN FARRELL *Secretary*

RESOURCES FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR 2005

Christ, the one foundation of the Church (*1 Cor* 3:1-23)

FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

It is a joy for us both to announce the birth of a new era of collaboration between the Pontifical CounciUCatholic Church and Faith and Order/World Council of Churches and a further, small step in the direction of Christian unity. This year, for the first time, the text for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity *that you have in your hands has not only been jointly prepared by the PCPCU and Faith and Order but is being jointly published by them. Although this has been the case* de facto *for some years we have also now adopted a common format.*

We urge you to make good use of the text — not only during one particular week in the year but as a basis both for your private and public prayers for unity throughout *the year.*

BRIAN FARRELL
Secretary,
Pontifical Council for
Promoting Christian Unity

SAMUEL KOBIA
General Secretary,
World Council
of Churches

THE SEARCH FOR UNITY: THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

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

Mindful of this flexibility concerning the date, we encourage you to understand the material presented here as an invitation to find opportunities throughout the whole year to express the degree of communion which the churches have already received, and to pray together for that full unity which is Christ's will.

ADAPTING THE TEXT

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

USING THE WEEK OF PRAYER MATERIAL

- For churches and Christian communities which observe the week of prayer together through a single common service, an order for an ecumenical worship service is provided.

- Churches and Christian communities may also incorporate material from the week of prayer into their own services. Prayers from the ecumenical worship service, the "eight days", and the selection of additional prayers can be used as appropriate in their own setting.

- Communities which observe the week of prayer in their worship for each day during the week may draw material for these services from the "eight days".

- Those wishing to do Bible studies on the week of prayer theme can use as a basis the biblical texts and reflections given in the "eight days". Each day the discussions can lead to a closing period of intercessory prayer.

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

1 Corinthians 3:1-23

And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, "/ belong to Paul", and another, "I belong to Apollos", are you not merely human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labour of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder 1 laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it.

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness" and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile".

So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

(New Revised Standard Version)

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

Christ, the one Foundation of the Church (*1 Cor* 3:1-23)

The situation in which the theme was developed is marked by new possibilities for church growth. The churches in Slovakia have experienced more than a decade of renewal and growth after four decades of living in a political situation which, while allowing the churches to exist, attempted to impede their growth and limit their witness in society. In the process of preparing the theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the preparatory group reflected on the following questions: 1. What is the foundation on which the new "existence" of their churches is being built? 2. Is there a space to grow in unity as the respective confessional communities grow? 3. What are the means for strengthening the service of the church?

The New Testament preserves letters written to the churches as encouragement for their spiritual growth since they lived in a world often hostile to the values of the gospel. One of these is the first letter to the Christians of Corinth from which the members of the preparatory group drew their guidance. The following reflections provide a theological and pastoral introduction to this year's theme and the eight days drawing principally from the Slovak context and the recent experience of its Christian communities. These questions may challenge all churches and Christian communities in whatever context they find themselves - whether of growth or decline.

GROWING IN FAITH IS GROWING IN UNITY

While reflecting on the Slovak experience of growth, it was realized that this growth is truly a gift to all the churches in Slovakia. People, who previous to 1989 avoided church fellowship, began turning to the churches with the important questions in their lives. This meant that the churches needed to learn how to respond by communicating the gospel in this new context of growth. This situation was not unlike that of Paul who had aided the church in Corinth in its phase of growth.

However, the process of growth is not without its setbacks and problems. Paul observed that the Corinthians were still not ready for the solid food that provides for growth in faith. It is normal to begin growing with milk. However, if after a time, the body cannot absorb solid food, there is something wrong, unhealthy in the body.

Paul used a very strong expression to describe the people in Corinth. He calls them "people of the flesh" because he sees them lacking in spiritual maturity. They are still living according to human inclinations indicated by their petty jealousy and quarrelling among themselves (day 1). How can Paul use these strong words to describe a people whose church is so rich in diverse gifts and so full of life? He himself knows of this richness and comments on it in *1 Cor* 14.

The lack of spiritual maturity was not evident in the absence of lofty thoughts or visible signs of power. The congregation was rich in gifts and works. They were not poorer or weaker than any other congregation in this regard. In spite of all of this Paul describes the church as one of the flesh, as infants. Why? Because there was a lack of unity among them.

In turn, the churches in Slovakia have asked themselves how authentic their growth has been these past 15 years of new freedom and new possibilities? What is the value of their achievements if there are still tensions among them as different confessions? The churches in Slovakia have realized the need to pray for growth in faith marked by unity in service and mutual understanding.

HUMILITY IN SERVICE UNITES

The reason for division in Corinth was not due to the rejection of any basic tenets of the faith. The problem in Corinth was a matter of not leaving behind the old unredeemed patterns of human behaviour. In spite of the many spiritual gifts the Corinthians had been blessed with, there was something lacking: they were not united in the same mind and the same purpose. Paul rejects this way of being Christian. He does not fall into the trap of jealousy of other leaders when some people adore him and identify themselves as those who belong to him. He insists that neither he nor Apollos are "lords" to whom people would belong. They are "servants through whom others came to believe" (7 *Cor* 3:5). Even this ministry was not exercised through their own power. In fulfilling this service, they were completely dependent on the grace of the Lord. They performed the service "as the Lord assigned to each".

This attitude shows humility and greatness at the same time. Paul's understanding of service is distinct from a worldly perspective, wherein to be "only a servant" is the opposite pole of wanting to be served as somebody important in the church. Jesus teaches us in Matthew 20:28: "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve". Therefore, all the gifts received need to be put at the service of the plan of God since these should point back to the author of these gifts and not the recipient.

Paul understands that the fruit of this service will be different since it is built on cooperation. This is indeed the reality experienced in the Slovakian context. Because of a new situation, namely the mobility of people, ministers frequently do not see the fruits of the word that was planted. Now, as in the pauline context, some plant while others tend to the daily needs of growth, and still others harvest. In the past, people remained in the same villages and towns so that their pastors tended to their spiritual needs

from planting the seed of the gospel to its maturity in the fruits that were harvested. Today there may be many involved in this process of growth. This process is not without problems. Even within churches of the same confession this leads to tensions among fellow servants as it did in Corinth. Moreover it is often forgotten that it is not the ministers who enable faith to grow but it is "only God who gives the growth" (day 2).

This situation causes us to pause and ask: to what extent are the tensions among us really caused by differences in our teaching? How much pride is there still among us? To what extent does a longing for power control our actions instead of a desire and a readiness to serve?

Paul had to confront a similar situation among Christians in Corinth. His solution was that humility in service unites. This, too, is what the churches are learning in their life together. We realize that we are co-workers, working together with God, each building on the one foundation laid by God, namely Jesus Christ. In knowing this we are then able to support each other and act according to the grace God has given to each of us (day 3).

BUILDING SERVICE ON THE ONE FOUNDATION

The responsibility that we have in our service is great. The foundation has been laid, but the edifice that rises on it depends on the work of each builder. How will each use the gift that God gives? Paul makes reference later in his letter that there is a variety of gifts and services given but that it is the same Lord who bestows them. This diversity is given by the same Spirit for the common good and for unity of the body (*1 Cor* 12:4ff). These gifts must then be used appropriately for the work of edifying the church and of building bridges as a sign of hope and the fruit of unity in Christ (day 4).

