

# The Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity

N. 88  
(1995/I)

VATICAN CITY

# Information Service

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# COMMON CHRISTOLOGICAL DECLARATION BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

November 11, 1994

*On November 11, 1994, His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East signed an historic Common Christological Declaration. Presented below is first of all, a background piece putting the declaration in perspective. This is followed by the Com-*

*mon Declaration and the addresses given by the Pope and the Patriarch on the occasion of the signing of the declaration. There are finally, two other references to the declaration made by Pope John Paul II at the general audience two days before the signing, and at the Angelus, two days afterwards.*

## BACKGROUND OF THE HISTORIC DECLARATION

From 8 to 12 November Pope John Paul II welcomed to Rome Mar Dinkha IV, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East.

This is not the first time the Holy Father has met His Holiness Mar Dinkha. The latter was among the dignitaries and delegations of other Churches and World Christian Communions at the Mass on 22 October 1978 which solemnly inaugurated his ministry as Bishop of Rome. Moreover, the Patriarch visited the Holy Father exactly 10 years ago (7-9 November 1984). The Pope and the Assyrian Patriarch of the East also met on a very significant occasion, 27 October 1986, during the *World Day of Prayer for Peace* in Assisi.

The visit that began on 8 November, however, was not routine. It had special importance because it was the occasion, as we shall soon see, of the signing of a *Common Christological Declaration* between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.

Mar Dinkha IV was accompanied to Rome by:

— Archbishop Mar Narsai de Baz, his Patriarchal Vicar, Metropolitan of Ator, Lebanon, Syria and Europe; he resides in Beirut, Lebanon;

— Bishop Mar Bawai Soro of the Diocese of the Western United States, General Secretary of the Department for Inter-Church Relations and Religious Education; he resides in San Jose, California, USA;

— Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia of the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand, Secretary of the Holy Synod; he resides in Fairfield, Australia.

In this brief article, it seems useful to provide some information on the Assyrian Church of the East, to put the present meeting in context and to understand the reasons for the commitment of the Holy Father and the Patriarch to promoting and deepening their mutual relations.

The *Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East* — its precise name — is one of the most ancient Eastern Churches. Its origins go back to the preaching of St Thomas the Apostle and his disciples Addai and Mari in the first century. With a history marked by great missionary zeal, this Church of the Eastern Syriac language extended from the territories identified with ancient Mesopotamia all the way to India (where it brought Christianity to the Malabar Coast), Tibet, Mongolia and Manchuria.<sup>1</sup>

It has often been called *Nestorian*, a name that Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV has expressly asked not to be applied to his Church, because of the negative connotation it implies. The appellation refers to the Council of Ephesus in 431.

The isolation of the Assyrian Church of the East from the rest of Christianity goes back to this date.

Many historical vicissitudes, related to the territories where the Assyrian Church was established, would later reduce and greatly limit its expansion.

Mar Dinkha IV, born in Iraq on 15 September 1935 and ordained Metropolitan Bishop of Teheran in 1968, was elected Patriarch on 17 October 1976 and took Iranian citizenship. He currently resides in the United States.

The Assyrian Church of the East currently numbers about 400,000 faithful divided into 90 parishes in Iraq (and in territories of the former Soviet Union), India, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Europe, Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

<sup>1</sup> As reported in *L'Osservatore Romano* on 12-13 November 1984 in an article by Juan Pedro de Gant, "the Vatican Museum preserves a reproduction of the famous stone of *Si-ngan-fu*, bearing a Syriac and Chinese inscription and erected in 781 on the grounds of a Christian monastery founded in 638 by order of Emperor Tai Tsung in the suburb of his capital, following the introduction of the Chinese version of Christian books' brought by Assyrian monks.

In order to further the organization of his Church, the Patriarch devotes his greatest efforts to the formation of Bishops and clergy, and to the catechesis of the faithful.

Convinced that the Christological differences between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East are merely a question of terminology that does not affect the essentials of the faith, he has repeatedly expressed to the Holy Father his desire one day to arrive at a common declaration, which could also help dispel the memory among his faithful of past theological controversies and give a new impetus to relations between Catholics and Assyrians in countries where they are called to live side by side...

The Common Declaration that Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha signed on 11 November 1994 does not pertain only to the theological level. It is meant to dispel misunderstandings with regard to the manner of expressing the mystery of Christ in

order to draw practical consequences for the life of the faithful in all those territories where Catholics and Assyrians live close to one another and for effective pastoral collaboration.

This perspective of collaboration, which obviously extends to those Chaldean faithful who entered into communion with the Church of Rome in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and are closest to their Assyrian brothers and sisters because of their affinities in liturgy, language and tradition, "can enrich its [the Catholic Church's] own life as well as that of other Churches and ecclesial Communities. It can also strengthen their ability to give a common witness to the truth of the Gospel, insofar as this is possible".<sup>2</sup> Dialogue can only live in fraternal reciprocity.

ORE, November 16, 1994

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<sup>2</sup> *Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism*, Ecumenical Cooperation in catechesis, n. 188.

## COMMON CHRISTOLOGICAL DECLARATION BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

His Holiness John Paul II, Bishop of Rome and Pope of the Catholic Church, and His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, give thanks to God who has prompted them to this new brotherly meeting.

Both of them consider this meeting as a basic step on the way towards the full communion to be restored between their Churches. They can indeed, from now on, proclaim together before the world their common faith in the mystery of the Incarnation.

...

As heirs and guardians of the faith received from the Apostles as formulated by our common Fathers in the Nicene Creed, we confess one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father from all eternity who, in the fullness of time, came down from heaven and became man for our salvation. The Word of God, second Person of the Holy Trinity, became incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit in assuming from the holy Virgin Mary a body animated by a rational soul, with which he was indissolubly united from the moment of his conception.

Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man, perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity, consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with us in all things but sin. His divinity and his humanity are united in one person, without confusion or change, without division or separation. In him has been preserved the difference of the natures of divinity and humanity, with all their properties, faculties and operations. But far from consti-

tuting "one and another", the divinity and humanity are united in the person of the same and unique Son of God and Lord Jesus Christ, who is the object of a single adoration.

Christ therefore is not an "ordinary man" whom God adopted in order to reside in him and inspire him, as in the righteous ones and the prophets. But the same God the Word, begotten of his Father before all worlds without beginning according to his divinity, was born of a mother without a father in the last times according to his humanity. The humanity to which the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth always was that of the Son of God himself. That is the reason why the Assyrian Church of the East is praying the Virgin Mary as "the Mother of Christ our God and Saviour". In the light of this same faith the Catholic tradition addresses the Virgin Mary as "the Mother of God" and also as "the Mother of Christ". We both recognize the legitimacy and rightness of these expressions of the same faith and we both respect the preference of each Church in her liturgical life and piety.

This is the unique faith that we profess in the mystery of Christ. The controversies of the past led to anathemas, bearing on persons and on formulas. The Lord's Spirit permits us to understand better today that the divisions brought about in this way were due in large part to misunderstandings.

Whatever our Christological divergences have been, we experience ourselves united today in the confession of the same faith in the Son of God who became man so that we might become children of God by his grace. We wish from now on to witness together to this faith in the One who is the Way, the

Truth and the Life, proclaiming it in appropriate ways to our contemporaries, so that the world may believe in the Gospel of salvation.

\* \* \*

The mystery of the Incarnation which we profess in common is not an abstract and isolated truth. It refers to the Son of God sent to save us. The economy of salvation, which has its origin in the mystery of communion of the Holy Trinity — Father, Son and Holy Spirit —, is brought to its fulfilment through the sharing in this communion, by grace, within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, which is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Spirit.

Believers become members of this Body through the sacrament of Baptism, through which, by water and the working of the Holy Spirit, they are born again as new creatures. They are confirmed by the seal of the Holy Spirit who bestows the sacrament of Anointing. Their communion with God and among themselves is brought to full realization by the celebration of the unique offering of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist. This communion is restored for the sinful members of the Church when they are reconciled with God and with one another through the sacrament of Forgiveness. The sacrament of Ordination to the ministerial priesthood in the apostolic succession assures the authenticity of the faith, the sacraments and the communion in each local Church.

Living by this faith and these sacraments, it fol-

lows as a consequence that the particular Catholic churches and the particular Assyrian churches can recognize each other as sister Churches. To be full and entire, communion presupposes the unanimity concerning the content of the faith, the sacraments and the constitution of the Church. Since this unanimity for which we aim has not yet been attained, we cannot unfortunately celebrate together the Eucharist which is the sign of the ecclesial communion already fully restored.

Nevertheless, the deep spiritual communion in the faith and the mutual trust already existing between our Churches, entitle us from now on to consider witnessing together to the Gospel message and cooperating in particular pastoral situations, including especially the areas of catechesis and the formation of future priests.

In thanking God for having made us rediscover what already unites us in the faith and the sacraments, we pledge ourselves to do everything possible to dispel the obstacles of the past which still prevent the attainment of full communion between our Churches, so that we can better respond to the Lord's call for the unity of his own, a unity which has of course to be expressed visibly. To overcome these obstacles, we now establish a Mixed Committee for theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.

Given at Saint Peter's,  
on 11 November 1994

+ K. MARDINKHA

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

## DISCOURSES OF POPE AND PATRIARCH AT THE SAME CEREMONY

### ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

Your Holiness,

1. Exactly 10 years have passed since I had the joy of welcoming you here on your first official visit to this Apostolic See. This pleasure is renewed today as you are accompanied by a delegation of eminent Bishops from your Holy Synod. In the words of the Apostle Paul, I wish you "grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (1 Tm 1:2).

At the time of your previous visit, you shared with me your ardent wish that a declaration of the Pope of Rome and of the Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East would one day be able to express our two Churches' common faith in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary. Historians and theologians immediately set about examining very carefully the Christological consequences of the Council of Ephesus. In an atmosphere of fraternity and mutual confidence, a fruitful dialogue has enabled us to overcome the ambiguities and mis-

understandings of the past. Today, we have arrived at the *Common Christological Declaration* which we are about to sign together. This constitutes an important witness which will not fail to cause rejoicing among the faithful of our two Churches.

2. For my part, I am confident that this agreement will open up wide horizons at the level of *pastoral collaboration*. Of great importance will be the strengthening of cooperation in the spiritual and theological formation of future priests and responsible laity. The same applies to catechesis of children and of young people: we must apply all possible concern in this direction.

Moreover, in order to "share with the saints who are in need" (Rom 12:13), should we not also seek to coordinate our efforts to welcome with dignity and to help effectively those who are uprooted from their homeland or are forced to emigrate because of the severe trials which they have endured (cf. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 18)? We do not forget the long night of suffering endured by your *Eastern Syriac communities*, which were scattered, persecuted and massa-

cred down the centuries for professing the name of Christ. Those who despite everything have remained in their countries in the Middle East — and who have had to face war and unjust deprivation of every kind — should know that the Holy See will employ the means at its disposal, particularly through its contacts with Governments and International Organizations, to lessen their sufferings and if possible make them cease. Finally, a Church so distinguished in its past for its heroism as regards fidelity to the faith cannot remain marginalized in the Christian world, and especially among the Churches of the Middle East. We hope to be able to help you break down any isolation that still exists.

3. From my contacts with your brother Chaldean Bishops, whom I am meeting again in these days, I am able to assure you that they are ready to foster *the great movement towards the restoration of the unity of all Christians*, in accordance with the principles of the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council. They are truly concerned for “the preservation in a communion of faith and charity of those family ties which ought to exist between local Churches, as between sisters” (op. cit., n. 14). We all recognize that it is of supreme importance to understand, venerate, preserve and foster the rich heritage of each of our Churches, and that a diversity of customs and observances is in no way an obstacle to unity. This diversity includes the power of our Churches to govern themselves according to their own disciplines and to keep certain differences in theological expressions which, as we have verified, are often complementary rather than conflicting (cf. *ibid.*, nn. 15-17). In all things and in whatever circumstance, it is essential that we foster between ourselves mutual respect and a profound spirit of charity such as to exclude all forms of rivalry (cf. *ibid.*, n. 18).

4. Your Holiness and Beloved Brothers: here then is the spirit in which the Catholic Church proposes this exchange of gifts. Together let us ask the Most Holy Trinity, Model of true Unity within diversity, to strengthen our hearts so that we will respond to the call for one visible Church of God, a Church truly universal and sent forth to the whole world, that the world may be converted to the Gospel and so be saved, to the glory of God. May God who has begun this good work in us bring it to completion in Christ Jesus (cf. *Phil* 1:6). Amen.

ORE, November 16, 1994

#### ADDRESS OF PATRIARCH MAR DINKHA IV

Your Holiness, our beloved brother in the Lord, John Paul II, most honoured Bishop of Rome, and Pope of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

We greet you today, along with this delegation, comprised of our brothers in the Episcopate, members of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of

the East, with hearts filled with joy. Our combined personal efforts, and those of the representatives of our two Churches, who have met in joint sessions as brothers in Christ, have at last enabled us, in his name, to come to mutual understanding and respect for the unique expression each of us has traditionally made of the faith we both hold in common. Today the time has come to bring down the walls which have separated us and kept us apart for 15 centuries. Today, the door of opportunity is open and we are bidden to enter and labour together toward the noble goal of unity in the Church, the unity for which our Lord Jesus Christ so fervently prayed, “*that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me*” (*Jn* 17:21). It is with deep gratitude to God that we now gather to sign a common Christological declaration. This agreement will bring the sons and daughters of our two ancient and honourable traditions closer to one another than at any time in the last 15 centuries.

The Church of Rome and the Church of the East were both established during the first century by the Apostles, one in the West and the other in the East. Each gave birth to generations of believers who were baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and their souls were nurtured by the faith the two sister Churches received from the blessed Apostles. Sts Peter and Paul, two illustrious and zealous Apostles, traveled to Rome and there became two strong pillars of the Church of Christ in the West. The vineyard of their labours, which was later nourished with the blood of apostles and martyrs, is today bearing fruit for the benefit of millions of believers in the four corners of the world. In a similar manner, Sts Thomas and Bartholomew from the 12 and Sts Addai and Mari from the 70 arrived in the East as proclaimers of the Good News and founders of the Church of the East in Mesopotamia and all Asia. The Apostolic and Patriarchal See of the Church of the East was founded in Seleucia-Ctesiphon, and the missionaries sent out by this See brought the Gospel to the nations of the far East with such success that in A.D. 1281 Mar Yahb'alaha III (a Mongol by race), became Catholicos-Patriarch of the East. From the earliest beginnings of the Christian faith the Eastern and Asian Churches have kept that faith in the Son of God alive for millions of people in what proved, at times, to be dire circumstances.

Our respective Churches are built upon the same foundation: the apostolic tradition and the Sacred Scriptures. Sharing this common heritage gives the Churches of the East and West a common source of living theology from which to draw as we move toward a more complete unity. The vision of unity between the Churches of the West and East has always been one of considerable power. Achieving reconciliation between our great historical traditions at this time in history will be as remarkable as it is necessary, for faithfulness to our Lord's will, as expressed in his prayer to the Father, demands it.

Therefore it is fitting and proper for the Patriarchate of the Assyrian Church of the East, as represented by the holder of that see and its synodically appointed episcopal delegates, having come to Rome to join Your Holiness on this historically important day, to agree on a statement of common faith — a statement providing a foundation of hope and promise for our current and future relationship.

Though 15 centuries have now come and gone since the eruption of the Christological controversies, the desire for ecclesial concord still burns in our hearts and souls. Though our two ancient Churches meet with some differences, yet it is our sincere hope that the statement of faith we sign today will be both a partial realization of past dreams and a significant step toward future co-operation and enhanced ecumenical relations. And how far does this hope extend? Certainly it extends so far as to encompass the "oneness" to which Christ calls all Christians.

This faith agreement will promote a new atmosphere of harmony and understanding between our distinct Churches as they live together and interact throughout the world. The "Decree on Ecumenism" (*Unitatis redintegration*, promulgated by the Roman Pontiff, Pope Paul VI, at the Second Vatican Council on 21 November 1964, provides a foundation that, together with the faith agreement, gives us encouragement to continue the process of working toward unity. The witness which will be provided by that sought-after unity is no less than a witness to the love, fidelity, and forgiveness that Christ has revealed and offered to the whole world in his life, death, resurrection, and glorification at the right hand of the Father. We are already achieving significant unity in responding to the triune God's call, freely given through the grace of the Holy Spirit, as today, with one voice, East and West confess as one their historic faith that Jesus Christ is the Father's only-begotten Son, and our Lord, God, and Saviour.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East both face similar social and political challenges to the work of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in the modern world. Today's faithful look to both East and West for moral leadership, spiritual guidance, a model and arena of Christian fellowship, and a strong pastoral response to the anxieties and questions encountered in everyday life. United we can give a stronger witness to the continuing mission of Christ to make all things new through the grace of God.

Our work toward unity is a testimony to the virtues of Christian hope in a world where many people have almost lost hope. The light of Christ shines clearly despite the many obstacles which threaten to dim its brightness. Through greater mutual under-

standing of our distinct theological and liturgical traditions, and appreciation for our differences, accompanied with an untiring effort toward renewal, our two Churches can proclaim the Gospel with a voice more alive and vibrant than would otherwise be possible. Learning from one another through faithful dialogue, and working together to be instruments of God's loving presence in the world, we can demonstrate to all mankind a spirit of charity and co-operation befitting the Apostolic foundation upon which both our traditions firmly stand. When our ultimate goal of service in obedience to the one Head of his one Church, Jesus Christ, is realized, the benefits will be enjoyed by all the Christian faithful as they unite in a ministry of healing to the world. For "*he is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he himself might be pre-eminent. For in him all fullness was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile all things to himself, making peace through him by the blood of his cross, whether for those on earth or those in heaven*" (Col 1:18-20).

With joyful hearts we, with members of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East, are pleased to greet Your Holiness with the statement of hope and to join in agreement on the faith. May this new understanding between our two venerable Churches add to the foundation of unity already laid with other Christian Churches, and lead us on further along the path toward restoring the Apostolic communion which once existed between the Apostles and their Churches during the earliest generations of Christians. May God the Father grant us wisdom, a spirit of charity, and courage as together we move ahead, striving to do his will as he has revealed it in and through his Son, Christ Jesus our Lord.

With thanksgiving for this day and the promise which it holds — and with prayers for the health and well-being of our most honoured brother, His Holiness, Pope John Paul II — we remember the words of the Psalmist, "*How good and how comely for brothers to dwell in unity*" (Ps 133:1). How good indeed, and fair in the eyes of God and men when in true humility the servants of Christ give themselves to one another in mutual love and service to the greater glory of the Father who loves them, and the Son who purchased their redemption with his own precious blood, and the Spirit of Holiness who perfects their sanctification by his ever present working. To you our brothers we offer the hand of fellowship and our unfeigned fraternal affection. May God's blessing seal our efforts with success, to whom be everlasting glory, and to the Holy Trinity we commit these our labours toward unity. Amen.