What is clear for Paul and for our context is that the work that has been done in building will be tested so that the sort of work done by each will be brought to light. In the past, the churches have at times been caught up with themselves and in their agendas, and not with tending to the proclamation of Christ crucified and risen as the foundation of Christian life. Paul considered himself accountable before God for what he had accomplished. In the same way, the churches need to be accountable not only before God but to each other as co-workers in their service. The kind of work done will reveal the quality of our discipleship, (day 5).

In attempting to encourage the Christians in Corinth, Paul needed to affirm the nature of who they were. Because they have received the gift of the Spirit they have become the temple of God and bear God's image. This reality challenges these Christians to live united with the Spirit who in turn unites them to Christ, the one foundation (day 6).

From our human experiences and the histories that we recount, we can begin to see the folly of our ways which have caused divisions among those who follow Christ. This foolishness is what Paul began with in his letter to the Corinthians when he exhorts them to be in agreement and avoid divisions since they should be of the same mind and purpose (*1 Cor* 1:10). We have made from the one Church of Christ, many divisions, founded on disagreements since we have not been of the same mind and purpose but have worked against one another. This may be seen as the fruit of living in a world where such traits as individualism and competition are considered to be wisdom. By contrast, Paul proclaims the message of Christ who humbled himself to accept our human weaknesses even unto death, thus revealing "what God has prepared for those who love him" (*1 Cor* 2:9) (day 7).

Paul makes a connection between different co-workers who are in the service of the gospel. Then he sets this fellowship into a context of universal and cosmic unity. He is assuring those, who in different times and different ways are building on the one foundation, that they together belong to Christ. They are of Christ. If we belong to Christ then we also belong to God. Paul is aware of how God has acted in creation through Christ to make all things new and to reconcile all things. As fellow servants and ministers, we are united when we realize that our service starts in Christ and is directed to God who has laid the one foundation of our faith and from whom our unity comes (day 8).

The eight days of prayer are an invitation to reflect together as different churches, to ask a blessing for each other and to see where we can grow together in unity.

PREPARATION OF THE MATERIAL FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2005

The initial draft of this material was prepared by an ecumenical group composed of members of The Theological Committee of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Slovakia. Those participating in the preparation were (in alphabetical order):

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Rev. JOZEF HAVERCAK (Orthodox Church)

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We wish to thank the theological committee for providing material and inspiration for our work.

The material reached its present form at a meeting of an international preparatory group named by the Commission on Faith and Order of The World

Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity of the Catholic Church. The international group met at the Jesuit Retreat House in Piest&y, Slovakia and was received by its director, Father Emil Vani. We also wish to thank the centre and all its staff for their welcome and their prayerful support of our work. Our gratitude is expressed to the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Slovakia and its general secretary, the Rev. Ondrej Prostrednik for their work in organizing the local preparatory process and hosting the international preparatory meeting.

WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The theme of the worship is: *Christ, the one foundation of the church.*

The worship begins with the congregation giving thanks to Christ for his work of salvation.

The complete text of *1 Cor* 3 is at the heart of the worship, though one of our two options for the liturgy of the word proposes that only verses 10-13 are to be read within that liturgy. The other readings can develop the theme of sturdiness and the quality of the building of the church upon Christ, the cornerstone and foundation of our unity.

The penitential prayer and prayer of forgiveness comes after the proclamation of the word of God. This allows it to be an essential element in the worship. Some congregations will prefer to leave it in its traditional place towards the beginning. It is intended that each community participating in the service examine its collective conscience before Christ (v. 4) the foundation of the one church. Expressions of penitence, symbols and testimonies will assist this process.

Do we proclaim the gospel together, recognizing and sharing the gifts which the Lord gives our churches (v. 5)? Do we accept the complementary role of our churches in certain local situations? Do we recognize the primacy of Christ, whose servants we are? Do we really labour together at God's work? (v. 9)

The symbol proposed here is that of two wooden planks or beams, assembled midway through the service into a simple cross. It evokes not only the gates of hell destroyed by Christ by his resurrection but also the solid materials habitually used in the construction of a house. Once placed on the ground as a cross, other symbols — of penitence, or expressing our faith and our unequivocal belonging to Christ for the building up of the one church — could be set on top of it, such as candles/nightlights, germinating heads of corn, flowers, or children's drawings.

During the intercessions, inspired by *1 Cor* 3:1-23, the congregation entrusts to Christ, the one mediator, the work of Christians and the diakonia of the churches throughout the world, beyond the domain of ecumenism.

(See over for Order of Service)

ORDER OF SERVICE

I. GATHERING

Words of welcome

Dear friends in Christ, as we gather together, we thank God for calling us to search for unity. We thank God for all who in different parts of the world desire, and pray for Christian unity. Within the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity for the year 2005 we pray and meditate with the churches in Slovakia. God has blessed them with new opportunities to serve, reconcile and receive spiritual gifts. Inspired by their ministry, with Christians all over the world we reflect on the foundation of our common faith - Jesus Christ the Lord, who is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

As the service begins, two planks of wood will be carried to the altar/communion table. These wooden planks have rich, symbolic content. A common material for building houses, the wood represents the foundation on which the churches are invited to construct unity. During the worship, we shall assemble the two planks into the form of a cross, as a sign of our common foundation, Jesus Christ. The two planks also symbolize Christ's victory over death as he broke the gates of hell and announced life.

(Processional music)

Greeting

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

Introductory sentence

No one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ (*1* Cor 3:11).

Opening prayer

Let us pray *(brief silence)*

Living God, we give thanks to you for your great works among us. We thank you especially for Jesus Christ who through his death on the cross has saved us. Keep us close to Jesus, seeking comfort and joy, healing and wisdom at the foot of his life-giving cross. With all the faithful, and all creation, we praise

you; through Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

L1 and L2= First and Second Leaders

C= Congregation

After each verse — where "I" is Christ — the congregation praises the name of the Lord. The response to the Lord could be sung , formulated using the first person plural , "we" Alternatively , a simple spoken response could be used , as below . The litany might start with the words "Thus speaks the Lord Jesus".

Litany of thanksgiving

L1 Because I love you, O my people, I was bom in Bethlehem.
They called me Emmanuel, for I am God with you, for ever and ever.

C We *praise you Lord.*

L2 I went down into the Jordan where I was baptized in the water, as a sign of the baptism in the Spirit who would come that all flesh might be purified and renewed.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L1 I was led by the Spirit into the desert to confront the Tempter, to overcome him and to free you from his chains.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L2 I proclaimed the good news of the reign of the Father, a reign of justice and mercy, of love and truth, peace and joy.
I accomplished the signs of the "new age", my hands cured the sick, my presence brought peace.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L1 I brought you together, little flock, as a hen gathers her chicks, as the shepherd gathers his sheep. I wanted to take you on my shoulders and lead you into heaven.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L2 I broke bread and offered new wine to forge an alliance with you and to give you life in all its fullness. I prayed to the Father that my joy might be in you.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L2 I died on a cross of wood, for the forgiveness of sins and to bring back the scattered children of the Father, and I opened the gates of hell.
On the third day I rose from the dead.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L1 From my place beside the Father, I pour down upon you my holy Spirit.
He will remind you of all that I have taught you,
He is the breath of life,
He is light and consolation, the force of your witness and the inspiration of your prayer.

C *We praise you Lord.*

L2 Listen to me 0 my people, for I am with you everyday until the end of time, that you may be *one* with me as I am *one* with my Father, that the world might believe.
Listen to my voice, my people and follow me so that there is but one flock and one Shepherd.

C *We praise you Lord.*

Congregational response:

- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing! *(Eph 1)*
- *Or* Glory to God in the highest!
- *Or* To You be the glory
- *Or* another hymn of praise to Christ

II. THE WORD

Prayer before readings

May the pure light of divine knowledge shine in our hearts, O Lord, friend of all men and women. Open the windows of our minds to the meaning of your gospel message. Inspire in us the respect of your blessed commandments, so that, overcoming the desires of the flesh, we lead a life according to the spirit, directing all our intentions and acts that they may be pleasing to you. For you are the light of our souls and our bodies O Christ, and we glorify you together with your Eternal Father and your good and life-giving Holy Spirit, from now until eternity. Amen.

Readings (Set 1 or *Set 2)*

Setl: *Gen* 28:10-17
Psalm 118:16-24
1 Cor 3:10-13a

Set 2: *1* Cor 3:1-23
Psalm 118:16-24

Hymn

Gospel: Mt 7:24-27

Sermon (or testimonies) We recommend a brief sermon/homily.

Hymn (offering can be taken up here)

Confession and pardon (background music)

Two people form a cross from the two planks of wood. They place the cross on the ground, in a visible place in the worship space.

Between each expression of repentance, members of the congregation can come forward to place upon the cross either a symbol of Christ as foundation of the church, a candle/nightlight, a flower or a stem of com. This gesture expresses our desire for conversion and

our renewed belonging in Christ for the construction of the one church.

L1 Lord, you are peace and reconciliation!

L2 Forgive us Lord, for often choosing jealousy and animosity rather than confidence and respect between churches.

(Silence and placing of a symbol on the cross)

L1 Lord, you give us an abundance of blessings in the unity of faith!

L2 Forgive us Lord, for often choosing isolation and refusing to be a blessing for each other, between churches.

(Silence and placing of a symbol on the cross)

L1 Lord, you have given joy to the afflicted, liberation to the captives, pardon to sinners!

L2 Forgive us Lord, for having closed our hands and turned our faces away from those who need help.

(Silence and placing of a symbol on the cross)

L1 Lord, you have gathered us together as a shepherd gathers his flock and then goes to seek the one sheep that is lost!

L2 Forgive us Lord, for having often strayed far from you, and pushed you away, thus underlining our divisions.

(Silence and placing of a symbol on the cross)

Examples of openness to ecumenism which have required a true personal or community conversion can be given here.

Prayer for forgiveness

L: Almighty Lord, no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid. That foundation is Jesus Christ. We admit that we have not been able to finish building on this foundation in such a way that we may become the dwelling place of God. We have sometimes even been the cause of its ruin. Even if our work should be lost, save us, Lord and give us a fresh chance to work for unity. Create in us an ardent longing for the unity of your church and enable us to work towards it. Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Nicene Creed

III. Prayers

Intercessions (two or more worship leaders)

The apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Corinthians to encourage them. May we have the same hope as the Corinthian church as we pray for the church of God and for all people according to their needs.

Eternal God, we thank you for calling us by name. In you we live and move and grow. We pray for churches and Christians throughout the world. Remind us of our common foundation in Christ . May we grow together in faith and in love, until we attain that unity which is your will.

Build us together in Christ,
Make us your dwelling place.

Send down your Spirit so that we may know Jesus and bear witness to our life and unity in him. May we know the mind of Christ in order to speak Gods' wisdom everywhere. Strengthen us to work towards peace and reconciliation in church and society.

Build us together in Christ,
Make us your dwelling place.

We pray for the churches in Slovakia and for all churches which are experiencing change — growth or struggle, reconciliation or conflict. Inspire and strengthen them in works of witness and service.

Build us together in Christ,
Make us your dwelling place.

We pray for those who have no home, no land, no food, no work, no medicine, no peace. May we recognize and serve Christ in the suffering and the needy.

Build us together in Christ,
Make us your dwelling place.

We thank you for all your gifts of creation. Teach us to share with others our time, our energy, our resources and our love. Make us sensitive and responsive to the wounds in the human family and creation. May we be faithful to our calling and live a long life on earth. May we give our whole life to Christ, for we belong to him and in him are united all things on earth and in heaven. Amen.

(Local congregations are encouraged to add petitions according to their own context and experience.)

The Lord's Prayer (each in her or his own language)

IV. Benediction and Dismissal

Benediction (Aaronic blessing)

The Lord bless you/us and keep you/us. The Lord make his face to shine upon you/us and be gracious to you/us. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you/us and give you/us peace. Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

(Postlude)

DAY 1: CALLED TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY (*1 Cor* 3:1-4)

Hos 2:21-23	I will say to Lo-ammi (not my people) "you are my people"
Ps 24	Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
Col 1:25-28	The mystery hidden throughout the ages
Jn 15:1-8	I am the vine, you are the branches

COMMENTARY

In Saint Paul's letter to the Christian community of Corinth, a community for whom he had played an important role in laying the foundations of faith, Paul is eager to call the Corinthians to spiritual maturity. While celebrating the gifts God had bestowed on this community, he confronts them with the echoes of division which have been reported to him, as expressed in the conflicting slogans: *I am for Paul; I am for Apollos; lam for Cephas.* Paul responds with the evocative question: *Has Christ been divided?*

There is a Hebrew tradition, found in the Old Testament, of God giving a people a name, reflective of their spiritual state, in order to call them to fidelity or conversion. In an analogous manner, Paul names the Corinthians as *people of the flesh,* as *infants in Christ,* lamenting that for the moment he cannot address them as *spiritual people.* He identifies their preoccupation with allegiances as immature and not in keeping with the mind of Christ. His words are abrupt, not because their behaviour is unusually small-minded, but because of its stark contrast with the magnitude and divine origin of their Christian calling: for they are God's temple, wherein God's Spirit dwells; they belong to Christ, and will be given all things in him. This identity in Christ carries with it a mission: with Paul, they are to make known *the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages,* and to be stewards of this mystery, proclaiming the great redemptive action of God in Christ and witnessing to it in their transformed lives.

It is worth noting that the divisions in Corinth had to do with conflicts in their reception of the preaching of the apostles: *I am for Cephas; I am for Paul.* Here we see a foreshadowing of the divisions which historically would scar our unity in Christ, built on the faith of the apostles. It is in a deepening acknowledgement of the faith of the early church that Christians today seek to find their unity. We live with Paul's question still: *Has Christ been divided?* Spiritual maturity has to do, in part, with retrieving and incarnating the unity given us in Christ. To what extent does our disunity derive from our being less than mature in the faith, less than expansive in our Christian vision? In what ways does our disunity keep us from carrying out the healing and reconciling mission of Christ in a broken and needy world?

PRAYER

Gracious God, you continue to call us to spiritual maturity. You desire to name us as your own. Open our hearts and minds to the greatness of our calling, and help us to walk in unity — in communion with Paul and Apollos and Cephas — as we proclaim and place ourselves at the service of your redeeming work in the world. Amen.