ORE, November 16, 1994

## OTHER STATEMENTS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

*The Pope made reference to this event when he introduced Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV at the weekly General Audience on November 9, 1994. He spoke of the significance of the Common Christological Declaration at the Angelus on November 13, 1994.*

### GENERAL AUDIENCE

*November 9, 1994*

Today I am honored to have here beside me a very respectful guest, from a far away country. He is also a Brother, whom I greet with joy: the Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, who is accompanied by three Bishops, members of the Holy Synod of his Church.

He is at the head of one of the most ancient and venerable Churches of the East. The language used in their liturgy is the closest to the one Jesus himself spoke.

He has come also to sign with the Catholic Church a Common Christological Declaration, that will allow the separation which came about following the Council of Ephesus in the year 431 to be overcome.

This will bring to an end after more than fifteen centuries the misunderstandings concerning our faith in Christ, true God and true Man, born of the Virgin Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit.

You can well understand how joyful my soul is for this occasion and with what sentiments of esteem and fraternal communion I receive His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV.

OR, 10. 11. 1994, translation ZS

### ANGELUS

*November 13, 1994*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Today I would like to thank the Lord for the great joy given me last week of signing a Common *Christological Declaration* with His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the

East. I would like to express my exultation with the words of the Blessed Virgin: " My soul magnifies the Lord! ", Certainly it was not without Mary's motherly aid that we were able to arrive at this moment, which, although not indicating full communion yet, nevertheless closely prepares for it by clearing away a misunderstanding that lasted over 1,500 years .

This reciprocal lack of understanding actually goes back to the early centuries of Christian history, when theological reflection was obliged to spell out the precise content of faith in Christ. In teaching that it was legitimate to venerate Mary as the "Theotokos", "Mother of God", the Council held at Ephesus in 431 wanted to underscore the Church's deep conviction that " Christ's humanity has no other subject than the divine person of the Son of God, who assumed it and made it his own, from his conception" in Mary's womb (cf. CCC, n. 466). The calm, in-depth dialogue with our brothers of the Assyrian Church of the East made it possible to overcome the misunderstandings that occurred at the time of that Council, and today we share the joy of recognizing that, over and above different theological emphases, our faith in Christ, true God and true man, is one, and equally great is our love for Mary, his most holy Mother.

2. What has been accomplished in these days is a significant step that augurs well. Providentially, it occurs at a time when the Church is beginning a broad programme of suitable initiatives to prepare for the Great Jubilee of the year 2000. Tomorrow the Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio adveniente* will be promulgated, in which I invite all the Church's sons and daughters to a combined, intense and enthusiastic effort so that, through the action of the Holy Spirit, the Jubilee may bear great fruits of renewal for Christian faith and witness. The focus of this commitment must be a renewed *contemplation of the mystery of Christ*. With this starting point, we will feel spurred to intensify our ecumenical efforts to bind up the wounds inflicted on the unity of the Church in the first and second millennia, as we docilely listen to Christ's prayer: " Father, that they may be one ".

ORE, November 16, 1994

## POPE JOHN PAUL II AND ECUMENISM

*July-December 1994*

### CONCERT AT CASTEL GANDOLFO

*August 28, 1994*

*On Sunday evening, August 28, at the end of the concert given by young Russian musicians of the International Charity Programme "New Names" in the courtyard of the Apostolic Palace at Castel Gandolfo, the Holy Father spoke extemporaneously in Italian to those present.*

I would like once again to express my sincere gratitude for this musical evening, especially for the witness of intellect and spirit: the Russian soul, rich in talent.

We all know, Europeans and not only Europeans, that this wealth of intellect has been expressed in different artistic mediums, but at the same time, despite the diversity, with a certain unity of spirit.

If we take the great writers like others who are well known, especially great writers such as Tolstoi and Dostoevsky, if we take great thinkers such as Soloviev and many others down to our contemporaries; not forgetting Solzhenitsyn who has recently returned to Russia, and many other artists, composers and painters, also including the religious genius expressed in the Russian icon, we never fail to observe this fact.

The whole Byzantine Orthodox Tradition, everything connected with the spiritual tradition of the Russian people, has come to Castel Gandolfo this evening. It has arrived in a Western city, Rome, and Rome belongs to the great tradition of the Apostles Peter and Paul, the great mission of the Roman Church in the West to all the peoples of the world.

Rome looks with love and hope to the Russian people and the Orthodox Church, and the Pope of Rome looks with hope to his Brother, the Patriarch of Moscow, Alexis II.

All this is virtually concentrated in our meeting this evening. I should like once more to express not only my gratitude, but also my enormous excitement at this great exchange of gifts. I think that the phrase: "the exchange of gifts", is very important, for it is essentially of the Gospel and of Christianity.

We have different gifts. We, with our Roman, Western tradition, we have our gifts; you, with your Byzantine, Eastern, Russian tradition, have other gifts. These gifts cannot continue to be divided, separated, we need an exchange.

It is an exchange of communion, and the Church is communion. Christ founded the Church as human and earthly communion: a communion which almost anticipates, which reflects the supreme communion of the Trinity, God the Trinity...

ORE, August 31, 1994

### TO LATIN BISHOPS OF THE ARAB REGIONS

*September 3, 1994*

*"I would like to assure those of your faithful who are living in the most difficult conditions, of all my solicitude", the Holy Father told the members of the Conference of Latin Bishops of the Arab Regions whom he received in audience on Saturday, 3 September, at the end of their ad limina visit.*

... The Christian presence, almost everywhere a minority, is just as ancient and all your Christian brothers and sisters hope that it will survive. Despite the difficulties, despite emigration which is weakening some of your Dioceses, continue to give a generous Gospel witness of peace and love, in accordance with Jesus' words. Be scrupulous in seeking interreligious dialogue with Judaism and with Islam. It is a question of making a constant effort to understand one another better, to work constructively together in different areas, to encourage the development of persons and a harmonious society. It is a question of an attitude of tolerance and mutual respect for the religious convictions and activities proper to the communities; and I particularly hope that, in your country, Catholics may enjoy the freedom of worship which one would like to see recognized for all believers throughout the world.

In the region which saw Christ entrust his Church to his Apostles, it is especially to be hoped that ecumenical dialogue will make progress. It will flourish if it involves all the faithful. The desire for unity, expressed by Jesus in the Cenacle should penetrate catechesis, education, preaching and social and charitable activities, so that a greater fidelity to the Lord may enable the baptized to draw closer to the full communion for which he gave up his life (cf. *Jn* 17: 20-23).

ORE, September 14, 1994

### REFLECTION AT THE ROSARY

*September 3, 1994*

*The Holy Father led the recitation of the Rosary on 3 September, as he always does on the first Saturday of the month. Here is an excerpt of the Pope's reflection, which was given in Italian.*

The Rosary, which we are about to recite on this first Saturday of September, is above all intended as a fervent plea to the Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, for the success of my *Pastoral Visit to Sarajevo*.

I sincerely hope — if sufficient guarantees are given for the people's safety — to be able to go to that city, so sorely tried and so dear to me as a *pilgrim of peace*, not relying on the resources of human power, but pointing out the tears of the Mother of God. My planned trip to Sarajevo coincides with the feast of her Nativity. The children of the Catholic Church always look to Mary most holy with great affection. Our Christian brothers and sisters of the Orthodox Church, bound to us by the one faith and the desire for an ever fuller communion, turn to her with equal love. The faithful of Islam also regard her with respectful piety...

ORE, September 14, 1994

#### TO THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE OF TURKEY

September 5, 1994

*On September 5, the Holy Father received the members of the recently created Turkish Episcopal Conference at a meeting to conclude their ad limina Apostolorum visit to Rome.*

In a country with such a great cultural tradition, I would also like to encourage you to establish your centre for scriptural, patristic, and historical studies in Iskenderun, in an ecumenical perspective and also open to Islamology. In addition, I applaud the relations established between the State University of Ankara and the Pontifical Gregorian University, in order to develop high level intellectual exchanges and to allow Catholic universities to participate in the cultural research pursued in the country.

10. You have highlighted your good relations with your Christian brothers and sisters of the different confessions. In the East where you live, the importance of ecumenical dialogue is clearly evident. In a country with a non-Christian majority, unwavering fidelity to the Gospel is necessarily accompanied by a constant effort for fraternal understanding between Christians. Our age has fortunately known an intense development of relations between the See of Rome and the Patriarchate of Constantinople; you are naturally associated with it. Through Baptism, we “are all one in Jesus Christ” (cf. *Gal* 3:28); through the apostolic succession, the priesthood and the Eucharist we are yet more closely united with our Orthodox brothers and sisters (cf. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 15). I can confide to you that I keep present in my heart the wonderful meditation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, His Holiness Bartholomaios I, who prepared the *Via Crucis* for the Roman Church this year. It is a precious witness to the deep communion that we should foster, so that the mystery of God who loves and saves humanity may be the true motive behind all our efforts for dialogue and to meet.

ORE, September 14, 1994

#### TO CARDINAL CASSIDY FOR THE ASSISI MEETING

September 7, 1994

To my Venerable Brother  
Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy  
President of the Pontifical Council  
for Promoting Christian Unity

1. Your Eminence, I am particularly pleased to convey through you my greeting and most cordial appreciation to the distinguished representatives of the Churches and Christian communities and of the great world religions, who have gathered in Assisi for the eighth international prayer meeting for peace, promoted by the St Egidio Community.

How can we not recall that memorable 27 October in 1986 when, for the first time in history, men and women of different religions and creeds gathered with me in Assisi, in this same sacred place to invoke the gift of peace on the whole world?

I had deeply desired that meeting; I wanted it so that, faced with the tragedy of a divided world and under the terrible threat of war, a cry might rise from every believer's heart to God who guides man's footsteps on the paths of peace.

That day is engraved in the history of our time, and those who took part in it, some of whom are present in Assisi now, still recall the event with emotion. It could not remain isolated. That meeting was bursting with spiritual force. It was like a wellspring to return to, to confirm one's inspiration; a fountain which could release new energies for peace. This is why I had hoped not only that the “Assisi spirit” would not be extinguished, but on the contrary, would expand throughout the world, awakening new witnesses of peace and dialogue everywhere.

2. I would like to thank the St Egidio Community on the occasion of this new meeting in Assisi, for the enthusiasm and courage with which it has made this “spirit” its own and sent it forth as a pilgrim on the ways of the world. The meetings it has promoted are a place for dialogue where the protagonists have learned to meet and understand one another, not concealing differences nor allowing them to alienate or still less to expose them to that violence which in the past has sadly scored the history of peoples. Instead, each has mastered the language of dialogue and reciprocal attention, the language of love, ready to emphasize above all what unites. And what can unite us today as deeply as the need for peace?

This prolonged pilgrimage has traversed the various phases of a delicate moment in contemporary history. Three years after the first meeting in Assisi we saw the collapse of that wall which tragically divided the earth in two opposing blocs. The whole world was relieved from a nightmare. Unfortunately the bitter roots of hostility have not disappeared and in the following years new selfishness and individualism have multiplied, spurring groups and peoples to fight one another, sometimes with extreme ferocity.

3. A century is drawing to a close, scarred by what were perhaps the cruellest crimes in human history. A century which opened dramatically with the outbreak of war in Sarajevo; at its close this century is once more facing a tragedy which has Sarajevo as its sad symbol of misunderstanding and hatred. Sarajevo, the martyr city, the symbol of so many places in the world which are still today in the grip of the nightmare of the war lords.

Despite the dark clouds, there is no lack of signs which encourage us to look with hope towards the new millennium. We must certainly count among them the meetings that are repeated as the resolute development of the "Assisi spirit". Coming together to ask God mercifully to grant peace among men represents the prophecy of a new age.

Witnesses of peace must multiply; this is why, once again, I would like to join all those who, on their pilgrimage, are now pausing in Assisi. And I would like many others to set out with them, pilgrims to the dawn of the new millennium, that it may be a dawn marked by God's peace.

4. Today, we have more need than ever for pilgrims of peace, witnesses to universal solidarity, over and above our own individual and group interests, over and above our very own life. There can be no peace in the common abode of this world if even a single people, even the smallest, is forgotten or actually excluded.

I wish to encourage all those who have gathered in Assisi on their way. I consider it necessary and indispensable, especially in a world where the selfishness of individuals and society as a whole seems easily to prevail. This world has need of men and women who are sensitive to religious values to help the others to rediscover the pleasure and the will to walk together. This is the "Assisi spirit".

5. This year's meeting is entitled "Friends of God, Witnesses to Peace". In Assisi, in St Francis, friend of God and a witness to peace, everyone can find an ancient and new inspiration for generous commitment to the world. Francis, icon of the humble and poor Christ, shows all the strength of faith lived in abandon to God and love for all.

Your Eminence, through you I would like to convey to the illustrious representatives of the Christian Churches and of the world's great religions, gathered on the sacred hill of Assisi, my heartfelt encouragement. May the words of the Bible accompany them: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace" (Is 52:7). How beautiful upon the hill of Assisi are the feet of those who seek God united in their common will to be witnesses to peace and friends of him who dwells in heaven.

Upon all I invoke an abundance of heavenly favours.

From the Vatican, 7 September 1994

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

ORE, September 21, 1994

## ADDRESSES INTENDED FOR SARAJEVO

*The Pope was unable to go on a planned trip to Sarajevo, September 8, 1994, but the addresses that he intended to give there, were published in L'Osservatore Romano.*

## HOMILY AT CASTEL GANDOLFO

*September 8, 1994*

*The Pope celebrated Mass on September 8, 1994, for the peoples of Sarajevo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here is a portion of his homily.*

*"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil..."*

*Lead us not into temptation!* What are the temptations which today we ask the Father to avert? They are those that turn man's heart to stone, insensitive to calls for forgiveness and accord. They are the temptations of ethnic prejudices that make people indifferent to the rights of others and to their suffering. They are the temptations of exasperated nationalisms, that lead to the oppression of neighbours and the hunger for revenge. They are all temptations in which the civilization of death is expressed.

Facing the tragic spectacle of human defeat we pray with the words of our Venerable Brother, Bartholomaios I, Patriarch of the Church of Constantinople: "Lord, let our hearts of stone crumble at the sight of your sufferings and be transformed into hearts of flesh. Let our prejudices be dissolved by the Cross. With the sight of your excruciating struggle against death, may our indifference and rebellion flee!" (*Via Crucis at the Colosseum, Good Friday, 1994, Opening Prayer*).

ORE, September 14, 1994

## JOHN PAUL II OFFERS GREETINGS AFTER THE MASS

*September 8, 1994*

*The special Mass for the peoples of Sarajevo and Bosnia-Herzegovina which was celebrated in Castel-Gandolfo on 8 September was followed by the Holy Father's greetings. Here is a portion.*

Finally I address a cordial greeting to the Serb community of Sarajevo, with the wish at the same time to embrace spiritually the entire Serb people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, to whom I offer my most heartfelt wishes for prosperity in harmony and in solidarity, and I give the kiss of peace to His Beatitude Patriarch Pavle, and all the Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church. I do so with the words of the liturgy "Christ is amongst us".

ORE, September 14, 1994

## ADDRESS TO RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN SARAJEVO

*This is a translation of extracts from the address the Holy Father had prepared to give to the President of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the civil and religious authorities in Sarajevo.*

... In these long, unending years of war, Sarajevo has truly been at the centre of my heart. I was spiritually present here, together with our brothers and sisters of different Christian confessions and the believers of other creeds, during the Day of Prayer which took place in Assisi on 9 and 10 January 1993. I made a spiritual pilgrimage here on 23 January this year, during the Mass for peace in the Balkans celebrated in St Peter's Basilica. You have constantly been in my mind, on the many occasions when I have launched heartfelt appeals to hasten the peace process.

... Thank you, Mr President, for your kind welcome. As I offer you my cordial greetings, which I respectfully extend to the authorities present and to all those who have helped to make this visit possible, I have before me the citizens of Sarajevo and of the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Bosnians who are Muslim, Serbian and Croatian, as well as the members of national minorities. I *desire to enfold you all in a single embrace*. I think affectionately of the beloved Catholic community; of our brothers and sisters who belong to the venerable Orthodox Church; of the numerous Muslim community; of the small and cherished Jewish community, dispersed once again. All have been the victims of violent acts of nationalism which is insensitive to the values of peaceful coexistence among peoples...

... 1989 was a moment of historical importance in this conflict. That year marked the end of the communist regime and also the start of the tensions and subsequently the terrible war in the Balkans between the peoples of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This was a new challenge for all, since Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims were all involved in the Balkan war; all of them believers who trusted in the power of prayer and who found they shared a common concern...

ORE, September 14, 1994

## ADDRESS TO SERBIAN-ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

*Here is a translation of the Holy Father's address to the Serbian Orthodox community, which he was to have given in Sarajevo on 8 September.*

1. I address my cordial greetings to the Serbian Orthodox community of Sarajevo, and at the same time I wish to embrace in spirit the entire Serb people. I express to them my sincerest wishes for peace and fraternity.

I offer the kiss of peace to His Beatitude Patriarch Pavle, Pastor of the Serbian Orthodox Church

and to his coadjutor Bishops. I would like to do so with the words of the liturgy: "Christ is amongst us."

2. In these regions where the two great spiritual trends which have shaped the spirit of Europe converge, I would like to insist that all those who are living in these traditions cannot be opposed to one another, but on the contrary, should rejoice to have received different gifts at the heart of a single great apostolic Tradition.

We must strive to know one another better, in order to be mutually enriched through the exchange of these gifts. Christ wanted the Church as communion. It is through this fraternal communion, an indispensable source of true and just peace, that the glorification which Christ offers the Father in the Holy Spirit will be manifest.

Above all in the present circumstances, we have the duty to proclaim the saving Cross of the Redeemer, since in it alone men's hearts can quench their thirst for light, truth and liberation.

3. In the face of the tragic events of modern history, in which many brothers and sisters have been led to martyrdom through their love for Christ, we are united on the mountain of faith on which the Cross has been set up, a sign of victory and communion between heaven and earth. In that life-giving Wood, man rediscovers his roots. We cannot allow Christ's Cross to be emptied of its meaning: from it he reigns, he who alone has the words of eternal life.

To him, our steadfast hope, I commend the sufferings and desires for well-being of the Serb people, and with the words of the great Easter vigil I pray: "Cross, guardian of the whole universe; Cross, ornament of the Church; Cross, source of all power; Cross, strength of believers; Cross, glory of angels and downfall of devils": save us now and forever.

ORE, September 14, 1994

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## PASTORAL VISIT TO ZAGREB, CROATIA

*September 10-11, 1994*

## ARRIVAL IN ZAGREB

*September 10, 1994*

*"I am here in the Land in Croatia as an unarmed pilgrim of Jesus' Gospel", the Holy Father said upon his arrival at the Zagreb airport on Saturday afternoon, 10 September. The Pope was greeted by Croatia's President, H.E. Mr Franjo Tudjman, with a welcome address. Here are excerpts of the Holy Father's discourse, which was given in Croatian.*

Mr President of the Republic,  
Representatives of the non-Catholic  
religious Communities,  
Cardinals and Brothers in the Episcopate,  
Beloved Citizens of Croatia,

... I likewise extend my greetings to all the Christian communities in Croatia and particularly to the Serbian Orthodox Church and her Pastors; I also greet the Muslim community, which has increased notably in the past few years after the forced displacement of the people from the war-torn regions of Bosnia-Herzegovina; I then greet the Jewish community rooted in the land of Croatia for centuries. ...