DAY 2: GOD IS IN CHARGE OF GROWTH (*1 Cor* 3:5-9)

Gen 1:26-2:9	The Lord God planted a garden in Eden.
Ps 104:24-31	You renew the surface of the earth
Rom 8:14-25	Creation awaits with impatience the revelation of the Son of God
Lk 8:4-15	It is those who hear the word ...and bear fruit

COMMENTARY

Speaking to the people of Corinth, Paul uses an image familiar to them, of planting and growth. It is a rural image taken to illustrate the works of God, who is directly at work in their midst, calling forth servants who will collaborate in his work.

Like the Corinthians, we are called to be instruments, faithful servants who will be judged for the way in which we accomplish this work. It is an important task, both to be in this service and to bear the responsibility of the work to be accomplished to the glory of God. We must offer our talents to him whom we serve; and place our competence on the only foundation which is Christ, in order to build an edifice in the service of love.

God has made this world good. We see this in the first chapter of Genesis. Humankind has gone beyond the role given us therein; we have destroyed this perfect world. That is why we are called to a ministry of healing in the world *(Rom* 8). This multifaceted ministry unites us. It consists of diverse facets, transcending confessional and cultural barriers. The world is wounded, in the same way as the traveller lying on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. We must not be afraid to touch what is broken in our world. God desires to heal through our intervention. Creation awaits with impatience the healing which will come from God.

Within the unity which is sought, Christians can exchange their own experiences to show that beyond being of Paul or of Apollos, they are Christ's. Only Christ can help them grow in the love of the Father, in the service of the Spirit of holiness and of unity who desires to save the world and its marginalized people.

PRAYER

0 God,

We thank you for the confidence and blessing which you offer to those who work for the coming of your reign in this world.

Help us to find new ways of carrying out your work in the service of those around us.

May we serve, rather than seek to be served, and may your healing power be at work among us.

United as one family of your only Son, may we be faithful stewards of your creation so that you may be known by all men and women, great and small, by all things and all people, as the true living saviour and creator of all. Amen.

DAY 3: CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION (*1 Cor* 3:10-11)

Is 28:14-16 I am laying a foundation stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation

Ps 118:16-24 The stone rejected has become the cornerstone

Eph 2:19-22 Christ Jesus as the cornerstone

Mt 7:24-27 A house built on the rock will not fall

COMMENTARY

God in Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, has laid down a common foundation for all the baptized. Christians can therefore affirm their faith in Christ, the one foundation on which the church of God is built. Since nobody can lay down any other foundation, Christians can confess together that the foundation on which their faith is built, is what God in Christ has done. This conviction is a source of thankfulness and humility.

In their efforts to be rooted in the one foundation, many Christians have been and continue to be challenged by other voices that contradict and tend to reject Christ. Christians in such situations are called to be like leaven in society, trusting that they will be supported by the grace of God. Therefore in the face of testing, Christians must never waver. Since Jesus was rejected, his followers too must be prepared to endure the same trials.

On the foundation of Christ and his teaching, we are able to meet the challenges of present day society. As Christians, we are not afraid to make use of what others consider useless, as a starting point for witness in the world.

Christians are convinced that to build on Jesus Christ as the sure and common foundation implies the idea of working together from a common starting point towards a common goal, namely the unity of all the followers of Christ.

The meaning of Jesus Christ for us predefines in a unique and profound way the character of every joint activity or whatever we do separately. The power of Christ's love fills us with great hope that whatever we create in his name has a capacity to last, and survive even in the midst of difficulties, because Christ is the beginning and the end.

PRAYER

Lord our God, through the work of the Holy Spirit you have established in Christ the one foundation on which your church is built. We thank you for what you have done for us in Christ. We thank you too for continually upholding your church in the midst of all attempts to destroy it. Help us by your grace that we may build on the foundation you have laid down in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

DAY 4: YOU ARE TO BUILD ON THE FOUNDATION (*1 Cor* 3:12-13)

Neh 2:17-18 Come let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem

Ps 127 Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain

1 Cor 12:4-11 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit

Mt 20:1-16 A landowner went out to hire labourers to work in his vineyard

COMMENTARY

Christ is God's gift to the world. In him the salvation and liberation of the whole of humankind is revealed. He is the basis and the source of the new life which God has given us. There is no need for us to add anything to complete this gift of God.

But this does not mean that we should remain passive and detached. Paul writes of the commitment to build on the foundation. He affirms our vocation and response. We are called to be workers in God's work of renewal and labourers in his household.

God has given us different gifts (7 *Cor* 12). We have to make use of them for the one purpose: to glorify Christ and the power of his peace. Through our work we are to be witnesses to God's love and to our unity in Christ.

In the history of the churches we can see that not everything which is done in the name of Christ was really "Christ-like". Sometimes Christ and his reconciliation have been overshadowed by arrogance, divisions and the struggle for power. "Church building" is not a matter of building confessional barriers against each other or of building our own "monuments".

In today's world, churches have to demonstrate how to build bridges and how to cooperate as a sign of hope and a fruit of unity in Christ. Old wounds can be healed and new challenges in a changing society can be met together, each respecting the other's traditions and gifts.

This foundation in Christ makes us sisters and brothers. It is the basis for being the one, true church

of Christ, filled with love for the poor, the marginalized, trusting God and in the hope of his coming kingdom.

God's reconciliation commits us together and as individual churches to be living stones of unity in Christ, so that the foundation in Christ will become more and more evident.

PRAYER

God, we thank you for your unique gift of life and peace in Christ. You have given our churches many different gifts. Help us to see this diversity as an enrichment to building your house in this world. Let us witness to what strengthens our unity and encourage all that helps us to bring your love to the people with whom we are living. Amen.

DAY 5: GOD JUDGES OUR EFFORTS TO BUILD (*1 Cor* 3: 13-15)

Gen 4:2b-10a Am I my brothers' keeper?

Ps 51:1-4, 9-13 Against you, you alone, have I sinned

Phil 2:1-5 Regard others as better than yourselves

Mt 25:14-30 A man entrusted his property to his slaves

COMMENTARY

It is a continuing wonder that in all ages God wants and needs people to work with him in what he is doing in the world. Though the one foundation, Jesus Christ, is laid there is always a task of building to be done.

In explaining this to Christians in Corinth, Paul also insists on God's quality control: how well we build is to be tested. Our works do not bring about salvation, but we remain responsible for our works before God.

Paul saw this in terms of the purifying fires of the final judgement which he thought would come soon. For us it is still a matter of urgency — regarding each opportunity as if it could be the last — and realizing that we all bring judgement on ourselves by how well we use the gifts God has given us for building up the kingdom. And for Christians in Slovakia, there is a special urgency because they sense new opportunities for Christian service in the community which are not to be missed.

We are all accountable both to God and to each other. Indeed churches too are accountable to each other in the quest for unity. Like the servants in the parable, entrusted with their masters' property and required to make good use of it, we have all been given treasure: the life of a fragile planet, sisters and brothers world-wide to care for, the precious word of the gospel to share. They are given to all Gods' people together and provide an opportunity for us to share with one another, to learn from our successes and failures. And how well we work and build together is even now being put to the test.