... Peace, if it is really desired, *is always possible!* To be able to build it on the foundations of justice and truth, it should first be implored from God. This was the reason why I invited Catholics and representatives of other Christian creeds to Assisi in January 1993, while I promoted a similar celebration this year in St Peter's Basilica, at the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity...

ORE, September 21, 1994

## HOMILY AT MASS

September 11, 1994

*On Sunday, September 11, more than a million faithful gathered in prayer to implore peace from the Lord with the Holy Father. The Pope celebrated Mass at the Zagreb race track on the occasion of that Church's ninth centenary.*

... Today this whole history of grace has become an incentive to you to reflect on your present and a call to build the future that awaits you. Above all, it is an invitation to raise your fervent, trustful plea for peace. In fact, I am thinking nostalgically of the time when all believers in these lands were in full communion with one another and each with his own sensitivity and culture bore witness of the same loyalty to Christ's Gospel.

The present tragic divisions and tensions should not make us forget that there are many elements which unite the peoples who are at war today. It is urgent and necessary to gather up all that unites you — and this is no small thing — in order to rebuild new prospects of fraternal solidarity...

Peace in the Balkans — I would like to affirm it forcefully at this time of suffering — *is not a Utopia!* On the contrary, it imposes itself as a prospect of *historical realism*.

For centuries the peoples of these regions have mutually accepted one another, developing a wealth of exchanges in the area of art, language, literature, popular culture. Is not the tradition of *religious tolerance*, also a common heritage which throughout the interval of almost a thousand years has never been lacking even in the darkest periods? No, the phenomenon of nationalistic intolerance that is sweeping

over this region cannot be attributed to religion! This is not only true for the Christians of various confessions whom God is calling today to make an extraordinary commitment to achieve full communion, but also for believers of other religions, especially the *Muslims*, who have built up a conspicuous presence in the Balkans, within the framework of respectful and civil coexistence.

5. You, Church of Zagreb, who today are commemorating 900 years of the Lord's mercy, are called, together with the other Churches of Croatia, to become *an apostle of renewed concord*. Did the Council not remind us that the Church is "sacrament" not only of intimate union with God, but also of the *unity* of the whole human race? (cf. *Lumen gentium*, n. 1).

6. The faith in these sorely troubled regions must return to being a unifying and beneficial force, like the rivers flowing through them. I am thinking of the River Sava. Rising in Slovenia, it crosses your country, flowing along the border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and pours into the Danube, in the land of Serbia. It is another great river which unites the land of Croatia and Serbia on the one side and with other great countries of Eastern, Central and Western Europe. Two rivers which converge, as the many people who are linked by them are called to do, as the two expressions of Christianity, the Western and the Eastern that have always existed in these lands, must do.

In this metaphor of the rivers, we can almost perceive the plan of the journey which God is calling you to follow at this difficult time in history.

7. It is *a way of unity and peace* which no one can avoid. This is demanded by reason, even before faith.

Has not history created a thousand unbreakable ties between your peoples? Are not the languages themselves, although different, so similar that you are able to talk to one another and understand one another better than the peoples in other parts of Europe?

Even your geographical position which makes the Balkans the obligatory route between the nearby East and the Central European region, suggests peace. It was precisely this which caused commercial, financial and business enterprises to flourish in past centuries, guaranteeing an abundance of benefits to all. The future of the Balkan peninsula therefore lies in this direction. With cooperation and solidarity it is possible to face and solve the many problems with which the Balkan peoples are struggling. *The progress and welfare of the Balkan nations have a single name: peace!*

8. But over and above human conventions, you, the Church in Zagreb and in the whole of Croatia are called by a categorical moral imperative to this urgent duty of peace. This imperative is irresistibly manifest to every believing conscience every time the prayer of the *Our Father* sounds on our lips.

With these words, Christ taught us to turn to God. "Father" a gentle name, but also extremely demanding! If in fact God is Father to us, then all of us *are and must think of ourselves as brothers and sisters*. Beyond all the differences, origins, nationalities, there is a basic unity linking every human being and we Christians are called to witness to it with special strength and responsibility.

Would it not be intolerable hypocrisy to repeat the "Our Father" while harbouring feelings of resentment and hatred, or even ideas of retaliation and revenge?

The "Our Father" in fact contains in embryo a plan for society which not only excludes all violence, but in every aspect is structured according to criteria of fraternal solidarity...

It is time for the Church in Zagreb and in the whole of Croatia to become promoters of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation. "To ask forgiveness and to forgive": the commitment incumbent on all can be summarized in these words, if there is a desire to take firm preliminary steps to reach a true and lasting peace.

10. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the mandate offered you by the 900 years of Christian history that you are celebrating today. You are called to be worthy heirs of the believers who went before you, to be rivals of your martyrs and your saints...

ORE, September 21, 1994

#### GENERAL AUDIENCE

September 14, 1994

*On Wednesday, September 14, at the General Audience, the Holy Father referred to his recent Pastoral Visit to Zagreb.*

... May the Church in Croatia continue to work today, too, with the same understanding, in sincere collaboration with the other Christian and non-Christian communities, and with all people of goodwill...

ORE, September 21, 1994

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#### TO THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF PASSIONIST ORDER

September 14, 1994

*On the occasion of the celebrations organized by the Passionists for the third centenary of the birth of their founder, St Paul of the Cross, the Holy Father addressed a special message to the Superior General of the Congregation, dated 14 September 1994. Here is a part of the message.*

... Today, the Passion of Jesus and human suffering form one of the most timely themes of theology and ethics. On this topic it is easier to find a basis for dialogue both with Christians of other confessions and with other believers in God and, in general, with all people who are motivated by a sincere search for justice and love. Among the sons of St Paul of the Cross there have been some authentic forerunners of the ecumenical movement, enthusiastic apostles of the unity of all Christians, such as Bl. Dominic Barberi and Fr Ignatius Spencer. They felt they were the heirs to the longing for unity characteristic of the founder himself, who prayed intensely for this objective.

Today's Passionists must not be anything less, but should continue to point to Christ crucified as the One who through his sacrifice broke down the dividing wall and reconciled every man to God and to his own brothers and sisters (cf. *Eph 2: 11-12*). Like the Apostle, they must be deeply enthusiastic about Christ's Cross, folly for the world today, but the most profound wisdom for those who seek God, justice and peace...

ORE, October 19, 1994

#### TO THE PRESIDENT OF ESTONIA

September 15, 1994

*On Thursday, September 15, the Holy Father received H.E. Mr Lennart Mere, President of Estonia, who was making an official visit. Addressing the Head of State in Estonian, the Pope praised the harmonious relations between Church and State in that Baltic Republic and stated that Catholics were committed to the country's progress. Here is an excerpt.*

... Mr President, thanks to the harmony that exists between them, the various Christian confessions present in your country also help to encourage a climate of peace and cooperation. The ecumenical meeting held in the church of St Nicholas, in which I had the joy to take part during my previously mentioned Pastoral Visit, was an eloquent sign of the commitment of all those who profess a common faith in Christ to seriously continue on their journey towards full unity.

Their witness to Gospel values helps keep alive the memory of the great cultural and human patrimony that Christianity historically offered to the civilization and progress of the Baltic people, especially to Estonians. Catholics intend to intensify this journey of reconciliation and peace, in the face of current challenges, by seeking every just solution for healing the still gaping wounds in people's minds...

ORE, October 5, 1994

## ANGELUS

September 18, 1994

*The Holy Father entreated Our Lady, before praying the Angelus with the crowds who had gathered for Mass in the Stadium at Lecce, on Sunday, September 18.*

We beg you, faithful Virgin of this land which loves to invoke you as *Hodegetria*, help believers in their daily efforts to find *ways for meeting and for mutual understanding*. Here where the East and the West exchanged precious gifts of faith and civilization, we feel you close to us, Mother of unity.

Foster in all Christians the desire to proclaim soon and in full harmony the faith of the Apostles, so as to be able to celebrate the Lord's Body and Blood at one table. Open their hearts to trust and dialogue, so that they may be credible witnesses to the Gospel of salvation in the world.

ORE, September 21, 1994

## TO PAKISTAN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE

October 21, 1994

*John Paul II addressed the Bishops of Pakistan on Friday, 21 October, at the conclusion of their ad limina visit. Here is an excerpt:*

... Because you are a "little flock" (Lk 12:32), *ecumenical cooperation with other Christians in social, cultural and civic life is ever more imperative*. The Second Vatican Council foresaw that joint efforts among Christians would contribute to "a just appreciation of the dignity of the human person, the promotion of the blessings of peace [and] the application of Gospel principles to social life" (*Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 12). Likewise, for such collaboration to be a true instrument of ecclesial fellowship, it should be "accompanied by other forms of ecumenism, especially by prayer and spiritual sharing" (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, n. 212). I am aware that in union with the members of other Christian Churches and communities you seek to give a united witness against injustices and in promoting the common good. I shall continue to pray for the success of these efforts...

ORE, November 2, 1994

## TO ANGLICAN AND ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS FROM USA

November 7, 1994

*On Monday, 7 November, the Holy Father met a group of Anglican and Catholic Bishops from the USA who were making a pilgrimage to Rome and Canterbury. Here is the English text of the Pope's address to them.*

Dear Brothers in Christ,

1. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Vatican, *Bishops of the Anglican Communion and Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States*. You have come to Rome on a pilgrimage which has included another important stage at Canterbury. I appreciate the greetings which you have conveyed from Archbishop Carey and I gladly reciprocate. You are making this journey in the spirit of ecumenical brotherhood, with the desire to promote ever more intense dialogue between Anglicans and Catholics in your country. I thank Bishop Griswold for his kind words, and I take comfort from the fact that we agree in seeing a "divine summons and grace" in the long-ing for unity which the Holy Spirit has for many years been stimulating in the hearts of Christ's followers (cf. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 1).

2. It is already a wonderful gift of God's grace that we concur in acknowledging that *ecumenical relations are an essential requirement of our obedience to the Lord*. Jesus in fact prayed to the Father for his disciples "that they may be one... so that the world may believe" (*Jn 17:21*). We can all be encouraged at the progress already made along this road. You in particular can point to many valid examples within the United States of cooperation in Christian witness and in service between Anglican and Catholic dioceses and parishes. Common prayer for unity has become almost an habitual occurrence. You are also immediately aware of the need for common witness in matters of Christian morality. Building on what has already been evidenced in the document of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission *Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church*, you are increasingly challenged, in order to be faithful to the divine Teacher, to seek a united stance in the moral questions which so deeply affect the men and women of our time. For all of this, for the "grace of God which was given you in Jesus Christ" (*1 Cor 1:4*), we must be thankful.

3. At the same time we are painfully aware of the further obstacles along the way. We should neither be surprised nor held back by the difficulties involved. Among them, you have mentioned the serious disagreement between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion over the ordination of women to the priesthood. At the same time it is heartening to hear you place this important issue in its proper perspective, *a profound ecclesiological perspective which sees the Church's first duty as obedience to Christ the Head* (cf. *Eph 5:23*), a perspective which implies limits to our authority in relation to what has been

handed down (cf. *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*, n. 4). Only a theological vision inspired by prayerful, contemplative faith will ensure openness to the Spirit's sure guidance as we continue our pilgrimage towards full communion.

4. In the face of these and other difficulties, where does our ecumenical hope lie? It is grounded in the very strength of the things which unite us in

spite of our differences. Anglicans and Catholics already share a deep faith in the mysteries of our Redeemer's life, death and resurrection. These mysteries, made present to us in Baptism, are the well-spring of our lives in the Church. Baptism however is "a beginning, a point of departure"; it is "wholly directed towards the acquiring of the fullness of life in Christ" (cf. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 22). Baptism thus contains an internal dynamism towards an ever fuller participation in the Church as a community of faith and visible communion. Our hope therefore is not of our own making, but flows ever new from the efficacy of the very gifts by which God constitutes his People on earth, the Church which journeys in a foreign land, away from her Lord (cf. *2 Cor 5:6*), until she appears in glory with her Spouse (cf. *Col 3:1-4*) (cf. *Lumen gentium*, n. 6).

I pray, as we approach the Year 2000, that the Lord will guide us as we move ahead on the way to full communion, so that we can once again bear witness together to the Gospel of Christ, "that the world may believe" (*Jn 17:21*). In friendship I invoke upon you the grace and peace of God.

ORE, November 23, 1994

To BISHOPS OF THE CHALDEAN CHURCH

November 14, 1994

*On Monday November 14, the Holy Father received in audience the Bishops of the Chaldean Church, at the end of their visit ad limina Apostolorum. He urged them to be the leaven of concord and reconciliation in their communities.*

Because of their geographical and cultural situation and their religious sensitivity, the "Eastern Churches in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome have the special duty of fostering the unity of all Christians, in particular of Eastern Christians" (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n. 24). It is in this spirit that I am glad to welcome His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, who has come to Rome to sign a Christological declaration with the Catholic Church...

ORE, December 7, 1994

To ATLANTIC CLUB OF BULGARIA

November 14, 1994

*On Monday, 14 November, the Holy Father met a delegation from the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria, which brings together representatives of the country's religious, political and labour interests. Here is the English text of the Pope's address for the occasion.*

Your Excellencies,  
Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure for me to be able to welcome the Delegation of the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria which brings together distinguished representatives of relig-

ious, cultural, political and labour interests in your country. Your visit is a vivid reminder of the centuries-old record of contacts between Bulgaria and the Holy See, forever linked to the memory of the two Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius...

... I pray that one day I shall be able to visit your beautiful country, often referred to as "the garden of Eastern Europe". This hope is also nourished by a desire to be able to meet your dear Orthodox Church, in a spirit of true fraternal respect and reconciliation.

I invoke God's abundant blessings upon you and upon all the people of Bulgaria.

To THE AMBASSADOR OF SWEDEN

November 17, 1994

*On Thursday, November 17, H.E. Mr Carl Torsten Wilhelm Öm, Ambassador of Sweden to the Holy See, presented his credentials to the Holy Father.*

... Although they are few, you know that the Catholics of your country, in collaboration with the Christians of other Churches, are eager to promote the basic spiritual and moral values of a just and equitable social life, values which belong to the Swedish tradition...

ORE, December 21/28, 1994

AUDIENCE WITH CARDINALS WINNING, KEELER AND MAIDA

November 28, 1994

*On Monday morning, November 28, the Holy Father received in audience three of the new Cardinals: Thomas Winning, Archbishop of Glasgow, Scotland, William Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore, USA, and Adam Maida, Archbishop of Detroit, USA, together with their friends and relatives. The Pope addressed each one. He referred to Cardinal Keeler's work in ecumenism. ...*

... Like your predecessors in the See of Baltimore and in your office as President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, you have sought to shepherd a flock which strives to be authentically Catholic within a pluralistic society. Your pastoral ministry has likewise included much work for ecumenical and interreligious understanding. Today I ask the Lord to sustain you in serving the Church in America as it faces the challenges of the new evangelization on the eve of the third millennium.

ORE, November 30, 1994

MEETING WITH THE SICK AT LORETO

December 10, 1994

*On Saturday, 10 December, during his visit to Loreto, the Holy Father greeted a group of sick people gathered in the central nave of the Shrine. Here is an excerpt of this address which was given in Italian.*

... So, dearly beloved, Loreto makes us think of Nazareth and Nazareth represents every home, every Christian family. In these families *you sick people have an irreplaceable task: to be an inexhaustible source of peace and unity* through your prayer and witness. I say this *also in reference to the Italian nation, and especially to the great Family of the Church*. In particular, I entrust to your prayers the cause of *Christian unity*: insistently implore, through the intercession of the Virgin, the complete unity of Christians in faith and love...

ORE, December 21/28, 1994

#### MESSAGE TO CARDINAL PULJIĆ

December 8, 1994

*The Holy Father sent a message to the new Cardinal Vinko Puljić, to mark the celebration of the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Peter's Cathedral in Sarajevo. His greeting referred also to the Orthodox.*

... I greet you with special affection, beloved and venerable Brother Vinko Puljić, diligent and generous Pastor, who on this occasion is receiving your faithful's acclamation for the first time as Cardinal. I greet the Auxiliary Bishop Pero Sudar, the priests, the

religious and the People of God who live in Bosnia-Herzegovina. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Gal 1:3*). I also offer a special greeting to the Orthodox, Jewish and Muslim citizens who have joined in these celebrations...

ORE, January 4, 1995

#### ADDRESS ON THE FEAST OF ST STEPHEN

December 26, 1994

*On Monday, December 26, the Holy Father spoke briefly to the crowds gathered in Castel Gandolfo, on the Feast of St Stephen.*

... In the 2,000 years of her existence and especially in our century, the Church has in fact been constantly invigorated by the contribution of martyrs, who, like St Stephen, gave themselves up for *the great cause of God among men*. Therefore Christians cannot and must not forget the gifts offered by these chosen members: they are the *common heritage of all believers*. The example of the martyrs and saints is consequently an invitation to full communion among all Christ's disciples...

ORE, January 4, 1995

# SYNOD OF BISHOPS ON THE CONSECRATED LIFE AND ITS ROLE IN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

October 2-29, 1994

## ECUMENICAL ASPECTS

*This was the ordinary meeting of the Synod of Bishops. Below are found in different ways some of the ecumenical aspects of the Synod. These include references to ecumenism in important addresses at the beginning, such as the "Relatio Ante Disceptationem" of Cardinal Hume, one of the Presidents of the Synod, which highlighted issues which should be discussed in the days ahead, and the report of the Archbishop Schotte, General Secretary of the Synod office pointing to ecumenical aspects in the preparation of this Synod. There are summaries of the address of Edward Cardinal Cassidy, President of the PCPCU, as well as those of the participants from other churches and the greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury. For the second half of the Synod, there are excerpts of Cardinal Hume's "Relatio Post Disceptationem", and the closing address of Cardinal Clancy, as well as of the Synod's message.*

### ADDRESSES AT THE BEGINNING

#### CARDINAL HUME'S RELATIO ANTE DISCEPTATIONEM FIRST CONGREGATION

October 3, 1994

*At the first Congregation on October 3, Cardinal Basil Hume, o.s.b., Archbishop of Westminster, Great Britain, and General Rapporteur, gave the Relatio ante disceptationem. Here is an excerpt.*

... I believe that at this Synod we must reflect more deeply on the importance of the contemplative life and of its role in the Church and for the Church. We must think about monastic life as well and especially about its specific nature. Monastic life is itself the most ancient form of consecrated life, which not only challenges young people today, but is also found in Churches of both the Orthodox and Catholic traditions...