PRAYER

God, through your coming to us in Jesus and through using fallible people, you have shown yourself to be a vulnerable God; we thank you that you still trust us to offer service and work for the building of your kingdom. Keep us alert to your will and purpose and open our eyes that we may see the true needs of people around us. Enable us in humility to learn from one another, that we may be united in our mutual accountability and devoted in service for your kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DAY 6: You ARE GOD'S TEMPLE (*1 Cor* 3:16-17)

Gen 1: 26-27 God created humankind in his image

Ps 8 What are human beings

1 Pet 2:9-10 God's own people

Mt 16:24-27 If any want to become my followers

COMMENTARY

The question of identity is by no means a new one. Human beings have always asked themselves and sought to live out who they really are and what they are meant to be. Today, living in a world which is characterised by constant changes and a fundamental pluralism, the search for identity has become an even more crucial issue. We struggle with that question not only as individuals but also as communities and as churches. We try to find our own identity in what distinguishes us from others and makes us unique.

The apostle Paul — although addressing the Christians of Corinth 2000 years ago — reminds us even now that the question of identity has to be approached from another perspective: we are not "special" because we are different from others, but because we have all received the gift of the Holy Spirit — a gift which is present in every human being since we are all created in the image of God.

We are God's temple — sacred and full of dignity; nobody has the right to destroy this temple. We are those with whom God wants to feel at home — a place where his good Spirit dwells. God wants to have fellowship with us, which includes and requires that we have fellowship with each other. Since this call to fellowship extends beyond the borders of our Christian communities, the scandal of our divisions as Christian churches is heightened, making it imperative to overcome them.

Differences are also part of our Christian identity since we live in different situations and cultures, we

live as women and men, we are shaped by particular personal experiences and by the history of the communities in which we live. But wherever we live, whatever the challenges we face or the talents we are given, we are united by the Holy Spirit who enables us to live as God means us to live, and as has been made manifest in Jesus Christ: holy, and in love-giving and love-receiving relationships.

PRAYER

Eternal God, you created heaven and earth, you created human beings in your image, giving each of us identity and dignity. We thank you for your gift of life — life which binds us to you and to your creation. Help us — as Christians and as churches — to receive your gift in all its fullness so that we may be able to overcome whatever limits or reduces your gift of life. Fill us with your good Spirit so that we may grow into the image of Christ and become his image in the world. Amen.

DAY 7: FOLLY AND WISDOM, LIFE IN CHRIST *(1 Cor* 3:18-20)

Job 32:7-33 It is the breath of the Almighty that makes for understanding

Ps 14: 1-7 The Lord looks down to see if there are any who seek after God

1 Cor 1: 17-30 God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise

Mt 10: 17-25a It is the Spirit of your Father who will speak through you

COMMENTARY

Democracy and liberty bring us many advantages but also temptations. That is as true for individuals as it is for churches. In countries which have been Christian since ancient times, churches are often tempted by a misplaced use of power. In consequence, their witness has offered human perspectives rather than the word of God. Nowadays, we can still be tempted to rely on relations of power and the advantages which come from being in the majority, or, alternatively, to abandon debate in our societies, too often futile. However, as churches we have been commanded to witness to a common foundation for the life of the world, that is Jesus Christ and his word, and nothing can change that.

The prophets underlined that what they proclaimed was not their own words, thoughts or opinions, but a word received from God. Job understands that he must seek wisdom elsewhere, in the inspiration of God, rather than from within his own resources.

The apostle Paul delved into this wisdom to proclaim to all the crucified Lord Jesus Christ. He says that he has decided to know nothing other than Jesus Christ. For the sake of the message of Christ crucified, he was ready to appear a fool in the eyes of the wise of his time. He writes to the Christians of Corinth that Godś wisdom was to offer salvation "through the folly of what we preach": Christ crucified. It was a scandal and madness for the people of the time. But Paul says that the madness of God is wiser than human wisdom and that the fragility of God is more solid than human force. The Christ depicted in the gospels does not act like a hero but as somebody whose power is not of this world. He reaches out to the marginalized, he touches the dying, he forgives sins, even where the just and pious saw no possibility of forgiveness. This is the God who came down to walk the dusty ways of humankind! The word of the cross has also been entrusted to us, Christians of today. Between our churches, which the madness of humankind has separated, the pursuit of unity might seem a crazy project. Yet at the heart of a divided world, torn apart by war and violence, the search for peace and reconciliation remains the only wisdom. In the light of the cross, the foundation of our common witness takes shape here. With Christ, God reaches out towards humanity and sends us towards those who seek him in order to proclaim: the way to life passes through the crucified and risen Christ.

PRAYER

O God, full of wisdom and truth, you made known to us the folly of your love when humanity crucified your only son, Jesus, and when you raised him from the dead as the Christ, we began to grasp your great wisdom. We pray you, keep us in the steps of your Son on the narrow road to Life. May we proclaim the good news of salvation by the cross of Jesus Christ which witnessed to life for all. May your church today stay faithful to him who is its foundation and may it lead all nations to the wisdom of your Spirit. Amen.

DAY 8: YOU ARE CHRIST'S (*1 Cor* 3: 21-23)

Is 44: 1-8 I am the first and I am the last

Ps 89: 1-4 Your steadfast love is established forever

Rev 4: 1-11 Worshipping the one who lives forever and ever

Mk 9: 33-35 Whoever wants to be first must be last

COMMENTARY

We belong to Christ. We are his and no other's. This fact is the foundation for our unity: In baptism, Christ has claimed us for his own, and made us all one in him. The unity we share in Christ is greater than all the differences, past and present, which divide the churches today.

Because we belong to Christ, we belong to one another and are accountable to one another. That is why Christ calls us to build up his body, the church, together as co-workers and fellow-servants. That is why Christians and churches are called to live and work together, as fellow-servants in witnessing to their faith and in serving those in need. And that is why divisions, dissension, quarrelling, factions based on personalities (even if they are Paul or Apollos or Cephas) — all these are denials not only of our brothers and sisters in Christ, but of Christ himself.

As God's temple, the church is a place of worship, and common worship is the most powerful expression of our common belonging to Christ. Every act of common worship is a victory over our division and a celebration of the unity which we do have in Christ. We are united with all those, in all places and times, who have belonged to Christ and who in the Spirit have worshipped God. We do not always act, of course, in accordance with the unity given us in Christ. When we cannot worship together, especially at the Lord's table, our disunity is plain for all to see. Here there is more "building" to be done — and that by all churches!

Because we belong to Christ, we belong to God. Paul affirms in all boldness: "all things are yours". We live and move, together with all our co-workers and fellow-servants, within God's plan for all of creation. God acts within history, for salvation, for healing of the broken, for reconciliation of those at war, for the renewal of the whole creation. God acts, too, in judgement: we know that what we build together is being tested and the results made known. We anticipate a final accounting being made of our work. We do not know the exact time or form of this judgement; but we know that we will be judged by the God whose nature is life and love.

For all God's gifts of creation and redemption, we give praise and thanks to God who has made us one through his Spirit in Christ. May our building together of Christ's church, may our search for unity, be offered in praise of God.

PRAYER

Loving God, we thank you for making us one in Christ. Give us imagination and courage to build your church together in unity and in love. Make our lives, and the lives of our churches, a witness to your love for us and for the whole creation. Grant us unity in our time, 0 Lord. Amen!