... In living out the missionary dimension of one's own charism, it is also necessary to enrich it with the achievements of the Church's missionary journey: the central importance of witness, proclamation and the building of the living Christian communities (cf. *RM*, nn. 42-51), the need for inculturation, dialogue, ecumenism, human advancement of the laity (cf. *RM*,

nn. 71-74, 77-82). To grow in harmony with the Church is a requirement of consecrated life (cf. *Instrumentum Laboris*, n. 45). ORE, October 12, 1994

#### ARCHBISHOP JAN P. SCHOTTE'S ADDRESS

October 3, 1994

*Archbishop Jan P. Schotte, General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops, was the second to speak at the first Congregation. He summarized the work of the Synod's General Secretariat. He referred to the input of persons of other Churches and communities to the preparation of this Synod.*

... The *Instrumentum laboris* was then published on 20 June 1994, when the General Secretary presented it to journalists in the Holy See's Press Office. The document resulted from the responses to the *Lineamenta* by various Church authorities: Episcopal Conferences, Synods of the Eastern-rite Churches, dicasteries of the Roman Curia, Unions of Superiors General. The Union of Superiors General and the World Conference of Secular Institutes also participated. Further, there were additional responses from other groups and individuals, such as: Cardinals and Bishops, national and international conferences of men and women religious, various institutes of consecrated life, societies of apostolic life, confederations and federations of monasteries, individual monasteries, priests, men and women religious, consecrated virgins, men and women hermits, theologians, our brothers of the other Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

... Various Commissions are also involved in the celebration of the Assembly: the Commission for Information, the Commission for the Preparation of the Message and the Commission for Controversies. The *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum* provides in Art. 14 for the appointment of assistants to the Special Secretary, to work with him in the task of dealing with the Synod theme; 12 men and eight women belong to this group. Twenty-four *auditores* and 41 *auditrices* listed in the booklet are present at the Synodal Assembly, from nations, continents, cultures and institutes of consecrated life. *Auditores* who are expert in the traditions of consecrated life from other Christian Churches are also taking part in the Synod, eight of whom are listed in the booklet.

ORE, October 12, 1994

ADDRESS OF CARDINAL EDWARD IDRIS  
CASSIDY

*President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting  
Christian Unity*

ELEVENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION

*October 10, 1994*

One of the great aspirations of Christians in the closing years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is undoubtedly the restoration of unity within the Christian community. Our present Holy Father Pope John Paul II has made that aspiration his own and has on several occasions stated that the search for Christian unity is a pastoral priority of his Pontificate.

The *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, which Pope John Paul II approved on 25 March 1993, made it clear that ecumenism is not a task only for the Pastors or for a select few within the Church, but "concerns all the faithful, who are called to pray and work for the unity of Christians, under the direction of their Bishops" (ED, n. 4).

It is obvious then that members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life should consider among their priorities the promotion of Christian unity. And, indeed, one of the new features of the revised edition of the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* is a special section within the chapter on the Organization in the Catholic Church of the Service of Christian Unity, entitled: "Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life" (nn. 50 and 51).

Certain values, which form an essential role in the consecrated and apostolic life — and the Directory mentions conversion of heart, personal holiness, public and private prayer and distinguished service to the Church and to the world — "are at the heart of the ecumenical movement".

Members of these institutes are also engaged in many activities that can have an important bearing on ecumenical progress. There is particular scope for those who conduct various educational institutions to contribute to the ecumenical formation of those who attend such institutes. I would also mention in this connection the importance of a correct presentation in our schools and other educational institutes of the relations between Christians and the Jewish people.

The presence with us in this Synod of "witnesses of the tradition of consecrated life in other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities" is greatly appreciated, since here is an area where ecumenical and spiritual exchange can be of particular importance to the whole ecumenical movement.

As in so many incisive developments in the history of the Church, religious communities have been at the heart of the movement even leading the way, so too many have been to the forefront in the promotion of Christian unity within the Catholic Church. I should like here to pay tribute to those members of

institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life who have made invaluable contributions to the search for Christian unity.

ORE, November 2, 1994

ADDRESSES OF ECUMENICAL PARTICIPANTS

AUDITORS PARTICIPATING IN THE SYNOD FROM OTHER  
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES WHO ARE EXPERTS IN THE  
TRADITIONS OF THE CONSECRATED LIFE

WERE THE FOLLOWING:

Bishop Isidoros of Tralles, Hegumen and Patriarchal Exarch, St John's Monastery on Patmos, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Fr Elias, Superior of the Monastery of Deir El-Harf, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (Lebanon).

Archimandrite Joseph Poustooutov, Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow (Russia).

Archimandrite Bartolomeu Valeriu Androne, Orthodox Patriarchate of Romania (Romania).

Sr Hildegarde-Lucia Cölin, *Communität Casteller RING*, Lutheran World Federation.

Fr Benedict Green, C.R., Anglican Communion (England).

Sr Minke de Vries, Superior of the *Communaute de Grandchamp*, World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

BISHOP ISIDOROS OF TRALLES

*Hegumen and Patriarchal Exarch, Monastery  
of St John on Patmos, Ecumenical Patriarchate  
of Constantinople*

FIFTH GENERAL CONGREGATION

*October 5, 1994*

I am particularly moved by the benevolence of God's grace for giving me the privilege of being here today at this venerable Assembly of the Bishops of our Roman Catholic Sister-Church from all over the world, and also to represent the Ecumenical See of Constantinople in accordance with the mission entrusted to me by His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomaios I. I convey to the Most Holy Pope of ancient Rome, John Paul II, and to you all, members of this holy Assembly, his fraternal embrace and his best wishes that your work may proceed smoothly.

My presence among you, venerable brothers, is the result of our Churches' will. They wish to intensify their contacts despite the obstacles that could hinder their relations.

Your Church's fraternal invitation and the favourable response of our Patriarchate, thanks to which I am here, coincides with our Churches' common interest in sharing their experience of the spiritual life. This participation, as is demonstrated by the theme of monastic life which your Synod is discussing, encourages mutual understanding and fosters

the closeness desired by both sides as well as their successful coexistence.

This spirit is directly in line with the movement of the Fathers of the early Church, such as St Jerome and the great Athanasius, who established the West's fruitful contact with the monasticism beginning to develop in the East. Grafting Eastern monastic life onto the flourishing Church of the West has produced some very succulent fruit down the centuries abundantly nourishing and spiritually strengthening the world. In critical ages the Roman Church was fortified by these fruits, and continues to be considerably reinforced by them, the monastic orders being her particular glory. But the monastery of Grottaferata here in the heart of Rome has continued to live according to the Eastern tradition for centuries, and is among her greatest treasures.

It is particularly important and serious that today, on the threshold of the third millennium since the birth of Christ, the Church of Rome, at the Synod of her Bishops, is officially dealing with the issue of monastic witness in the world. In presenting this ideal way of life in accordance with Christ, in self-denial and in accordance with the Lord's call, she offers an antidote to the selfishness and individualism that prevail in the secularized society of our age.

For us, the Orthodox Church has never underestimated the value of monastic life. This is why she has fostered it and supported it, but she herself is also nourished and supported by it.

It is true that many of the famous places of monasticism in the East are deserted or have disappeared through the violence of storms and the historical changes that have occurred in this region. However, serious witnesses to the tradition received from our Fathers on the subject of the ascetic life still exist. In our holy monasteries, we combine mystical contemplation with daily work, which ranges from simple manual tasks to apostolic activities. Coming from one of these sacred centres myself, the Patriarchal monastery of John the Evangelist on Patmos, which, together with the Holy Mountain (Athos), is the jewel of the ecumenical throne, I can testify that monastic life continues according to the ancient tradition, but not in ignorance of the new world that surrounds it or of its new living conditions. The ancient rule is preserved in our monastery. Accordingly the midnight office is celebrated daily and during the day work continues on the painting and restoration of sacred icons and manuscripts. Moreover, our famous library functions normally. All this is provided by the monks in the monastery as is pastoral service in many parishes of the Exarchate for which we are responsible. You now have a general picture of how our life is organized.

In this monastery, in 1988, on the occasion of the festivities for the ninth centenary of its foundation, I had the joy of receiving Cardinal Hamer, Envoy of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. I am glad today, for I consider that in a certain way I am making this visit as an envoy to you from our Ecumenical Patriarch. The event that we were celebrating then was monastic, and it led to that joyful meeting. Monasticism is also

the reason and focus of this sacred gathering in which I am taking part today. On that occasion, taking advantage of his presence in the place where the Book of Revelation was written, Cardinal Hamer used that text to say: "The Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church are listening together to what the Spirit is saying to the Churches". I am a product of this sacred place and, through God's condescension, responsible for its governance. I meditate upon the Lord's revealed words which this book contains, applying them and adapting them to the monks' world. According to our traditional expression, I think that the monks are seen as having received "the angelic habit" through their profession and their renunciation of the world. What could be more angelic in this life than that the monks should really appear as God's angels on earth, proclaiming the renewal of the world in Christ according to the Lord's apocalyptic voice: "Behold, I make all things new". May the fulfilment of this expectation of the monks' angelic mission be in our time the essential result of the celebration of the 1,900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the composition of Revelation, a celebration that the Ecumenical Patriarchate is preparing for the year 1995, to take place in the holy monastery of Patmos.

ORE, October 26, 1994

ARCHIMANDRITE BARTOLOMEU VALERIU ANDRONE  
*Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, Romania*

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION  
*October 13, 1994*

The religious communities are necessary in the Catholic Church, because people, cultures and mentalities are very different.

The Orthodox Church does not have all the organizations of the Catholic Church. We only have two forms of religious life: monastic life and the lay state. Monastic life follows the ancient Christian tradition. The Rules of St Basil the Great and of the other saintly Fathers of the East are scrupulously followed especially in monasteries.

As monks, and as the Orthodox Church, we would like to do more for the community and for man. This is still very difficult. Our monasteries are always open to the faithful and also everyone wishing to see us.

Consecrated life is indispensable in our modern age. People today always need the positive religious models offered by consecrated life. The Orthodox Church in Romania needs this life even outside the monastery walls.

There are famous monasteries everywhere in Romania, in which consecrated life is lived in depth. These monasteries are centres of authentic Christian spirituality.

The *Instrumentum laboris* is meant to help and guide Catholics so that they will seek the perfection of their religious life. I wish the Synod great success in this task.

ORE, November 16, 1994

ARCHIMANDRITE JOSEPH POUSTOOUTOV  
*Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow, Russia*

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION  
*October 13, 1994*

Today, with the rebirth of the Russian Orthodox Church, monasticism is also being reborn in Russia. There were 16 monasteries in the Soviet period; today there are almost 300.

St Benedict of Norcia links our two traditions. He helps us to understand the call to give practical expression to ecumenism and to unity in diversity, and he invites us to preserve the 30-year heritage of bilateral dialogue. Our meetings in Geneva and our future meeting in Moscow also contribute to this.

Today the Russian Orthodox Church has millions of faithful. For centuries the Church provided their moral formation and influenced the formation of State structures in Russia. Sts Sergius of Radonezh, Seraphim of Sarov and Ambrose of Optina contributed with self-denial.

The Catholic Church is also having a rebirth in Russia.

We sincerely hope that her canonical structures not only accord with the real pastoral needs of those ethnic groups which have their historical roots in the Catholic Church, but also that these structures will contribute to a rebirth of the cultural, religious and linguistic identity of these nationalities. Number 100 of the *Instrumentum laboris* as well as Pope John Paul II's speech on 5 September 1993 in Lithuania will facilitate our common aspirations to an ecumenical attitude.

Russia is not a spiritual desert. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone, her Orthodox Church has given the Church thousands of martyrs.

To avoid the risk of parallel missions, Catholic monks should study the experience of the Friar Minors and of certain Benedictines and Cistercians.

Patriarch Alexei II of Moscow and All the Russias stated that the mission in Russia is primarily the task of the Russian Church, which has been present in this country for over 1,000 years. The Holy Church of Rome can help in carrying out this task, but this aid must particularly avoid proselytism, which is foreign to the nature of our fraternal relations as apostolic Churches.

ORE, November 16, 1994

FATHER ELIAS  
*Superior of Deir el Harf Monastery  
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, Lebanon*

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION  
*October 13, 1994*

With the blessing of His Beatitude Ignace Hazim, Patriarch of Antioch, and His Excellency Metropolitan Khodre of Mt Lebanon, I come from St George's Monastery at Deir el Harf, Mt Lebanon, to bring a

modest witness from the tradition of the Orthodox Church.

One cannot insist enough on the spiritual and theological reality of consecrated life. One cannot insist enough on the "being" of consecrated life, on "being" before doing. "Vocation precedes mission".

Christ said: "You are the light of the world". He also said: "I am the light of the world". He is the light. God is light. We are the light. He asks us to become light. "Believe in the light that you may be children of the light", that is, be light — not created light, but the divine, uncreated light. Yes, truly. Otherwise, why would Christ have become incarnate?

I think we must insist on this task, if consecrated life is not to be left by the way.

The Byzantine tradition insists on hesychasm and the prayer of the heart, the continuous prayer with the Holy Name of Jesus. St Gregory Palamas explains how — after having been purified by asceticism and silence — to make the "nous" (spirit or intellect) descend into the heart, the centre of being, and how one's whole being (spirit, heart and body) receives the Holy Spirit, sees the light of God, sees himself as light, becomes light.

The Fathers tell us that we must never forget that we are sinners. St Isaac the Syrian said that we will be judged not on what we have done (on the miracles we have performed), but on the tears we have or have not shed — a permanent state of penance in sorrow and in joy, a penance that leads to resurrection, to the kingdom.

ORE, November 16, 1994

FR BENEDICT GREEN, C.R.  
*Resurrection Monastery of the Anglican Communion,  
Great Britain*

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION  
*October 13, 1994*

Speaking as one of 1,200 Anglican religious (whose numbers have fallen by half since 1960), I want to say something of "spiritual ecumenism" as we have experienced it, not only in prayer but in initiatives from the Catholic side. My own community was represented at the Malines Conversations, and there encountered that truly prophetic figure, Dom Lambert Beauduin. The Abbé Couturier visited it in the 1930's and found a future biographer there. Our community has taken part in theological exchanges with English Dominicans and shared problems and aspirations in depth with German Benedictines.

"Spiritual ecumenism" thus includes the spirit of prophecy, of intercessory prayer, of truth and of openness; it is ecumenism in depth and its effects can be summed up in the motto *cor ad cor loquitur*. Religious of separated ecclesial traditions are in a specially apt position to promote this: but the mutual recognition that results will not uncommonly be found to run ahead of current juridical norms.

ORE, November 16, 1994

SR MINKE DE VRIES

*Superior of the Communauté de Grandchamp  
World Alliance of Reformed Churches*

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION

October 13, 1994

Sr Minke de Vries, prioress of the *Communauté de Grandchamp* in Switzerland, first expresses her emotion and gratitude to the Holy Father, to the Synod Fathers and to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. She is very moved to be able to attend this Synod, which deals with such an important theme as that of consecrated life and its role.

After quickly describing the *Communaute' de Grandchamp*, an ecumenical community of monastic inspiration originating in the Reformed Churches and recognized as such by the Evangelical Reformed Church of Neuchâtel and by the Federation of Protestant Churches of Switzerland, she points out that the call to consecrated life never disappeared completely from the Reformed Churches after the 16<sup>th</sup>-century schism, but this important reality in the Church's life unfortunately had to remain for a long time underground. However, she continues, the Holy Spirit did not remain inactive. In the past century, in the context of great social misery, houses for deaconesses were established and quickly received many vocations. Later, the first Protestant religious communities of monastic inspiration arose between the two world wars, during and after the Second World War in the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.

Consecrated life is located by its very nature in the heart of the Church and in the heart of the world towards which flows God's threefold holy compassion. Is not the Church's monasticism indivisible, insofar as it remains faithful to its origins in the first centuries?

The more prayer becomes our breath of life, the more ecumenism becomes natural and the desire for communion among Christians a passion, a burning fire "that the world may believe...". The situation and the distress of today's world make urgent the need to answer this prayer of Christ. In the crucified and resurrected Christ, the Father's love for every human being creates in us the desire not only to sing of this love, but to become a sign of it, an instrument in prayer and in our outreach to the rejected of our world.

ORE, November 16, 1994

SR HILDEGARD-LUCIA COÛLN

*"Communität Casteller Ring"  
Lutheran World Federation*

SEVENTEENTH GENERAL CONGREGATION

October 13, 1994

After more than four centuries in which monasteries were forgotten about, during and after the Second World War new religious communities arose in

the Lutheran world, totally independent from each other, in different places and according to their own characteristics. We believe this is the work of the Holy Spirit. In a life according to the evangelical counsels, these communities seek a lifestyle that frees one for God and for men. The total giving of self to Christ takes place through the profession of vows. With all their differences, the communities are places of mandatory spiritual life, of lived brother- and sisterhood, of ecumenical life and activity, and of committed service to the Church and the world.

The *Communität Casteller Ring*, which is one of these recent religious communities, combines Lutheran ecclesiology with Benedictine spirituality. The frequent celebration of the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours and private meditation characterize the spiritual life. One of our main duties is hospitality. People wishing to participate in our spiritual life come to us, in order to find comfort in moments of crisis and to receive guidance for their spiritual lives.

In all of this, we seek to work for the coming of God's kingdom.

ORE, November 16, 1994

GREETINGS FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

*Eighteenth General Congregation*

*During the Eighteenth General Congregation, Archbishop Schotte read the following Englishlanguage message from Dr George Leonard Carey, Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Great Britain.*

Dear Bishops,

It gives me the greatest pleasure to send this message of greeting and best wishes to all of you gathered for the Synod of Bishops on the religious life.

The religious life, in all of its aspects, has had a major part to play in the development of our two traditions, whether within the areas of spirituality, theology or social justice.

I am sure that this Synod will contribute greatly to an understanding of the role of the religious life within the whole Church of Christ and I look forward to hearing of your deliberations.

ORE, November 23, 1994

STATEMENTS TOWARD THE END  
OF THE SYNOD

CARDINAL HUME'S RELATIO POST DISCEPTATIONEM

October 14, 1994

*At the Nineteenth General Congregation which began on the evening of Friday October 14, Cardinal George Basil Hume, o.s.b., General Rapporteur of the Synod, gave the Relatio post disceptationem, a synthesis of the various interventions made during the general discussion of the Synod theme. Here is one aspect of his report.*

... Also included among the duties of consecrated life are ecumenism, with all its implications, the contribution to ecumenical dialogue and collaboration with other Christian in the areas of education, the protection of creation and reconciliation among people...

ORE, November 23, 1994

#### MESSAGE OF THE SYNOD

*October 27, 1994*

*During the twenty-fourth General Congregation on the morning of Thursday October 27, the Synod Fathers approved the Message of the Synod of Bishops.*

At the end of the Synod, we Synodal Fathers together with participants representing the consecrated life, one with the Successor of Peter, joyfully turn to God's People and all of goodwill in order to bear witness to the good news of the life consecrated by the profession of the evangelical counsels. We rejoice in the presence at the Synod of representatives of consecrated life from other Churches and Christian faith communities. In a special way we turn to over a million women and men who make up this grand family of consecrated persons and members of societies of apostolic life. For a month we have asked the Holy Spirit to give us light. We have prayed, reflected and dialogued about God's plan for the consecrated life and its role in the Church and in the world today. We take to ourselves its joys and hopes along with its concerns and needs, even while we search for ways we can be of help. We have offered some of these as proposals to the Holy Father...

... To you, venerable and dear religious of the Oriental Churches, we send our thanks. For us, you represent the continuity of religious life. Your monastic traditions have inestimable value for Christ's Church. The common patrimony of religious life, preserved still in all the Eastern Churches, is itself witness to a once complete unity.

The desert Fathers and the Eastern monks developed the monastic spirituality which then spread to the West. It is nourished by *lectio divina*, liturgy and unceasing prayer; and it is lived in the charity of common life, in conversion of heart, flight from the world, silence, fasts and long vigils. Eremitical life

still flourishes around monasteries. This spiritual treasury has forged the culture of nearby peoples and, at the same time, has been inspired by it.

To religious of Catholic Eastern Churches, we send our thanks for the history of your often heroic witness in the heart of the Catholic Church; we ask that you re-enforce your monastic roots, drawing from the sources of the Gospel and sacred Tradition. We hope that the Oriental Catholic Churches take up again their monastic experience, welcoming and valuing those movements which welling up from within, lead them toward monasticism.

Attentive to the needs of your people you have shown, in many ways and to all those who have turned to you in moments of difficulty and conflict, how you love the Church. This service will continue, rooting itself more and more in the quest for the One who is necessary, who is monastic life's reason for being.

Solidify and intensify a sincere dialogue of personal acquaintance and exchange with the monks and nuns of the Orthodox Churches, to whom you are so closely united in the same following of Christ...

ORE, November 2, 1994

#### CLOSING ADDRESS BY CARDINAL EDWARD CLANCY

*October 28, 1994*

*The twenty-seventh and final General Congregation of the Ninth Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops closed with a brief address by Cardinal Edward Bede Clancy, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia. Here is an excerpt of his address.*

... We have studied consecrated life in length in practically all its perspectives, and in detail. We freely shared opinions and reflections deriving from theology, spirituality, history and contemporary experience, as well as anxieties and joys, together with hope and trust in the future. We listened to the interventions of the Bishops, Superiors and religious, members of different forms of consecrated life, priests and lay faithful, men and women from the Eastern to the Western Church; not only Catholics but also members of other ecclesial communions, from Europe, Asia, the Americas, Africa and Oceania (that is to say, people from the Pacific)...

ORE, November 30, 1994

## TOWARD THE YEAR 2000

### SELECTIONS FROM *TERTIO MILLENNIO ADVENIENTE* OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

*With the intention that the Catholic Church makes serious preparations for the year 2000, Pope John Paul II had called an Extraordinary Consistory of Cardinals, June 13-14, 1994 to discuss this matter (see Information Service 87 (1994) pp. 217-218).*

*This was followed by the publication of the Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio Adveniente of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Bishops, Clergy and Lay Faithful on preparation for the Jubilee of the year 2000, (November 10, 1994). The letter is very ecumenical in spirit.*

*We present here excerpts from the Apostolic letter which are particularly important from an ecumenical perspective. They are put into the context of the logical themes in which they are presented. These excerpts are from the letter as published by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana.*

#### I. "JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME YESTERDAY AND TODAY" (Heb 13:8)

4. Christ, the Redeemer of the world, *is the one Mediator between God and men*, and there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved (cf. Acts 4:12). As we read in the Letter to the Ephesians: "in him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the richness of his grace, which he has lavished upon us. For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight... his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (1:7-10). Christ, the Son who is of one being with the Father, is therefore the one who *reveals God's plan for all creation, and for man in particular.* (...)

6. Jesus was born of the Chosen People, in fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham and constantly recalled by the Prophets. The latter spoke in God's name and in his place. The economy of the Old Testament, in fact, was essentially ordered to preparing and proclaiming the coming of Christ, the Redeemer of the universe, and of his Messianic Kingdom. The books of the Old Covenant are thus a permanent witness to a careful divine pedagogy. In Christ this pedagogy achieves its purpose. ...

#### II. THE JUBILEE OF THE YEAR 2000

10. ... From this relationship of God with time there arises *the duty to sanctify time.* This is done, for

example, when individual times, days or weeks, are dedicated to God, as once happened in the religion of the Old Covenant, and as happens still, though in a new way, in Christianity. In the liturgy of the Easter Vigil the celebrant, as he blesses the candle which symbolizes the Risen Christ, proclaims: "Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega, all time belongs to him, and all the ages, to him be glory and power through every age for ever". He says these words as he inscribes on the candle the numerals of the current year. The meaning of this rite is clear: it emphasizes the fact that *Christ is the Lord of time*, he is its beginning and its end; every year, every day and every moment are embraced by his Incarnation and Resurrection, and thus become part of the "fullness of time"...

11. Against this background, we can understand *the custom of Jubilees*, which began in the Old Testament and continues in the history of the Church. Jesus of Nazareth, going back one day to the *synagogue of his home town*, stood up to read (cf. Lk 4:16-30). Taking the book of the Prophet Isaiah, he read this passage: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour*" (61:1-2).

... The day of salvation had come, the "fullness of time". *All Jubilees point to this "time" and refer to the Messianic mission of Christ*, who came as the one "anointed" by the Holy Spirit, the one "sent by the Father". It is he who proclaims the good news to the poor. It is he who brings liberty to those deprived of it, who frees the oppressed and gives back sight to the blind (cf. Mt 11:4-5; Lk 7:22). In this way he ushers in "a year of the Lord's favour", which he proclaims not only with his words but above all by his actions. The Jubilee, "a year of the Lord's favour", characterizes all the activity of Jesus; it is not merely the recurrence of an anniversary in time. ...

16. ... With regard to its *content, this Great Jubilee* will be, in a certain sense, like any other. But at the same time it will be different, greater than any other. For the Church respects the measurements of time: hours, days, years, centuries. She thus goes forward with every individual, helping everyone to realize how *each of these measurements of time is imbued with the presence of God* and with his saving activity. In this spirit the Church rejoices, gives thanks and

asks forgiveness, presenting her petitions to the Lord of history and of human consciences.

Among the most fervent petitions which the Church makes to the Lord during this important time, as the eve of the new millennium approaches, is that unity among all Christians of the various confessions will increase until they reach full communion. I pray that the Jubilee will be a promising opportunity for fruitful cooperation in the many areas which unite us; these are unquestionably more numerous than those which divide us. It would thus be quite helpful if, with due respect for the programmes of the individual Churches and Communities, ecumenical agreements could be reached with regard to the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee. In this way the Jubilee will bear witness even more forcefully before the world that the disciples of Christ are fully resolved to reach full unity as soon as possible in the certainty that "nothing is impossible with God"...

### III. PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT JUBILEE

17. *In the Church's history every jubilee is prepared for by Divine Providence.* This is true also of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. (...)

18. From this point of view we can affirm that *the Second Vatican Council was a providential event, whereby the Church began the more immediate preparation for the Jubilee of the Second Millennium.* It was a Council similar to earlier ones, yet very different; it was a Council *focused on the mystery of Christ and his Church and at the same time open to the world.* This openness was an evangelical response to recent changes in the world. ...

19. ... During the Council, precisely out of a desire to be fully faithful to her Master, the Church questioned herself about her own identity, and discovered anew the depth of her mystery as the Body and the Bride of Christ. Humbly heeding the word of God, she reaffirmed the universal call to holiness; she made provision for the reform of the liturgy, the "origin and summit" of her life; she gave impetus to the renewal of many aspects of her life at the universal level and in the local Churches; she strove to promote the various Christian vocations, from those of the laity to those of religious, from the ministry of deacons to that of priests and Bishops; and in a particular way she rediscovered episcopal collegiality, that privileged expression of the pastoral service carried out by the bishops in communion with the Successor of Peter. On the basis of this profound renewal, the Council opened itself to Christians of other denominations, to the followers of other religions and to all the people of our time. No Council had ever spoken so clearly about Christian unity, about dialogue with non-Christian religions, about the specific meaning of the Old Covenant and of Israel, about the dignity of each person's conscience, about the principle of religious liberty, about the different cultural trad-

itions within which the Church carries out her missionary mandate, and about the means of social communication...

20. ... The best preparation for the new millennium, therefore, can only be expressed in a renewed commitment *to apply, as faithfully as possible, the teachings of Vatican II to the life of every individual and of the whole Church.* It was with the Second Vatican Council that, in the broadest sense of the term, the immediate preparations for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 were really begun. ...

22. Special tasks and responsibilities with regard to the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 belong to the *ministry of the Bishop of Rome.* ...

23. Since the publication of the very first document of my Pontificate, *I have spoken explicitly of the Great Jubilee,* suggesting that the time leading up to it be lived as "a new Advent". This theme has since reappeared many times, and was dwelt upon at length in the Encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem.* In fact, *preparing for the Year 2000 has become as it were a hermeneutical key of my Pontificate.* ...

24. *Papal Journeys* have become an important element in the work of implementing the Second Vatican Council. ...

The successive stages of these travels are well known. Papal journeys have become a regular occurrence, taking in the particular Churches in every continent and showing concern *for the development of ecumenical relationships* with Christians of various denominations. Particularly important in this regard were the visits to Turkey (1979), Germany (1980), England, Scotland and Wales (1982), Switzerland (1984), the Scandinavian countries (1989), and most recently the Baltic countries (1993).

At present, it is my fervent wish to visit Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Middle East: Lebanon, Jerusalem and the Holy Land. It would be very significant if in the Year 2000 it were possible to visit *the places on the road taken by the People of God of the Old Covenant,* starting from the places associated with Abraham and Moses, through Egypt and Mount Sinai, as far as Damascus, the city which witnessed the conversion of Saint Paul.

25. In preparing for the Year 2000, *the individual Churches* have their own role to play, as they celebrate with their own Jubilees significant stages in the salvation history of the various peoples. ...

And how can we fail to mention the Eastern Churches, whose ancient Patriarchates are so closely linked to the apostolic heritage and whose venerable theological, liturgical and spiritual traditions constitute a tremendous wealth which is the common patrimony of the whole of Christianity? The many jubilee celebrations in these Churches, and in the Communities which acknowledge them as the origin of their own apostolicity, recall the journey of Christ down the centuries, leading to the Great Jubilee at the end of the second millennium. ...

a) *First Phase*

... 33. Hence it is appropriate that, as the Second Millennium of Christianity draws to a close, the Church should become more fully conscious of the sinfulness of her children, recalling all those times in history when they departed from the spirit of Christ and his Gospel and, instead of offering to the world the witness of a life inspired by the values of faith, indulged in ways of thinking and acting which were truly *forms of counter-witness and scandal*. ...

The Holy Door of the Jubilee of the Year 2000 should be symbolically wider than those of previous Jubilees, because humanity, upon reaching this goal, will leave behind not just a century but a millennium. It is fitting that the Church should make this passage with a clear awareness of what has happened to her during the last ten centuries. She cannot cross the threshold of the new millennium without encouraging her children to purify themselves, through repentance, of past errors and instances of infidelity, inconsistency, and slowness to act. Acknowledging the weaknesses of the past is an act of honesty and courage which helps us to strengthen our faith, which alerts us to face today's temptations and challenges and prepares us to meet them.

34. Among the sins which require a greater commitment to repentance and conversion should certainly be counted those which *have been detrimental to the unity willed by God for his People*. In the course of the thousand years now drawing to a close, even more than in the first millennium, ecclesial communion has been painfully wounded, a fact "for which, at times, men of both sides were to blame" (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 3). Such wounds openly contradict the will of Christ and are a cause of scandal to the world. These sins of the past unfortunately still burden us and remain ever present temptations. It is necessary to make amends for them, and earnestly to beseech Christ's forgiveness.

In these last years of the millennium, the Church should invoke the Holy Spirit with ever greater insistence, imploring from him the grace of Christian unity. This is a crucial matter for our testimony to the Gospel before the world. Especially since the Second Vatican Council many ecumenical initiatives have been undertaken with generosity and commitment: it can be said that the whole activity of the local Churches and of the Apostolic See has taken on an ecumenical dimension in recent years. The *Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity* has become an important catalyst in the movement towards full unity.

We are all however aware that the attainment of this goal cannot be the fruit of human efforts alone, vital though they are. *Unity, after all, is a gift of the Holy Spirit*. We are asked to respond to this gift responsibly, without compromise in our witness to the truth, generously implementing the guidelines laid down by the Council and in subsequent docu-

ments of the Holy See, which are also highly regarded by many Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church.

This then is one of the tasks of Christians as we make our way to the Year 2000. The approaching end of the second millennium demands of everyone an *examination of conscience* and the promotion of fitting ecumenical initiatives, so that we can celebrate the Great Jubilee, if not completely united, *at least much closer to overcoming the divisions of the second millennium*. As everyone recognizes, an enormous effort is needed in this regard. It is essential not only to continue along the path of dialogue on doctrinal matters, but above all to be more committed to *prayer for Christian unity*. Such prayer has become much more intense after the Council, but it must increase still more, involving an ever greater number of Christians, in unison with the great petition of Christ before his Passion: "Father... that they also may all be one in us" (*Jn 17 :21*). ...

37. The Church of the first millennium was bom of the blood of the martyrs: "*Sanguis martyrum - semen christianorum*". ... At the end of the second millennium, *the Church has once again become a Church of martyrs*. The persecutions of believers — priests, Religious and laity — has caused a great sowing of martyrdom in different parts of the world. The witness to Christ borne even to the shedding of blood has become a common inheritance of Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans and Protestants, as Pope Paul VI pointed out in his Homily for the Canonization of the Ugandan Martyrs. ...

*In our own century the martyrs have returned*, many of them nameless, "*unknown soldiers*" as it were of *God's great cause*. As far as possible, their witness should not be lost to the Church. As was recommended in the Consistory, *the local Churches should do everything possible to ensure that the memory of those who have suffered martyrdom should be safeguarded, gathering the necessary documentation*. This gesture cannot fail to have an ecumenical character and expression. Perhaps the most convincing form of ecumenism *is the ecumenism of the saints* and of the martyrs. The *communio sanctorum* speaks louder than the things which divide us. The *martyrologium* of the first centuries was the basis of the veneration of the Saints. By proclaiming and venerating the holiness of her sons and daughters, the Church gave supreme honour to God himself; in the martyrs she venerated Christ, who was at the origin of their martyrdom and of their holiness. In later times there developed the practice of canonization, a practice which still continues in the Catholic Church and in the Orthodox Churches. In recent years the number of canonizations and beatifications has increased. These show the vitality of *the local Churches*, which are much more numerous today than in the first centuries and in the first millennium. The greatest homage which all the Churches can give to Christ on the threshold of the third millennium will be to manifest the Redeemer's all-powerful presence through the fruits of faith,

hope and charity present in men and women of many different tongues and races who have followed Christ in the various forms of the Christian vocation...

#### b) *Second Phase*

39. On the basis of this vast programme aimed at creating awareness, it will then be possible to begin the *second phase*, the strictly *preparatory* phase. This will take place *over the span of three years*, from 1997 to 1999. The thematic structure of this three-year period, *centred on Christ*, the Son of God made man, must necessarily be theological, and therefore *Trinitarian*.

#### Year One: Jesus Christ

40. *The first year*, 1997, will thus be devoted to *reflection on Christ*, the Word of God, made man by the power of the Holy Spirit. *The distinctly Christological character of the Jubilee* needs to be emphasized, for it will celebrate the Incarnation and coming into the world of the Son of God, the mystery of salvation for all mankind. ...

41. The commitment, mentioned earlier, to make the mystery of salvation sacramentally present can lead, in the course of the year, to a *renewed appreciation of Baptism* as the basis of Christian living, according to the words of the Apostle: "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (*Gal 3:27*). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, for its part, recalls that Baptism constitutes "the foundation of communion among all Christians, including those who are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church". From an *ecumenical point of view*, this will certainly be a very important year for Christians to look together to Christ the one Lord, deepening our commitment to become one in him, in accordance with his prayer to the Father. This emphasis on the centrality of Christ, of the Word of God and of faith ought to inspire interest among Christians of other denominations and meet with a favourable response from them.

42. Everything ought to focus on the primary objective of the Jubilee: the *strengthening of faith and of the witness of Christians*...

#### Year Two: the Holy Spirit

44. 1998, *the second year* of the preparatory phase, will be dedicated in a particular way to the *Holy Spirit* and to his sanctifying presence within the Community of Christ's disciples. ...

46. In this *eschatological perspective*, believers should be called to a renewed appreciation of the theological virtue of *hope*, which they have already heard proclaimed "in the word of the truth, the Gospel" (*Col 1:5*). ...

There is also need for a better appreciation and

understanding of *the signs of hope present in the last part of this century*, even though they often remain hidden from our eyes. ...*In the Church*, they include a greater attention to the voice of the Spirit through the acceptance of charisms and the promotion of the laity, a deeper commitment to the cause of Christian unity and the increased interest in dialogue with other religions and with contemporary culture.

#### Year Three: God the Father

49. 1999, *the third and final year of preparation*, will be aimed at broadening the horizons of believers, so that they will see things in the perspective of Christ: *in the perspective of the "Father who is in heaven"* (cf. *Mt 5:45*), from whom the Lord was sent and to whom he has returned (cf. *Jn 16:28*).

50. It will therefore be necessary, especially during this year, to emphasize the theological virtue of charity, recalling the significant and lapidary words of the First Letter of John: "God is love" (4:8,16). Charity, in its twofold reality as love of God and neighbour is the summing up of the moral life of the believer. It has in God its source and its goal.

53. On the other hand, as far as the field of religious awareness is concerned, the eve of the Year 2000 will provide a great opportunity, especially in view of the events of recent decades, for *interreligious dialogue*, in accordance with the specific guidelines set down by the Second Vatican Council in its Declaration *Nostra Aetate* on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions.

In this dialogue the Jews and the Muslims ought to have a pre-eminent place. God grant that as a confirmation of these intentions it may also be possible to hold *joint meetings* in places of significance for the great monotheistic religions.

In this regard, attention is being given to finding ways of arranging historic meetings in places of exceptional symbolic importance like Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Mount Sinai as a means of furthering dialogue with Jews and the followers of Islam, and to arranging similar meetings elsewhere with the leaders of the great world religions. However, care will always have to be taken not to cause harmful misunderstandings, avoiding the risk of syncretism and of a facile and deceptive irenicism.

#### c) *Approaching the Celebration*

55. The ecumenical and universal character of the Sacred Jubilee can be fittingly reflected by a *meeting of all Christians*. This would be an event of great significance, and so, in order to avoid misunderstandings, it should be properly presented and carefully prepared, in an attitude of fraternal cooperation with Christians of other denominations and traditions, as well as of grateful openness to those religions whose representatives might wish to acknowledge the joy shared by all the disciples of Christ. ...