APPENDICES

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS FROM SLOVAKIA*

ST CYRIL'S PRAYER WHEN HE WAS NEARING DEATH

O Lord, my God, who has created the angelic choirs and all the heavenly powers, who brought all things from non-being to being and who always hears the prayers of those who do your holy will and who, in your fear, keep your commandments.

Hear therefore, 0 Lord, my humble prayer, preserve the faithful flock you have entrusted to me, a humble and unworthy servant. Deliver them from the godless and heathen malice of those who blaspheme against you, destroy the heresy of the three languages, expand your church and keep it firmly united.

Unite your people in the profession of their faith and inflame their hearts with the truth of your word. You have bestowed upon us a great favour by calling us to preach the gospel of your Christ, and your people are ready to fulfil your good works.

Those whom you gave into my care 1 return to you — guide them with your strong right hand and protect them, that all may praise and glorify your holy name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.

Saint Cyril, bom in Macedonia and of Greek and Slav descent, translated the scriptures into Slavonic, the language of the people. The 'three languages' petition refers to the heresy that only Hebrew, Greek and Latin can be used as liturgical languages.

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Heavenly Father, fountain of all goodness,
We thank you that you have graciously led us to remember
The glorious day of birth of your Son and that you give us the chance to see him
Through the eyes of our faith.
What great joy! Born for all, rich and poor, he brings us all good gifts.
He became the Son of man, that we may become sons and daughters of God.
Eternal God, may the heavens praise you and may we be granted peace on earth.
Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, how can we thank you for your infinite love?
Receive the thankful praise of our hearts!
Enlighten us with your Holy Spirit,
That we may not fail to remember that it is the grace of God that brings salvation
And helps all men and women to reject ungodliness and worldly passions.
In so doing we are transformed to live decent and godly lives. Amen.

* The choice of these prayers was made and is presented by the local group.

Juraj Tranovský (1592-1637), Lutheran pastor in Liptovský Mikuláš, composer of many hymns and publisher of Cithara Sanctorum (Lutheran hymnbook used until 1991 in the Lutheran Church in Slovakia)

MORNING HYMN

Dear Father, God, we rise to say:
Your name be praised for this new day.
For health and strength our prayers lift,
Grant every good and perfect gift.

O God the Son, we pray of you,
may all we plan and say and do,
be ever welcome in your sight,
be done to your and our delight.

O Spirit, God, preserve from fear
all those who fret and sorrow here,
and when the day of days arrives,
with fadeless glory, crown our lives.

Jiří Zábojnik (1608-1672), Lutheran pastor
(translated by J. Vajda 1969)

O, LORD, JESUS CHRIST, DEAR SHEPHERD

Giver of salvation, joy and strength,
Look down on us in your love, look down on us your flock, and protect us.
Wolves surround us seeking to destroy your love, day and night.
They are many and without your help we are powerless.
As they come closer to us, your sheep stand helpless.
Intercede for us, O Prince of peace.
You died for our sins, we await your help,
Because we know that you will surely save us.

For yours is the glory and honour for eternity,
O good shepherd, great God,
Who will keep us close and finally,
Lead us to our Father in heaven. Amen.

By Kristina Roy ova (1860-1936), in Piesne Sionske (Hymns from Zion), novelist and hymn writer, key personality in Slovak spiritual revival movement

PRAYERS IN THE CATHOLIC TRADITION:

Anima Christi - Soul of Christ

Litany of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

ECUMENICAL SITUATION IN SLOVAKIA

Slovakia is a new state populated by old national groups. The majority of the 5.3 million inhabitants of the Slovak Republic are Slovak (86%). Hungarians are the largest ethnic minority (11%), and are concentrated in the southern and eastern regions of Slovakia. Proportionately, Slovakia has the highest population of Roma in the region, estimated at around 500,000 people. Other ethnic groups include Czechs, Ruthenians (or "Rusins"), Germans, and Poles. Recent and sometimes unregistered immigration has been mainly from the poorer Eastern European countries, with significant Russian, Ukrainian, Serb and Bulgarian groups concentrated in the larger cities.

Christianity was first brought to the region in its Eastern form in the 9th century by the Slavic missionary activity of Saints Cyrill and Methodius. From the 11th until the early 20th century, present-day Slovakia was under Hungarian rule, and became a predominantly Roman Catholic territory. The Slovak national revival was begun in the 19th century by intellectuals seeking to revive the Slovak language and culture.

The formation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 following World War I satisfied the common aspirations of Czechs and Slovaks for independence from the Habsburg Empire. On November 17, 1989, a series of public protests known as the "Velvet Revolution" began, and led to the downfall of communist rule in Czechoslovakia. In 1992, negotiations on the new federal constitution deadlocked over the issue of Slovak autonomy, and in the latter half of 1992, agreement was reached to peacefully divide Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic (SR).

The socio-economic situation remains precarious, although generally better than Slovakia's eastern neighbours. Following important parliamentary elections in 2002 that saw the defeat of the nationalist parties, Slovakia has been accepted as a candidate for both NATO and European Union membership, both of which will have a significant influence on the country's future development.

The national unemployment rate is higher than 15%, and in some regions surpasses 30%. Thus the most endangered groups are long-term unemployed people. Roma people, single parent families, children and large families are other vulnerable categories at risk of poverty. The low level of social and health care has resulted in the fact that the Roma people's average life span is 15 years shorter than the rest of the Slovak population.

The organized forms of ecumenism in Slovakia had their origins in the environment of Protestant churches, and their purpose was to assert the interests of Protestants in relation to the majority Roman Catholic Church. In 1927, the Union of Evangelic Churches in Czechoslovakia (of which Slovakia was part from 1918 until 1993) was created. Within this union, the first contacts with the young world ecumenical movement started.

The representatives of particular churches had become increasingly aware of the movement that started to develop in Europe and in the entire world after World War II. They realized that the message of the gospel should unite the churches, not separate them. The Ecumenical Council of Churches in

Czechoslovakia was established June 20, 1955. One of its purposes was to allow the churches to speak publicly about the social situation within the country after 1948, when communists took power in Czechoslovakia. This was a period of restraint in the life and service of the churches, as well as persecution of active church workers. In addition, co-operation with churches of neighbouring countries was needed. The task of the Ecumenical Council was to implement the ideas of the ecumenical movement in the territory of our country.

The year 1989 and the development of democracy provided a new impulse for the work of all churches; they could start the work of revival. As a result of change in general conditions, the mission and goals of the ecumenical movement in our country were transformed as well.

The Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Slovak Republic (ECCSR) resulted from the separation of Czechoslovakia into states, and begun its activity with its first meeting on April 15, 1993. The ECCSR associates churches that function in that territory. At the present, eleven churches are members, three of them as observers. The full members are the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession in Slovakia, the Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia, the Orthodox Church in Slovakia, the Brethren Church in the SR, the Evangelical Methodist Church Slovak District, the Czechoslovak Husite Church in Slovakia, the Baptist Union in the SR, and the Old Catholic Church in Slovakia. The observers are the Roman-Catholic and Greek-Catholic Churches, the Apostolic Church in Slovakia, and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

The ecumenical context is characterized by a disproportion of membership numbers between the respective churches. The following figures give an idea of the membership of different churches according to the results of the 2001 census: Roman Catholic 68,9% and Greek Catholic (Uniate) 4% — total of 72,9%; Lutheran 6,9%; Reformed 2,03%; Orthodox 0,93%; all other below 0,1%). There is some correlation between religious affiliation and ethnicity. The majority of Reformed Christians are ethnic Hungarians, and most Orthodox are ethnic Ruthenian or Ukrainian immigrants. The total population of Slovakia is 5,3 million. In this context the Ecumenical Council mainly serves as a body representing the "smaller churches". According to the 2001 census, the number of persons who claimed a religious affiliation in Slovakia increased from 72% in 1991 to 84% in 2002. The increase is partly due to the reluctance of some religious groups to declare their religious affiliation in 1991, and partly to the active missionary outreach of churches in Slovakia.