## VISIT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE HOLY SEE TO THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

*November 28 - December 1, 1994*

*As has now become the tradition, an official delegation of the Holy See were the guests of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the feast of St. Andrew, the patron of the Church of Constantinople. The delegation was composed of His Eminence Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, His Excellency Monsignor Sergio Sebastiani, Apostolic Nuncio in Turkey, His Excellency Monsignor Pierre Duprey, Secretary of the Pontifical Council, and Father Bernard Dubasque of the same Council.*

*On November 29th, the pontifical delegation was warmly received in audience by His Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomaios I. This conversation was followed by a working session with the Synodal Commission for relations with the Catholic Church led by Metropolitan Chrysostom of Ephesus.*

*The following day, on the feast of the Apostle St Andrew, the delegation assisted at the Divine Liturgy, celebrated in the Cathedral of the Phanar at which the Patriarch presided. The homily, delivered by the Metropolitan Athanasios of Heliopolis and Theiron, was dedicated entirely to dialogue and its necessity in our day. At the end of the ceremony, there was an exchange of*

*addresses and Cardinal Cassidy presented a message of Pope John Paul II to Patriarch Bartholomaios. The delegation was then invited to the patriarchate for a festive luncheon at which a number of metropolitans were also present. In the evening, for the first time, a reception was organized and offered by the Patriarch in honor of all the guests, civil and religious authorities of Istanbul, in which a number of journalists also participated.*

*Having arrived on Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, the delegation was able to meet, that evening, Archbishop Jean Tcholakian, President of the Catholic Episcopal Conference, and His Excellency Monsignor Louis Palâtre, the Apostolic Vicar of Istanbul. In the course of its stay, it also visited His Beatitude, Karekine II, Patriarch of the Armenian Orthodox, and the Syrian Orthodox Bishop, Monsignor Yousouf Cetin, along with his clergy and other leaders of the community.*

*Below are found the addresses exchanged at the Ecumenical Patriarchate on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1994 followed by a brief comment made by Pope John Paul II on the same date at a general audience in Rome.*

### MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

" Simon Peter, servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been given a faith like ours in the justifying power of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ: may grace and peace be yours in abundance through your knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord " (2 Pt 1:1-2).

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of St Andrew, I greet Your Holiness and the Church gathered by your ministry with these words from the Letter of Peter. We glorify God and give him thanks for allowing the Good News of salvation to reach us and the ends of the world through the intermediary of the Apostles. In our common faith, the celebration of an Apostle reminds us of the apostolic succession, the guarantee of the unity of the People of God and their continuity in fidelity to the faith, "once for all handed down to the holy ones" (Jude 3).

We have in mind our forthcoming entry into the third millennium and the Great Jubilee with which we will celebrate the Incarnation of the Word of God. Meditating on the Scripture at this historical moment, like the disciples of Emmaus we feel "our

hearts burning within us" (cf. Lk 24:32) with the sincere desire to proclaim the Gospel of salvation to all. We would like to proclaim Jesus Christ with renewed zeal and increasingly intense love. But, we know that he wants the unity of his people to be the sign given "that the world may believe" (Jn 17:21). How I long, in these years of preparation for the Jubilee, for us to find ways of close collaboration between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches!

Our common celebrations each year take place in this context, as do the cordial and fraternal exchanges between the delegations of our Churches on the occasion of our feasts, in Rome, of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and in Constantinople, of Andrew, the first called. These are blest events for coordinating our efforts towards unity and for promoting a common witness and concerted practice of evangelization.

In this regard, the theological dialogue between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches has made some important steps in affirming "our common faith in the mystery of the Church and the link between the

faith and the sacraments", as we were able to declare with your venerable predecessor, His Holiness Dimitrios I (AAS, 80 [1988], p. 253). We give thanks to God for it; and we express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to this dialogue in a spirit of faith, hope and service to the Church. Now, after resolving an issue which severely hindered our path to new progress, theological dialogue can continue its course according to the agreed programme, and examine the ecclesiological and canonical consequences of the sacramental structure of the Church. Thus we are advancing towards a more direct consideration of the articulation of ecclesial communion.

The dawn of the third millennium should therefore find us closer to the unity we are seeking together. I earnestly ask this of the Lord.

For this purpose, I have invited the whole Catholic Church to take part in this great supplication. I would be deeply happy if all Christians could join in this prayer and together invoke our Lord Jesus Christ, certain that "there is no other name under

heaven given to men by which we are to be saved" (*Acts* 4:12). For my part, I can assure Your Holiness of the Catholic Church's constant availability for prayer, fraternal contacts, theological study and practical collaboration.

With these sentiments of shared faith and joy, I send you and your Church the delegation led by our venerable Brother, Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy. His presence will express the Church of Rome's participation in the festivities of her Sister Church in Constantinople, as she celebrates her holy patron.

As I look forward to my forthcoming personal meeting with Your Holiness, I embrace you affectionately in the Lord.

From the Vatican, 25 November 1994

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

ORE, December 7, 1994

## ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMAIOS I

*November 30, 1994*

Your Eminence Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy,  
Dear Brothers in Christ who comprise the Delegation  
of the Church of Rome,

Welcome in our midst!

The commemorative anniversary and celebration of St. Andrew the Apostle the First-Called has gathered us again today in this venerable Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George the Great-Martyr and Trophy-bearer of our most holy Church of Constantinople so that we may praise our glorified Trinitarian God by remembering His saints.

The decades-old praise-worthy prevailing custom of our two sister Churches, that of the Elder and the New Rome, of exchanging official delegations and visits upon each Church's patronal feast has indeed proven to be an act which is pleasing to God and blessed from above in many ways.

Our two Churches know better than any third party the usefulness and God-worthiness of this sisterly communication. They are fully appreciative and for this reason they have never given in to the temptation of allowing the sacred annual journeys to each other to deteriorate or to be neglected in any way because of circumstantial criticisms and difficulties.

As it is known, during our blessed regular meetings, we have the opportunity on the one hand of being with each other in an atmosphere of prayer and love supplicating the mercy of our common Lord for the eucharistic and in general sacramental communion which is not yet possible. On the other hand we have the opportunity to renew our discussions on a few things, informing each other more generally of

the situation existing on each side with the aim of confirming and finding ways for mutual understanding and consolation.

It is in the spirit of fraternal watchfulness and trust that we welcome you again this year, most beloved brothers representing His Holiness the Pope of Rome John Paul II and his Church, under Your most cherished Eminence's leadership along with the brothers with you, Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

We are particularly delighted that in your persons, brothers, we greet once again in love and honour our brother in the West, His Holiness Pope John Paul II. For the restoration of his recent ill health we repeatedly offered up our fervent prayers to the Lord and we rejoice with great joy that he once again is enjoying sound health.

Our meeting here this year is taking place, unfortunately, once again under a considerably heavy climate brought on by the various on-going tensions and anomalies in numerous areas of the earth. The nearest area of general concern for us is the continuing bloodshed in Bosnia and the tragic misery of entire peoples in the countries of Eastern Europe.

Our proto-throne Church of Constantinople in the East cannot ignore the particular love and care which should be shown these peoples. And this, not only because the majority of these populations consist of faithful of the Orthodox Church, but also because we all well know by now that the great evils which have suddenly arisen cannot be attributed only to *endogenous reasons*, but primarily to *external*

*incurable interventions* coming from those in power who were not taught to use their power in order to develop together with others a common bliss, but to neutralize the small and weak considering them as soulless merchandise.

Thus, the ever-memorable Alexandros Papadiamantis, one rightly called the saint of neo-hellenic letters, was right when he characterized these senseless powers of the earth as "merchants of the nations",

Together with our fellow hierarchs, the members of the Holy and Sacred Synod, we have always kept these things in mind and, primarily through our prayers, but also through every means at our disposal, have not ceased to care for the improvement of the explosive situations everywhere for the benefit of every human being, irrespective of religion, nationality or other nearer definitions.

In our sacred care, we, as usual, always invoke the assistance of all the international ecclesiastical organizations such as the World Council of Churches, the European Council of Churches, and, firstly, His Holiness the Pope, knowing what power he wields with the governments of the world through his diplomatic agencies particularly in the Western Christian world.

Thus, we ask you, brothers, to transmit to His Holiness both our heartfelt thanks for every good initiative taken as well as our fraternal request that

he will continue and will concentrate more forcefully on his peacemaking efforts because, unfortunately, regardless of how honourably vigilant we are, the international developments are moving at such a fast pace that the events nearly always forestall us and we are obliged to run gasping behind them.

As far as concerns the official theological dialogue between our sister Churches, which always remains at the epicentre of the interest and prayer not only of the ecclesiastical leadership of each side, but certainly also of the entire Christian people in the East and in the West, we cannot say anymore at this time. Regarding what further steps will be taken after the meeting in Balamand, Lebanon, the Inter-Orthodox Commission will soon judge this from the Orthodox side.

Thus praying that the Lord and Builder of the Church will guide all of us who follow His call to do His divine will always and in everything, and not what our hearts desire, we thank you again for being present among us at this celebration which we are observing together and we wish many blessed years to His Holiness our elder brother Pope of Rome John Paul II, foretasting the joy of visiting him shortly.

Christ be in our midst, beloved brothers.  
Welcome!

Translation from original Greek  
by the Ecumenical Patriarchate

#### ADDRESS OF HIS EMINENCE EDWARD IDRIS CARDINAL CASSIDY

*"Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you can love like brothers, in sincerity, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been bom anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God" (1 Peter 1:22-23).*

Your Holiness,  
beloved brothers in the Episcopacy,  
dear friends:

These words from the First Letter of the Apostle Peter indicate well the motivation and inspiration for this voyage of ours from Rome to the Phanar. They express precisely that which our presence with you today wishes to convey. We have come, in obedience to the truth, to repeat that we love you deeply from the heart, as brothers, in sincerity. And this love of ours is not based solely on the profound human relationship that we enjoy, but on that unity which we share and which we have received as a gift from on high: "bom anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God".

The visits which we exchange each year, on the Feast of Saint Andrew and the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, are in this way a sign both of our affection for each other and of the unity to which the Lord calls us.

During the periods in between these visits we do not remain distant from one another either in

thought or action. Rather, the Spirit of Wisdom of the Lord, which accompanies his Church and sustains it along the path of the griefs and anxieties, joys and hopes of the present age, allows us the deep satisfaction of forming new bonds of friendship as we share in each other's events. In this way we come to recognise ourselves as brothers even in times of trial and anxiety, perhaps we should say *especially* in times of trial and anxiety.

Recently we had the joy of receiving in Rome as the representative of this holy Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Bishop of Tralles, His Excellency Isidoros, Hegumen of the Monastery of St. John on the island of Patmos — a place that has special meaning for the present relations between our Churches, since it was there in 1980 that prayers were offered for the success of the theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, as the Mixed Catholic-Orthodox International Commission began its valuable work.

In his address to the IXth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops of the Catholic Church, which had as its theme the consecrated life in the world of today, Bishop Isidoros was able to affirm:

"My presence among you, venerable brothers, is the result of our Churches' will. They wish to intensify their contacts despite the obstacles that could hinder their relations... This partici-

pation encourages mutual understanding and fosters the closeness desired by both sides as well as their successful coexistence”.

The presence in Rome of the Bishop of Tralles was a very special joy for us and for all present at the Synod of Catholic Bishops. These words of his, which I have just quoted, reminded us all that, if we are to love one another as brothers, then we must have the will to intensify our contacts despite whatever obstacle may seek to hinder our relations. Each common act of fraternal charity by the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople, by the Pope and the Ecumenical Patriarch, and especially the common participation in important events of bishops representing the Orthodox and Catholic hierarchies sends out a powerful message of Christian love and shows the world that our dialogue is well and truly alive and has a dynamism all of its own.

In this context, I wish to express once again to Your Holiness, in the name of Pope John Paul II, but also on behalf of all the Catholic Church, deepest gratitude for your much appreciated participation in the meditation on the *Via Crucis* of last Good Friday in the Colosseum of Rome. There is no need for any comment on my part regarding the significance of this participation. It was meant to be, and was in fact, a sign to the world at large; but it was also a source of profound satisfaction and inspiration for both our Churches. Each time that the love of a brother for another brother takes form and concrete expression, it becomes like an “icon” of Christ in the world, an “icon” of light that overcomes the darkness of our weakness and human enmity, and lights up the path to the sanctity of unity. For unity is surely a source of sanctity, not only because it is an expression of the will of Christ, but also because it demands from us a spirit of conversion and of repentance, of the desire to pardon and to be pardoned.

It is undoubtedly with these sentiments that Pope John Paul II penned his recent letter *Tertio Millennia Adveniente* on the preparation for the Jubilee Year 2000. Referring to the need in these last years of the second millennium to invoke with ever greater insistence the Holy Spirit for the grace of Christian Unity, His Holiness writes in this document:

“Among the sins which require a greater commitment to repentance and conversion should certainly be counted those which have been detrimental to the unity willed by God for his People. In the course of the thousand years now drawing to a close, even more than in the first millennium, ecclesial communion has been painfully wounded... These sins of the past unfortunately still burden us and remain ever present temptations. It is necessary to make amends for them, and earnestly to beseech Christ’s forgiveness” (n. 34).

It is the fervent desire of Pope John Paul II that the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000 may provide the Churches and Ecclesial Communions with new opportunities for ecumenical cooperation. The letter of His Holiness is a clear indication of his commitment to the promotion of Christian Unity, a commitment which he knows is shared by his Brother who presides over the Church of the Apostle Andrew, brother of Peter. It is in this spirit and in this hope for the future that Pope John Paul II looks forward with pleasure to the visit which Your Holiness intends to make to Rome this coming year.

In the meantime, we are called upon to intensify our common efforts towards the full reconciliation of our Churches. Our efforts in this connection are twofold. We are involved in encouraging our local Churches — Catholic and Orthodox — to receive and so profit from the results of the dialogue at the international level. At the same time we seek to overcome those obstacles which prevent us from reaching a deeper understanding and fuller communion, in both the dialogue of truth and the dialogue of love. I believe that we have reason to be encouraged by the results so far obtained.

I am most grateful, Your Holiness, for the generous, brotherly welcome that you and the members of your Holy Synod have once again extended to me and to the members of our delegation. May the Lord, who is the source of all that is good, reward you abundantly for this and for all that you do for the cause of the unity of his scattered children (*Jn* 11:52).

## GENERAL AUDIENCE

*November 30, 1994*

*At the end of the General Audience in Rome on 30 November, the Holy Father expressed his “special affection” for Patriarch Bartholomaios I and the Church in Constantinople. Here is a translation of his brief remarks, which were made in Italian.*

Today we are celebrating the Feast of St Andrew the Apostle, brother of Simon Peter, patron of the Church in Constantinople, where a

delegation from the Holy See has gone, as is customary.

I would like to express a thought of special affection for His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomaios I and for the whole Church of Constantinople.

Let us pray together that, through the intercession of the holy brother Apostles Peter and Andrew, the Holy Spirit may soon grant the Church fully to enjoy her unity.

ORE, DECEMBER ? 1994

## THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL FEDERATION 25TH ANNIVERSARY

April 9, 1994

*The Catholic Biblical Federation celebrated its 25th anniversary on 9 April 1994, in Stuttgart-Hohenheim.*

*Connected with the celebration was a visit to the tomb of Cardinal Augustin Bea. Cardinal Johannes Willebrands participated and presided over the eucharistic celebration in the church of Riedböhringen, Cardinal Bea's native village. Father Rêmi Hoekman participated as well and read Cardinal Cassidy's letter.*

*The Holy Father sent a message for the occasion, as did Cardinal Cassidy. These messages along with the address given by His Excellency, Bishop Alberto Ablondi of Livorno, President of the Catholic Biblical Federation, are presented here.*

ADDRESS OF BISHOP ALBERTO ABLONDI OF LIVORNO  
*President of the Catholic Biblical Federation  
Vice-President of the United Bible Societies*

This April is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Catholic Biblical Federation (C.B.F.).

It is an organism born of the Second Vatican Council, particularly of the Conciliar Constitution "Dei Verbum", where it finds its origins as well as its end and naturally, 25 years after its foundation, it also finds the measure of its successful or unsuccessful engagement.

A remarkable development of activities makes the Catholic Biblical Federation present today in each continent with a vitality which I was able to witness recently in Quito at the meeting of representatives of twenty nations and in Thailand with eighteen nations from the Far East. However, despite this wide presence, perhaps the Federation is not yet sufficiently known or listened to in the common mentality of the Catholic Church; and therefore it is not evaluated within the pure essential aim it proposes.

It is therefore necessary on this celebrative occasion, to make a presentation of C.B.F. which covers its calendar. We recall then, that in 1965 the Conciliar Fathers approved the Constitution "Dei Verbum" on Divine Revelation and in 1966 Pope Paul VI gave mandate to Cardinal Bea, President of the Secretariat of Christian Unity, to lead biblical work. In 1968 Cardinal Bea, with biblical and ecumenical sensibility, brought together for the first time the delegates of the Catholic Biblical organisations of Europe to the United Bible Societies. It was exactly in that encounter that the idea of a "World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate" was born. Thus, in June 1968 an important document was issued on the

preparation of the formation of the Federation. In that document, the Secretariat for Christian Unity and the United Bible Societies (a World Fellowship of Protestant Bible Societies) published norms for interconfessional cooperation in the translation of the Bible.

Then the time had come for the creation of the Federation, when in 1969 Cardinal Willebrands, the successor of Cardinal Bea, together with 24 delegates of various nations decided to found the "World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate".

In order for the major outlines of the Federation to be assumed in the relationship between the Bible and Man, it seems appropriate now to specify the goals proposed by the last Assembly. These goals reveal the inspiration of the long tradition of the past and a special attention to the needs of the world, particularly of the poor. One rich source of inspiration had been the letter of the Holy Father which suggested to consider the "Power of the *Lectio Divina*, namely of listening and meditating with a fervent heart, on the Scriptures themselves like Mary and the disciples of Emmaus". "It is necessary — John Paul II adds — to approach the Bible as a source of sanctification, of spiritual life and of ecclesial communion in Truth and Charity". A positive proof has resulted from the recent encounters with countries of Latin America and the Far East, where confirmation of these inspirations has appeared. The *Lectio Divina* is spreading; naturally it is taking different forms and criteria that respond to the spiritual needs, and the cultural mentalities as well as to the traditions of the various peoples. Moreover, these experiences do not remain limited to their environment; they diffuse not only through encounters, but through the C.B.F. press as well: the Bulletin "*Dei Verbum*". In fact the objectives of the C.B.F. are not restricted to suggesting but also to communicating the various experiences, in order to create the dialogue of communication between churches which becomes a profound ecclesial communion.

Always within the inspiration of the Assembly of Bogotà, but most of all of the word of the Holy Father: "the biblical week which your Federation has promoted for some time, should be an intense experience in the life of the ecclesial communities, convoked by the Spirit around the Resurrected Christ". And really the work of the Federation which in spreading the day, the week, the month or the year of the Bible, is particularly joyful, fruitful and heard because it responds to profound needs. Through such an initiative, it is possible to evaluate the liturgical

readings often ignored; it is possible to educate to the personal reading of the Bible; it gives continuity in life to moments of the celebration of sacraments; it creates an appropriate biblical foundation with engagements and ministries of catechesis and charity; the establishment of biblical groups is facilitated; certain ends that have been foreseen at the foundation of the C.B.F. are realized, namely the spreading of the Bible and the collaboration with the Bible Societies both on the interconfessional and on the ecumenical levels for the diffusion of the Word of the Lord.

Noteworthy finally is the ecumenical action whether in the direct engagement of the C.B.F. or through collaboration with the Bible Societies. With reference to the recommendations of “*Dei Verbum*”, the interconfessional translations are edited in the current language. These two characteristics are interesting: first of all the interconfessional translations facilitate the encounter between various confessions even where the ecumenical movement does not succeed in gathering Christians in a dialogue of prayer, of doctrine and of collaboration. I have personally witnessed this especially in the countries of the East and of Central Europe. But it is nevertheless “ecumenical”, inside the Church, that the Word of the Lord could be understood by the simple man. A man who can only read newspapers, should be able to read the Word of Love which comes from the Lord.

In conclusion, after this quick panorama on the history, the structure and the aims of the C.B.F., a question arises: is the Catholic Biblical Federation still present in today’s Church and world 25 years after its foundation?

In a Church which is still under many respects so in need of God’s Word, as to bring the Holy Father to affirm that “*Dei Verbum*” had not been “implemented”, the biblical animation becomes pressingly urgent in the Christian life of people and of the ecclesial communities. Not only this, but confronted with a world where many persons are in need of evangelisation, where numerous religions demonstrate willingness for dialogue and many Christians need to renew their evangelisation, the Catholic Biblical Federation with its biblical proposal can be a necessary and contemporaneous instrument. Today’s people and communities are really like the pilgrims on the road of Emmaus: many Christians in fact, many persons are still perturbed and disoriented for they have not yet met someone who could “explain the Scriptures to them”.

MESSAGE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II  
TO HIS EXCELLENCY MSGR ABLONDI

*Bishop of Livorno*  
*President of the Catholic Biblical Federation*

It gives me great joy to greet Your Excellency and the Catholic Biblical Federation on the twenty-fifth Anniversary of its foundation.

The Second Vatican Council called for a greater awareness and appreciation among all the faithful of the Sacred Scriptures in order to deepen the knowledge and love of God our Father and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This has been the chief goal of the efforts of the Catholic Biblical Federation during the last quarter of a century.

The Church has always understood the Scriptures to present God’s own word to his people. “In the sacred books the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them” (cf. *Dei Verbum*, n. 21). The sacred books are therefore “food for the soul, and a pure and unfailing fount of spiritual life” (*ibid.*). Nourished by this word, Christians are renewed in spirit, live the Gospel message and go out to announce it joyfully to others.

Today, the “new evangelization” demands that the Gospel be preached afresh to all humanity. As the Church approaches the Third Millennium of Christianity, the Fourth Plenary<sup>7</sup> Assembly of the Federation has rightly emphasized that the biblical apostolate is an important aspect of the “new evangelization” needed in these last years of the twentieth century. The Holy Spirit’s call to spread the Gospel in this decade of evangelization is being taken up by many Christians and, in this regard, I am happy to acknowledge the collaboration between the Federation and the United Bible Societies. It is through the faithful preaching of the Gospel that Jesus Christ wishes his people to increase by the action of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 2). May your work in union with the Societies help to bring about an ever greater respect and fellowship among those who bear the name of Christian.

Commending the Catholic Biblical Federation to the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Word Incarnate, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of grace and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

From the Vatican, 15 March 1994

LETTER OF HIS EMINENCE EDWARD IDRIS CARDINAL  
CASSIDY

Your Excellency,

I would like to thank you wholeheartedly for your kind letter of 9 February 1994 regarding the forthcoming celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Catholic Biblical Federation.

As I wrote to you in my previous letter, I very much regret that I will not be able to take part in the celebration. I nevertheless would like to express to you, and through you also to all the members of the Catholic Biblical Federation, to all those who over the years have worked very hard, as well as to those who are at present continuing to work for and within this important organization with great enthusiasm and generosity, my deep and heartfelt appreciation.

The Federation may be proud of what, with the grace of God, it has achieved over the years in the field of the biblical pastoral ministry. Prayer, reflection, commitment, generosity, and hard work are but a few of the characteristics which have made the Federation into a significant and continuing pastoral response to what the Second Vatican Council expressed in the Dogmatic Constitution on

Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*: "In His gracious goodness, God has seen to it that what He had revealed for the salvation of all nations would abide perpetually in its full integrity and be handed on to all generations" (n. 7).

May the blessing of the Almighty accompany your endeavours also in the years to come.

With every good wish and kind personal regards.

## ECUMENICAL NEWS

REV. MSGR CANON WILLIAM A. PURDY, 1911-1994

The Rev. Canon William A. Purdy, former staff member of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (1966-1981), died on November 24, 1994. After teaching for a number of years at the Beda College in Rome, Canon Purdy joined the staff of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in 1966. He was a pioneer in fostering the new contacts between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion after the Second Vatican Council. His main work was involvement in the relations between the Catholic Church with the Anglican Communion and the World Methodist Council. He was co-secretary of the international dialogues with both of these World

Communions, helping to prepare the reports that these dialogues produced. This included the landmark "Final Report" of ARCIC published in 1981.

Besides the memorial mass in England, a special mass in remembrance of Canon Purdy was celebrated at the Beda College, February 24, 1995, at which Edward I. Cardinal Cassidy presided. Johann Cardinal Willebrands preached and recalled in the course of his sermon significant events in the life of Canon Purdy, particularly in field of ecumenism. Jerome Cardinal Hamer was also present, along with many other former colleagues and friends of Canon Purdy.

### DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

*Kottayam, December 5-8, 1994*

The Commission for dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church met at the Spirituality Centre of the Syro-Malabar Church at Kottayam (Kerala, South India) December 5-8, 1994. All the Commission members were present:

#### *For the Catholic Church:*

H.E. Msgr Pierre Duprey, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Rome (Co-President);  
H.E. Mar Joseph Powathil, Archbishop of Changanacherry;  
H.E. Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Bishop of Kottayam;  
H.E. Msgr Patrick D'Souza, Bishop of Benares (Varanasi);  
H.E. Cyril Mar Baselios Malancharuvil, Bishop of Battery;  
Rev. Father Dr. Clarence Gallagher, S.J. Rome;  
Rev. Father Dr. Matthew Vellanickal, Kottayam;  
Rev. Father Dr. Xavier Koodapuzha, Kottayam;  
Rev. Father Dr. Geevarghese Chediath, Trivandrum;  
Rev. Father Bernard Dubasque, Rome (Co-Secretary).

#### *For the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church:*

H.E. Philipos Mar Theophilos;  
H.E. Paulos Mar Gregorios (Co-President);  
H.E. Mathews Mar Severios;  
Very Rev. Ramban Theophoros;  
Rev. Father Dr K.M. George;  
Rev. Father Dr Jacob Kurian;  
Rev. Father Johns Abraham Konat;  
Rev. Father Dr John Mathews (Co-Secretary);  
Rev. Father Dr M.O. John;  
Rev. Father Mathai Nooranal;  
Mr P.C. Abraham;  
Mr A.K. Thomas.

1. The principal subject was the study on *the role of the Episcopate in guaranteeing the Unity of the Church*. After taking up again the text on "Synodal Structure and Practice" (P.M.O. John) two other documents were presented: "Koindnia in the Church" (Mar Severios) and "Ecclesial Communion: A biblical-theological perspective" (P.M. Vellanickal). The sub-commission has begun to draft a first synthesis on "the Church as Communion (Koindnia)" which has been discussed by the assembly.

These progressive studies, which have not led

immediately to concrete decisions, have engaged the commission in a process of successive approaches to the mystery of the Church and more precisely of its sacramental structure which is common to the two Churches. These approaches also permit us to perceive the links between this structure and the exercise of authority in the Church. It has therefore asked a sub-commission to explore more deeply the notions of authority (*exousia*) and of service (*diakonia*) in the Church understood as communion (*koinonia*).

2. Another sub-commission will try to develop a common reading of *the history of the Church in India*. Two reports were presented by Father M.O. John, the first on "the relations of the Malabar Church with the Oriental party of the Syrian Church in the sixteenth century" and the second on "the impact of the arrival of the Portuguese on the Malankara Church", but these were not discussed by the sub-commission. Furthermore, there will be work to establish an inventory with an eye toward preserving that which remains of the Christian patrimony of India before the arrival of the Portuguese.

3. The question of the mixed marriages has been studied again but it has not yet been possible to arrive at an agreement on this important pastoral problem. A sub-commission will continue the reflection during 1995. The Orthodox point of view on "the indissolubility of marriage" has been presented (Fr Johns Abraham), and the Catholics will present their view at the next meeting.

4. Finally, the new sub-commission on "the common witness of the Church in Kerala" has been constituted. A list of problems which the Churches ought to face together has been established: culture and faith (inculturation), interreligious dialogue, educa-

tion and school policy, the impact of the media in the process of secularization, the formation of future priests and of the clergy, corruption in society and also in ecclesiastical institutions. After close reflection, the commission thinks that the two priority questions in India are the *dialogue with other religions and corruption*. A process has been elaborated and will be implemented with the assistance of competent persons.

At the end of the meeting, the Catholic delegation gave information on the preparation of the *Jubilee of the year 2000* (cf. John Paul II: "Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*" of November 10, 1994) and on the recent *Common Christological Declaration* signed in Rome with the Assyrian Church of the East on November 11, 1994. Then in a free exchange where each was able to express himself, two recommendations were made. Concerning the method of work, it seems indispensable that in regular meetings during the year, the sub-commissions study the themes adopted even with the help of outside experts, and present a synthesis at the annual meeting of the international Commission. It seems equally important that the faithful be interested in the work of the Commission. Therefore it is necessary not only to give information on the progress of our reflection but also to link this reflection closely to concrete pastoral problems. Furthermore, always in order to better connect this work to reflection on the local level, the Commission stresses the need to establish a more intense collaboration with the bishops and their various decision making institutions (Synods, Councils, Conferences).

After deciding that the next meeting would be held on October 9-14, 1995 at Kottayam (at the Sophia Center of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church), the Commission thanked the Apostolic Oblates of the Spirituality Center for their discrete and delicate attention to all its needs.

## DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MALANKARA SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

*December 9, 1994*

The Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church met at the Spirituality Center of the Syro-Malabar Church at Kottayam (Kerala, South India), December 9th, 1994. The participants were:

*For the Catholic Church:*

H.E. Msgr Pierre Duprey, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Rome (Co-President);

H.E. Msgr Joseph Powathil, Archbishop of Changanacheiry;

H.E. Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Bishop of Kottayam;

H.E. Msgr Patrick D'Souza, Bishop of Benares (Varanasi);

H.E. Cyril Mar Baselios Malancharuvil, Bishop of Battery;

Rev. Father Dr. Clarence Gallagher, S. J. Rome;

Rev. Father Dr. Matthew Vellanickal, Kottayam;

Rev. Father Dr. Xavier Koodapuzha, Kottayam;

Rev. Father Dr. Geevarghese Chediath, Trivandrum.

Rev. Father Bernard Dubasque, Rome (Co-Secretary).

*For the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church:*

H.E. Thomas Mor Athanasius (Co-President);

H.E. Yuhanon Mor Meletius;

H.E. Joseph Mor Gregoriose;

The Rev. Prof. Joseph Cor-Episcopa Pulickaparampil;

Rev. Father Dr Adai Jacob;

Rev. Father Kuriakose Moolayil (Co-Secretary);

Rev. Father R.V. Markose;

Rev. Deacon Biji C. Markose;

Rev. Deacon Saji K.V.

1. In the course of this fourth meeting, the Commission spent the greater part of its time on the issue of the reception, in each Church, of the *agreement on mixed marriages* published on January 25, 1994. On each side it has been welcomed in a very positive way. The faithful have experienced the new attitudes as a liberation because they respect and enlarge the freedom of choice of these minorities in regard to marriage and family life. If some difficulties have arisen on certain points, it has been because of the lack of awareness among the clergy more of the Agreement itself than of the *Pastoral Directives* which accompanied it. It seems indispensable to foresee in each diocese a small committee or a diocesan dele-

gate with the responsibility to resolve the more urgent problems.

2. Two reports were then presented and discussed on “*the function and the role of the bishops on the regional and local level*” (Mor Athanasius) and on “*the role of the Episcopate in the Unity of the Church*” (P.M. Vellanickal). In the next session, the Commission should be able to reach the point of its reflection on the subject of the unity of the Church and of conciliarity at the local level.

3. Finally, the Commission took up again a text already studied in 1991 on the foundations, the conditions and the possible contexts of a “*Common Witness*” (P.M. Vellanickal) between our two Churches. During the coming year, the areas where common witness of the Churches can be considered should be clarified more concretely.

At the end of the meeting, the Catholic delegation gave information concerning the preparation of the *Jubilee for the year 2000* (cf. John Paul II: “*Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio Adveniente*” of November 10, 1994) and on the recent *Common Christological Declaration* signed in Rome with the Assyrian Church of the East on November 11, 1994.

The next meeting is foreseen at the Spirituality Center of the Syro-Malabar Church, at Kottayam, Saturday, October 7 and Monday, October 9, 1995.

## MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF MOSCOW AND OF THE HOLY SEE

*January 30 - February 1 1995*

In recent days the regular bilateral talks between the delegations of the Holy See and the Patriarchate of Moscow were held in Moscow, Russia. The following were members of the delegations:

*For the Orthodox side:*

Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, President of the Department for Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow;

Bishop Avgustin of Lviv and Drohobych;

Archimandrite Joseph Poustooutov, responsible for relations with the Catholic Church at the Department for Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations of the Patriarchate of Moscow;

Archimandrite Nestor Zhilyaev, Representative of the Russian Orthodox Church at the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

*For the Catholic side:*

Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity;

Bishop Pierre Duprey, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity;

Mons. Jean-Claude P  risset, Nunciature Counselor, Secretariat of State, Section for Relations with States;

Fr J  zef M. Maj, S.J., official of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity;

Mons. Ivan Jurkovi  , Charg   d’Affaires *ad interim* of the Holy See’s Representation to the Russian Federation, also took part in the talks.

*At the end of the meeting the following press release was issued in French:*

On 30 and 31 January, the delegations of the Patriarchate of Moscow and of the Holy See met at the Danilovsky Monastery in Moscow.

The delegations learned with satisfaction of the efforts made by both parties since their last meeting to resolve the complex and difficult situations of conflict and misunderstanding that have arisen in the past few years. The delegations sought in common the best ways to further these efforts, given the con-

Crete difficulties which have arisen in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We specifically examined the situation in Western Ukraine. In this context we have once again confirmed that all violence must be avoided in resolving the questions concerning the use of places of worship. It is desirable that in these situations the problems should be solved by the ecclesiastical authorities.

Especially in contentious situations where communities do not have a suitable place of worship for their use, cooperation is required if a just solution is to be found that respects the needs of the minority.

This is an indispensable condition for the re-establishment of a peaceful and fraternal life, as was requested in the 1990 agreement.

Observing a different approach between the two delegations regarding the Catholic Church's mission in the territories of the Commonwealth of Independent States, a decision was made to clarify this issue at the next bilateral meeting. The two delegations recall that at the present time it is essential in their bilateral relations that the authorities of both Churches respect the canonical decisions and sanctions taken by the other Church.

ORE, February 8, 1995

## COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS

### ADDRESSES TO JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE B'NAI B'RITH  
ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

September 29, 1994

*The constant challenge of building friendship between Christians and Jews was the theme of the Holy Father's address to representatives of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith when he received them on Thursday, September 29 at his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo. Here is the text of his address, which was given in English.*

Dear Friends,

I am very pleased to welcome the representatives of the *Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith*. It is with great joy that I greet you.

In your kind words, Mr Chairman, you have spoken of friendship and its unifying force in our lives. Friendship is a great gift from God and is a blessing for everyone who experiences it. Genuine friendship has a strength which is capable of building indestructible bridges, resisting many evils and overcoming all kinds of difficulties. At the same time it poses a constant challenge to those who seek to be friends.

These convictions lie behind the following words which I wrote on the occasion of the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto: "As Christians and Jews, following the example of the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing for the world (cf. *Gn* 12:2). This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to be first a blessing to one another. This will effectively occur if we are united in the face of evils which are still threatening: indifference and prejudice, as well as displays of anti-Semitism" (21 April 1993).

Was it not the bond of friendship which in many cases during the terrible days of the past inspired the courage of Christians who helped their Jewish brothers and sisters, even at the cost of their own lives? Truly, nobody has greater love than the one who lays down his life for his friends (cf. *Jn* 15:13). Friendship stands against exclusion and makes people stand together in the face of threat.

Let our friendship, strengthened by our respect for divine Providence, bring us ever closer, for the good of the whole world.

ORE, October 12, 1994

TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

February 6, 1995

*"If it is to be fruitful, dialogue between Christians and Jews must find eloquent expression in the life of both our communities", the Holy Father told the Board of Governors of the American Jewish Committee, whom he received in audience on Monday, February 6. The Pope went on to say that the memory of the Sho 'ah should spur Christians and Jews to work together for justice. Here is the text of his address, which was given in English.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am pleased to meet once again the Board of Governors of the *American Jewish Committee*. Your visit to Rome this year coincides with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the promulgation of the Declaration *Nostra aetate* by the Second Vatican Council. It thus offers us an opportunity to look back with gratitude on the progress made in relations between Jews and Christians, and at the same time to commit ourselves to facing the challenges of the future with confidence and hope.

As a result of dialogue and cooperation carried out with patience and in an atmosphere of respect and goodwill, the last three decades have indeed witnessed *profound changes in the relationships between us*. The misunderstandings and difficulties of former times are gradually being replaced by trust and mutual esteem. Who can deny that these positive changes are the work of the Almighty, who is able to create all things anew and to turn our gaze from the things of the past (cf. *Is* 65:17)?

2. As we look to the future, there is an urgent need for us to *continue building on the foundations already laid*. One of our greatest mutual challenges remains at the level of education and information, where the results of our cooperation must ultimately be implemented. If it is to be fruitful, *dialogue between Christians and Jews must find eloquent expression in the life of both our communities*. What is more, we must work to make our mutual respect increasingly evident in a world where voices of polarization, confrontation and violence seem all too often to distract attention from the quiet but effective accomplishments being made on behalf of *solidarity in the service of justice and peace*.

3. At this time, 50 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, we cannot fail to remember together *the horrors of the Sho 'ah*. Last year, at the concert held in the Vatican to commemorate this genocide decreed

against your people, we — Jews and Catholics together — experienced how different voices blending in a unison of sounds and harmonies can move us deeply and bring us closer together in common resolve. The memory of the Sho'ah should impel us to renew our commitment *to work together in harmony to satisfy the hunger and thirst for justice* innate in every human being created in the divine image (cf. *Gn 1:26-27*).

4. I willingly invoke upon each one of you and your families the divine gift of peace. May this precious gift dwell in the hearts of all men and women of goodwill. Let us never cease to pray and to work together and with others, in order to foster peace in the Holy Land, which is so dear to Jews, Christians and Muslims alike.