The relations between church and state in Slovakia are generally positive, and have been strengthened in the recent period. The Church Department of the Ministry of Culture oversees relations between church and state. The Church Department administers the state subsidies to the registered religious communities. It has no authority to interfere with their internal activities. The ministry also administers a cultural fund that, among other works, maintains and repairs historical religious buildings. The Ecumenical Council, subsidized by the state, provides an important point of dialogue and representation with the authorities. Public opinion surveys systematically uphold the church as one of the most trustworthy institutions in the country. Recent elections have reinforced the presence of explicitly Christian parties and leaders in the government.

In 2000, the Slovak government signed an international treaty with the Vatican to regulate its relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. In April 2002, the government also signed a joint agreement with the eleven registered churches relating to the ECCSR, in an attempt to provide equal status with Roman Catholics. This national agreement is understood as guaranteeing the recognition, status and financial support of the churches and ECCSR. The support of the state for church schools is also strengthened.

However, there is continued uncertainty about the future financing of clergy and church personnel by the Slovak state, which poses the challenge of the economic viability of church structures and their activities.

In March 2003, the assembly of the ecumenical council of churches urged Slovak citizens to support European Union accession. According to the churches, EU enlargement is a challenge for the internal integration of people and churches in Slovakia, and requires churches to accept their common responsibility for the service of the gospel in today's world. The process of European integration should not be limited to the economic and political aspects imposed by the European Union. Churches think that there should be a list of their own objectives in the integration process, like increasing their openness to ecumenical cooperation, and finding ways of strengthening cooperation. At the same time, the spiritual identity of churches and the cultural integrity of Slovakia must be carefully nurtured and safeguarded to avoid dissolution in a new integration. Some of the churches are concerned about the growing penetration of sectarian teachings in the school system, and neo-liberal attitudes in Slovak society, which may undermine traditional moral values.

Since the year 2000 ECCSR operates an educational programme which aims at enabling its member churches in their service — mainly in areas of social work, youth work and work with marginalized groups. Staffed with one secretary, the programme offers capacity-building seminars and conferences to specialized workers in the churches. The programme also coordinates and accompanies the work of Youth — Women — and Diaconal commissions of the ECCSR. In 2002, the programme organized nine capacity-building seminars and one conference on the status of women in the light of New Testament.

Since 1999, the ECCSR operates a centre for study of new religiosity. This programme is operated in cooperation with the Ecumenical Society for Study of Sects. The Catholic Bishops' Conference

also supports the programme. The main activity is the publication of a quarterly magazine, ROZMER *(Dimension)*. In 2002, four issues with 2500 copies of each were published. Another activity is the dissemination of information. Nine lectures on topics of new religiosity in different parts of the country were offered last year. The centre also operates a webpage. 12,000 hits were recorded last year. Eighty e-mail questions were processed. Another 100 personal visits were made to the centre. The centre is staffed with one programme secretary and one administrative assistant. The ECCSR is searching for support to strengthen this programme and open a fulltime consulting/counselling position.

Since February 2001, the ECCSR has prepared a weekly news programme with information from churches and ecumenical organizations worldwide. In cooperation with the Slovak state radio, a 10-minute programme is prepared, based on news from ecumenical agencies like ENI, EPD, LWI, KNA as well as interviews with international guests. A transcript of the programme is distributed via e-mail to a wide network of subscribers.

The Round Table programme is an important instrument which serves the churches in Slovakia in strengthening their service. Since 1996 the programme has supported a large number of projects carried by the member churches or through the ECCSR secretariat. In 2002 a total of 113 projects were supported with an amount of 210, 000 euros, focusing on education, social diaconia, mission, media work and organizational development.

One of the main issues to be focused on in the future is the transformation and decentralization of the state owned and operated social care system. Churches are aware of the historical meaning of this challenge and are currently in the process of assessing their capacity to take over some of the institutions to be operated under their diaconal structures.

Another challenge to the churches' social work is the growing ability of Slovak economy to provide humanitarian aid. ECCSR is currently in the process of mapping the ground and conditions for establishing an independent aid organization.

There are many good examples of ecumenical activities at grass roots level among the churches in Slovakia. One to be mentioned is the Ecumenical Fellowship in the city of Kosice, which is the industrial and administrative centre of Eastern Slovakia.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed by most churches in Slovakia. In many places Christians of different confessions meet during the Week of Prayer. Since 2003 the Christian youth movements in Slovakia also organize special ecumenical prayer meetings in January. A major event during the week is a central ecumenical worship which is attended by representatives of most churches participating in the ecumenical movement and also by representatives of civil and political life. The Slovak public TV broadcast the worship live on the nationwide channel.

Churches in Slovakia in these years pray mainly for wisdom and strength in the process of the transformation of society; for growth in unity which will enable them to use the new positive opportunities as they enter the community of nations in the European Union; that they may serve as an enrichment for this community; and that they might find ways to effectively deal with negative social effects of the transformation.

(This description of the local ecumenical situation was prepared by the local preparatory group and is published under its sole authority.)

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY THEMES 1968-2005

In 1968, materials officially prepared jointly by the WCC Faith and Order Commission and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity began to be used.

1968 To the praise of his glory *(Ephesians* 1:14)
Pour la louange de sa gloire

1969 Called to freedom (*Galatians* 5:13)
Appelés à la liberté
(Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy)

1970 We are fellow workers for God *(1 Corinthians* 3:9)
Nous sommes les coopérateurs de Dieu
(Preparatory meeting held at the Monastery of Niederaltaich, Federal Republic of Germany)

1971 ...and the communion of the Holy Spirit
(2 Corinthians 13:13)
...et la communion du Saint-Esprit

1972 I give you a new commandment *(John* 13:34)
Je vous donne un commandement nouveau
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)

1973 Lord, teach us to pray *(Luke* 11:1)
Seigneur, apprends-nous à prier
(Preparatory meeting held at the Abbey of Montserrat, Spain)

1974 That every tongue confess: Jesus Christ is Lord
(Philippians 2:1-13)
Que tous confessent: Jésus-Christ est Seigneur
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)

1975 God's purpose: all things in Christ *(Ephesians* 1:3-10)
La volonté du Père: Tout réunir sous un seul chef, le Christ
(Material from an Australian group. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)

1976 We shall be like him *(1 John* 3:2) or, Called to become what we are
Appelés a devenir ce que nous sommes
(Material from Caribbean Conference of Churches. Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy)

1977 Enduring together in hope *(Romans* 5:1-5)
Lespérance ne de^oit pas
(Material from Lebanon, in the midst of a civil war.
Preparatory meeting held in Geneva.

1978 No longer strangers *(Ephesians* 2:13-22)
Vous n'êtes plus des étrangers
(Material from an ecumenical team in Manchester, England)

1979 Serve one another to the glory of God *(1 Peter* 4:7-11)
Soyez au service les uns des autres pour la gloire de Dieu
(Material from Argentina. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)

1980 Your kingdom come *(Matthew* 6:10)
Que ton règne vienne!
(Material from an ecumenical group in Berlin, German Democratic Republic. Preparatory meeting held in Milan)

1981 One Spirit - many gifts - one body (*1 Corinthians* 12:3b-13)
Un seul esprit - des dons divers - un seul corps
(Material from Gray moor Fathers, USA - Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)

1982 May all find their home in you, O Lord *(Psalm* 84)
Que tous trouvent leur demeure en Toi, Seigneur
(Material from Kenya. Preparatory meeting held in Milan, Italy)

1983 Jesus Christ - the Life of the World (*1 John* 1: 1-4)
Jesus Christ - La Vie du Monde
(Material from an ecumenical group in Ireland. Preparatory meeting held in Céligny (Bossey), Switzerland)

1984 Called to be one through the cross of our Lord (*1 Cor.* 2: 2 and *Col* 1: 20).
Appeles a l'unite par la croix de notre Seigneur
(Preparatory meeting held in Venice, Italy)

1985 From death to life with Christ *(Ephesians* 2:4-7)
De la mort à la vie avec le Christ
(Material from Jamaica - Preparatory meeting held in Grandchamp, Switzerland)

1986 You shall be my witnesses *(Acts* 1:6-8)
Vous serez mes témoins
(Material from Yugoslavia (Slovenia), Preparatory meeting held in Yugoslavia)

1987 United in Christ - a New Creation (2 *Corinthians* 5:17-6:4a)
Unis dans le Christ - une nouvelle créâtion
(Material from England - Preparatory meeting held in Taizé, France)

1988 The love of God casts out fear (*1 John* 4:18)
L'Amour de Dieu bannit la Crainte
(Material from Italy - Preparatory meeting held in Pinerolo, Italy)

1989 Building community: one body in Christ *(Romans* 12:5-6a)
Bâtir la communaute: Un seul corps en Christ
(Material from Canada - Preparatory meeting held in Whaley Bridge, England)

1990 That they all may be one... That the world may believe *(John* 17)
Que tous soient un... Afin que le monde croie
(Material from Spain - Preparatory meeting held in Madrid, Spain)

1991 Praise the Lord, all you nations! *(Psalm* 117 *and Romans* 15: 5-13)
Nations, louez toutes le Seigneur
(Material from Germany - Preparatory meeting held in Rotenburg an der Fulda, Federal Republic of Germany)

1992 I am with you always ... Go, therefore *(Matthew* 28:16-20)
Je suis avec vous...allez done
(Material from Belgium - Preparatory meeting held in Bruges, Belgium)

1993 Bearing the fruit of the Spirit for Christian unity *(Galatians* 5:22-23)
Pour l'unité: laisser mûrir en nous les fruits de l'Esprit
(Material from Zaire - Preparatory meeting held near Zurich, Switzerland)

1994 The household of God: called to be one in heart and mind *(Acts* 4:23-37)
La maison de Dieu: Appelés à être un dans le cceur et dans l'esprit
(Material from Ireland - Preparatory meeting held in Dublin, Republic of Ireland)

1995 Koinonia: communion in God and with one another *(John* 15:1-17)

La koinonia: communion en Dieu et les uns avec les autres
(Preparatory meeting held in Bristol, England)

1996 Behold, I stand at the door and knock *(Rev.* 3:14-22)
Je me tiens à la porte et je frappe
(Preparatory meeting held in Lisbon, Portugal)

1997 We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God (2 *Cor* 5:20)
Au nom du Christ, laissez-vous reconcilier avec Dieu
(Preparatory meeting held in Stockholm, Sweden)

1998 The Spirit helps us in our weakness *(Romans* 8:14-27)
L'Esprit aussi vient en aide à notre faiblesse
(Preparatory meeting held in Paris, France)

1999 He will dwell with them as their God, they will be his peoples *(Rev* 21:1-7)
Dieu demeurera avec eux. Ils seront ses peuples et lui sera le Dieu qui est avec eux
(Preparatory material from Malaysia: meeting held in Monastery of Bose, Italy)

2000 Blessed be God who has blessed us in Christ *(Eph* 1:3-14)
Béni soit Dieu, qui nous a benis en Christ
(Preparatory material from the Middle East Council of Churches: meeting held La Verna, Italy)

2001 I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life *(Jn* 14:1-6)
Je suis le chemin, et la vérité et la vie
(Preparatory material from Romania and meeting held at Vulcan, Romania)

2002 For with you is the fountain of life *(Ps* 36:5-9
Car chez toi est la fontaine de la vie *(Ps* 35: 6-10)
(Preparatory material CEEC and CEC, meeting near Augsburg, Germany

2003 We have this treasure in clay jars (2 *Cor* 4:4-18)
Car nous avons ce trésor dans des vases d'argile
(Preparatory material churches in Argentina, meeting at Los Rubios, Spain)

2004 My peace I give to you *(John* 14:23-31; *John* 14:27)
Je vous donne ma paix
(Preparatory material from Aleppo, Syria; meeting in Palermo, Sicily)

2005 Christ, the one foundation of the church *(1 Cor* 3:1-23)
Le Christ, unique fondement de l'Eglise
(Preparatory material from Slovakia; meeting in Piestahy, Slovakia)

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

ca. 1740 In Scotland a Pentecostal movement arose, with North American links, whose revivalist message included prayers for and with all churches.

1820 The Rev. James Haldane Stewart publishes "Hints for the General Union of Christians for the Outpouring of the Spirit".

1840 The Rev. Ignatius Spencer, a convert to Roman Catholicism, suggests a "Union of Prayer for Unity".

1867 The First Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops emphasizes prayer for unity in the Preamble to its Resolutions.

1894 Pope Leo XIII encourages the practice of a Prayer Octave for Unity in the context of Pentecost.

1908 The observance of the "Church Unity Octave" initiated by the Rev. Paul Wattson.

1926 The Faith and Order movement begins publishing "Suggestions for an Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity".

1935 Abbé Paul Couturier of France advocates the "Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" on the inclusive basis of prayer for "the unity Christ wills by the means he wills".

1958 Unité Chretienne (Lyon, France) and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches begin co-operative preparation of materials for the Week of Prayer.

1964 In Jerusalem, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I prayed together Jesus' prayer "that they all may be one" *(John* 17).

1964 The "Decree on Ecumenism" of Vatican II emphasizes that prayer is the soul of the ecumenical movement and encourages observance of the Week of Prayer.

1966 The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity [now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity] begin official joint preparation of the Week of Prayer material.

1968 First official use of Week of Prayer material prepared jointly by Faith and Order and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity [now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity].

1975 First use of Week of Prayer material based on a draft text prepared by a local ecumenical group. An Australian group was the first to take up this plan in preparing the 1975 initial draft.

1994 Text for 1996 prepared in collaboration with YMCA and YWCA.

2004 Agreement reached that henceforth resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity be jointly published and produced in the same format by Faith and Order (WCC) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (Catholic Church).