Thank you for your visit. *Shalom!*

ORE, February 15, 1995

## ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE HOLY SEE

*The establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Holy See has implications far beyond the political dimension. It will help intensify also the dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people. On Thursday, September 29, 1994, His Excellency, Mr Shmuel Hadas, the first Ambassador of the State of Israel to the Holy See, presented his credentials to the Holy Father. Because of the historic nature of this meeting, the Holy Father's address and that of the Ambassador are both presented in full.*

### THE HOLY FATHER'S ADDRESS

*September 29, 1994*

Mr Ambassador,

1. I welcome you with great pleasure for the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as the first Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel to the Holy See. The importance of this ceremony will be recognized by all, since our recently established diplomatic relations become effective by the presence of a Head of Mission of the highest rank, in accordance with the Fundamental Agreement signed on 30 December 1993 in Jerusalem.

It is a pleasure for me to recall today that in the past, like my predecessors, I have had the opportunity to receive several important figures from the State of Israel. While taking into account the differing viewpoints on certain subjects, these contacts have made it possible to progress towards the systematic dialogue that was entrusted over two years ago to the Permanent Bilateral Working Commission. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of this Commission; on both sides, they have ably devoted themselves to the deeper exchange

of views that led to the signing of the Fundamental Agreement, opening up a new era in our relations.

2. Mr Ambassador, I thank you for the words you have just addressed to me which deeply touch me. As you emphasize, it is true that diplomatic relations are not an end in themselves but represent a starting point for specific collaboration, bearing in mind the distinctive nature of the Holy See and the State of Israel. The study of various bilateral issues is continuing, as specified in the Agreement of 30 December last, with the establishment of two subcommittees which should enable us to progress together on the path of a collaboration founded on a solid basis.

Furthermore, this collaboration does not only concern the Holy See and the State of Israel; it also involves a trusting relationship between the Israeli authorities and the different institutions of the Catholic Church present in the territory of the Holy Land.

3. As you have said, over and above bilateral negotiations, the Holy See and the State of Israel, each in its own sphere and with its own means of action, must promote the essential principles mentioned in their Fundamental Agreement. In the first place, they are linked to respect for right to freedom of religion and conscience, an indispensable condition for the respect of every human being's dignity. They have joined forces to oppose every form of intolerance, in whatever way it is expressed. Most particularly, they are vigilantly working together to oppose all anti-Semitism, aware that we have recently been forced to observe some deplorable manifestations of it.

4. In many parts of the world, violent conflicts are unfortunately continuing to harm many peoples. The Holy See spares no effort, within the limits of its specific mission, to overcome opposition or resentment, which often originated in the distant past, and to open up the paths to peace. Without peace, integral human development is hindered, the survival of entire groups jeopardized, the culture and very identity of more than one nation are threatened with extinction.

Therefore, the Middle East peace process, which the Holy See has long desired, can only be encouraged. There is still a long and arduous way to go, but now it seems no longer utopian to say that mutual trust between the peoples of the Middle East can be established. Noting with satisfaction what has already been achieved by the leaders of Israel and of the whole region, I invoke upon them the help of the Almighty, so that they may continue their efforts with the courage of peace.

5. You have also expressed, Mr Ambassador, the desire to see your cultural institutions intensify their cooperation with the cultural institutions of the Catholic Church. I welcome these proposals all the more gladly, since the university exchanges, already begun in different circumstances, seem to me to be most desirable. This is true in a general way, for intellec-

tual life naturally benefits from them. It is particularly opportune, inasmuch as we have an important part of our cultural roots in common, starting with the writings of the Bible, the Book of Books, an ever-living source. Among Jews and members of the Church, the Holy Books shed remarkable light on the concept of man, of his spiritual vocation and of his morality. It can only be useful to both to share their knowledge in order to deepen their understanding of the Scriptures and to increase their knowledge of the civilizations and historical setting where they have developed over so many centuries, especially with the aid of archaeology, philology and the study of religious, doctrinal and spiritual traditions.

6. The particular nature of the relations between the State of Israel and the Holy See quite obviously stem from the unique character of this Land which is the focus of attention for the majority of believers, Jews, Christians and Muslims, throughout the world. This Land was sanctified by the one God's Revelation to men; it continues to bear the mark and does not cease to be a place of inspiration for those who can make a pilgrimage there. Most especially, believers of the great monotheistic religions turn to the Holy City of Jerusalem, which we know today is still the scene of division and conflict, but which remains a "sacred heritage for all those who believe in God" (*Apostolic Letter on the subject of Jerusalem*, 20 April 1984) and, as its admirable name implies, a crossroads and a symbol of peace. It is also to be hoped that the unique and sacred character of this Holy City will receive international guarantees that will also ensure its access to all believers. As I had occasion to write not long ago: "I dream of the day when Jews, Christians and Muslims will hail one another in Jerusalem with the greeting of peace" (*ibid.*).

7. Mr Ambassador, you yourself have insisted on the historical significance of this ceremony, over and above the usual diplomatic conventions. Indeed, a new age is dawning in relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel, by a persevering dialogue and by active collaboration in the areas I have just mentioned. All this will help intensify the dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people of Israel and of the whole world. Important progress has already been made in mutual understanding, especially under the impetus of the Second Vatican Council (Declaration *Nostra aetate*). I hope that these Jewish-Christian exchanges will continue and be deepened, and that they will enable both to better serve the great causes of humanity.

8. Your Excellency, you have been the spokesman for the sentiments of the President of the State of Israel and the Government of the country, and of their wishes on a deeply meaningful occasion. I beg you to convey to the senior authorities of the State of Israel my gratitude for their message, and my sincere wishes for the accomplishment of their tasks in service to the harmony and peace desired by all their fellow citizens.

I also offer to you, Your Excellency, my warm wishes for the success of your mission and your stay in the city of Rome. Be assured that my assistants will always be glad to welcome you and offer you any help you may need.

As I bless the Most High who has made this historic meeting possible, I pray that he will grant you, your loved ones and all your compatriots an abundance of his gifts.

ORE, October 12, 1994

AMBASSADOR HADAS' ADDRESS

September 29, 1994

*Here is a translation of the Ambassador's address, which was given in Spanish.*

Your Holiness,

*"The Holy See and the State of Israel, noting the unique character and universal importance of the Holy Land and aware of the unique nature of the relations between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people, the historical process of reconciliation and understanding and the growing mutual friendship between Catholics and Jews...".* These eloquent and meaningful words introduce the Preamble of the Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel, which on 30 December last paved the way to the normalization of relations between the Holy See and Israel, overcoming an obstacle to progress in Jewish-Catholic *rapprochement*.

Obviously, this is not the conventional language of international diplomacy. It could not be otherwise: our relations, despite their dramatic changes over the centuries, still retain the indelible seal of their common origin. For this reason, the signing of the Fundamental Agreement was more than a diplomatic initiative; it was a step of historical significance. A unique act, for its protagonists are unique.

I find myself here in the Holy See, representing the State of Israel, offering you the Letters of Credence accrediting me as Israel's first Ambassador to the Holy See, a moving and immeasurable honour and privilege for the person speaking to you.

I rejoice to be here, although I still feel anxious in the face of the difficult diplomatic challenge which this appointment holds for me in all its dimensions. A challenge which definitely does not belong to the role and routine of the classical exchanges of international diplomacy.

Hence, it is perhaps needless to comment on this here, in your Holiness' presence, since participation in this process of increasingly necessary and deeper dialogue between Catholics and Jews presents particular challenges. For this reason, I humbly recall here the words of gratitude of the prayer: "*Blessed be the Creator of the universe who gave us life and allows us to experience this moment*".

Your Holiness, centuries of misunderstandings have led to bloody and heartbreaking conflicts and to torturous and painful relations between Catholics

and Jews. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel is not the point of arrival, but on the contrary, a starting point, a new and constructive dimension in which to bring together in dialogue the Catholic Church and the Jewish People.

Your Holiness has given a new impetus to this creative dialogue with patience and persistence.

Actually, even without the perspective provided by time, it can be stated that Your Holiness's commitment to the Jewish-Christian dialogue has been decisive. When on 15 February 1985 you declared that relations between Christians and Jews had notably improved in recent years and, I quote you, that "*where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotypes, there is now growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect*", Your Holiness gave public witness that a new spirit was being forged in our relations. Since then there have been many echoes of the existence of this new spirit, which has been shown in an ongoing dialogue, in recognition of the need for combined effort.

We all remember your frequent and important declarations and gestures of fellowship. Many appreciated your words when in 1980 you declared, as I quote: "*the Jewish People, since the tragic experiences associated with the extermination of many of its sons and daughters, motivated by the desire for security, established the State of Israel*". Or, when, in 1984 you demanded for the Jewish People in Israel: "*the desired security and tranquillity which are the prerogative of every nation, as well as the living conditions and progress of every society*"; and in 1987, when you declared that: "*The Jews have a right to their homeland, like all peoples, in accordance with international law*".

It is certain, as your Holiness clearly demonstrated in your historic and inspiring visit to the Great Synagogue of Rome in April 1986, that the way undertaken is only in its early stages, and that sufficient time is needed to be rid of prejudices and to adapt every form of expression. But it is also very clear that there is a sincere wish for reconciliation. We must all seek greater mutual understanding with patience and persistence. This long delayed challenge is already being taken up by many good Catholics and Jews.

The Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel will enable my country to take an active part in this mission. It will be one of our great challenges, which we accept during these years of transition towards the third millennium of our common history.

But there is something more, which is just as important: this new era in relations between the Holy See and Israel will have a constructive effect on the peace process in the Middle East. We have embarked on the irreversible road to peace. The inspiring words of the Prophet Isaiah are those which today guide many good Christians, Muslims and Jews:

*"The Lord... shall judge between the nations and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat*

*their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again"* (Is 2:4).

In the Fundamental Agreement the Holy See and the State of Israel are committed to promoting a peaceful resolution of the conflicts between States and nations and to eliminating violence and terror from international life.

Israel aspires to make a contribution to peace not only in our afflicted region but throughout the world, a peace which men and women of goodwill desire. Hence on this occasion, my country wishes expressly to show its sentiments of sincere gratitude to Your Holiness for your tireless struggle, to the point of personal suffering, for a peace that respects human dignity and basic values. May God always preserve the renewed determination with which you champion - freedom and justice at every moment. History will be able to judge your extraordinary contribution to world peace.

We would like these new relations to be the first steps in the promotion of sincere and generous cooperation, which will allow everyone to advance on the broad and difficult way to peace throughout the Middle East and particularly in the Holy Land. We cherish the hope that Your Holiness, with your high moral authority, will in the future continue to transmit your message of love and hope without faltering. The State of Israel, its Government and all its citizens, Jews, Christians and Muslims, whom I have the honour of representing to the Holy See, are grateful to Your Holiness for your contribution of deep spirituality and lofty human fellowship.

We know that one of your greatest wishes is to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I can assure you that this visit will have an immense spiritual significance for us all. However, it will above all help reinforce the foundations of the peace we are seeking to build stone by stone. The age-old Hebrew greeting and wish, "*Leshana habaá be Yerushalaim*" (next year in Jerusalem), is here extended again to Your Holiness on behalf of all Israelis, Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Israel will measure up to history. It has made a pledge of peace and will fulfil its commitment so that "*the star of peace which once shone in Bethlehem, will return to brighten this region*", as Your Holiness proclaimed in January 1991. We hope and wish that, as soon as possible, dialogue, reason and right will prevail in the Middle East over terror and violence.

In its wording and in its spirit, our Fundamental Agreement calls for close cooperation in the struggle for the peace we are continuing tenaciously to seek. It also expresses the parties' will to resolve the sensitive bilateral disagreements that remain, with regard to their obligations and their rights. Cooperation in this regard is already under way. Negotiations in good faith will, we are certain, contribute to formalizing relations between the State of Israel and the Catholic Church, to the parties' satisfaction. In the meantime, the situation with regard to all that con-

cems the rights of Catholic institutions in Israel will be respected, and the proper nature of the Catholic Holy Places will continue to be respected and protected, as will the freedom to practise the Catholic religion.

The Holy See and the State of Israel have likewise recognized that they have a common interest in promoting and guiding the cultural exchanges between Catholic institutions throughout the world and Israel's institutions. It is our desire that Your Holiness, with your contagious enthusiasm, should give an impetus to these cultural exchanges. We do not only have common interests, but cultures that share common roots. The cultural dialogue will open new horizons in this understanding between the monotheistic religions, an understanding tenaciously pursued by us all. It will be our modest contribution to the creation of a new humanism centred on human beings as its principal objective.

There have been many echoes of Your Holiness' message and of your struggle to encourage the enforcement of human rights. But those of us who were present at the concert in the Vatican to commemorate the Holocaust, did so moved by the emotion of your heartfelt message on that occasion, which stressed the implications of the Holocaust, and by your appeal to remember and to give witness. We feel the deep need to be grateful for this action.

We appreciate your tireless activity on behalf of humanity. Wherever there is suffering, Your Holiness has never ceased to be present. We appreciate, in particular, the innumerable signs of your rejection of racism and anti-Semitism. "*We will risk making the victims of the most atrocious deaths die again, if we do not have the passion of justice*", you said on that unforgettable commemoration which we just mentioned.

According to the Fundamental Agreement, the Holy See and the State of Israel are committed to working together to combat all forms of anti-Semitism and other forms of racism and religious intolerance. We are hopeful that together we shall be able to transmit a message of peace, fellowship and justice. Christians and Jews must understand that the moment has come when their mission is to cooperate in carrying out the basic commandments at the heart of their beliefs, expressing them in constructive deeds. "*Anti-Semitism is a sin against God and against humanity*", Your Holiness declared in November 1992.

During your Pontificate, the Holy See has seen its moral authority increase. May God continue to enlighten you and may you continue to fulfil your sublime mission. May your spiritual guidance be duly followed throughout the world.

Your Holiness, in conveying the warmest greetings of the President and the Government of Israel, together with their best wishes, I am pleased to recall, in their name, Your Holiness' recent words. "*It is necessary to understand that the Jews, who for 2,000 years were dispersed throughout the world, have decided to return to the land of their ancestors. It is their right*".

Israel, a millennia-old people, as a member of the great family of humanity, preserved its spiritual wealth and best traditions for centuries without renouncing their land, until their desire to return was realized.

Therefore, to represent the State of Israel will be the greatest honour, but also a challenge. I will do all I can to make my modest contribution to relations between the Holy See and Israel. The diplomatic dialogue with the Holy See will go far beyond the usual diplomatic exchanges, considering its unique subject matter. It will certainly be a gratifying experience.

I trust, Your Holiness, that the words of Psalm 133, "*Behold how good it is and how pleasant, where brethren dwell at one*", will inspire my work. With this hope, I would like to close, repeating our best and most sincere wish: "*Shalom*".

ORE, October 12, 1994

\* \* \*

#### HOLY FATHER RECEIVES HOLOCAUST PAINTING

November 9, 1994

At the General Audience on 9 November, the Holy Father was presented with a painting entitled "Never More — Holocaust", which had been commissioned by Dr Otto Galambos of Sweden and painted by Mr Franco Costa in memory of the historic concert held in the Vatican on 7 April last to commemorate the Sho'ah. Dr Galambos is himself a survivor of the Holocaust and a close friend of the artist.

The Holy Father was deeply moved by the painting and blessed it. The artwork will hang in the offices of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Jews. Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, President of the Commission, said that the painting "does indeed show how beautifully the artist was able to express the profound emotions which the concert stirred up in all of us who were fortunate enough to be present".

The painting has been reproduced in a limited run of 250 serigraphs.

ORE, November 16, 1994

## DOCUMENTATION SUPPLEMENT

### PRAYER FOR UNITY 1996

#### LETTER OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

April 1995

As we do every year at this time, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity sends you the material proposed for the *Prayer for the Unity of Christians 1996*.

The method that has been followed since 1968 for composing the brochure attached to this letter is already well known. For the Prayer in 1996 the International Committee (nominated by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches) has based this material on a project prepared in Portugal by an ecumenical group made up of representatives from the Portuguese Council of Churches and the Catholic Bishops Commission which deals with ecumenical matters in Portugal. The International Committee met at Lisbon last October and was generously welcomed by the Episcopal Conference of Portugal.

*The theme for the 1996 Prayer for the Unity of*

*Christians is entitled: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rev 3:14-22).*

We hope that this line of reflection, centered on the coming of Christ, may reinforce the commitment of all to the reestablishment of the Unity of Christians, especially in this time when we are approaching the end of the second millennium. May it permit them, in the words of Pope John Paul II, to be *at the time of the year 2000, if not totally united, at least much closer to overcoming their divisions* (cf. Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, n. 34). To achieve this, as the Holy Father again has underlined, it is necessary to redouble their efforts and to *engage even more in ecumenical prayer*.

The materials being offered can effectively nourish *Prayer for Unity* if they are not simply translated, but also adapted to the religious and social situation of each country.

In thanking you in advance for all that you do to help bring to realization the goals sought through *Prayer for Unity*, I assure you of my fraternal best wishes.

+ PIERRE DUPREY  
Secretary

### PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 1996

#### MATERIAL FOR THE PRAYER

"Behold I stand at the door and knock"

Revelation 3:14-22

*And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation: "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.' You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked. Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be*

*rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."*

(New Revised Standard Version)

TO THOSE ORGANISING THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR  
CHRISTIAN UNITY

*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

in place 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 of Worship for an Ecumenical Service* is provided.

Churches and Christian communities may also incorporate material from the Week of Prayer into their own services. Prayers from the *Order of Worship*, the "*Eight Days* ", and the *additional prayers* can be used as appropriate in your 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* ". It will be noted that for each day an option is to read *Revelation 3:14-22* instead of the third text suggested. Each day the discussion 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.

### *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 have therefore 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.

But the search for Christian unity is not limited to one week each year. We encourage you therefore not only to be flexible concerning the date but also 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.

### THE PREPARATION OF THE MATERIAL FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY FOR 1996

The texts for Prayer for Christian Unity 1996 were prepared by an international group appointed by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. They were grateful for the full participation of the Bishop of Viseu, António Monteiro, President of the Commission for Doctrine and Faith of the Portuguese Catholic Bishops' Conference, Pastor Manuel Cardoso, Secretary General of the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches (COPIC) and other representatives of the Portuguese ecumenical team which had provided the draft text. This year's international group was also extended by the participation of representatives of two lay ecumenical organisations: the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCAs) and the World Young Women's Christian Association (World YWCA), who will adapt the material for their joint World Week of Prayer held annually in November.

The group met in Lisbon at the Generalate House of the Franciscan Hospitaller Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and wishes to thank the Sisters for their hospitality, as well as Bishop Monteiro and Pastor Cardoso for making the practical arrangements for the meeting.

## INTRODUCTION

*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock "*

This century is drawing to its close and with it the second millennium. For many people, the year 2000 seems to excite a special interest. It will remind Christians of the time that has passed since the birth of Jesus Christ. What has happened during that time? What will a new century and the new millennium bring for us and our churches?

During the present millennium divisions among Christians have become more and more evident, first between east and west and more recently in the western church. These divisions have been exported with the spread of Christianity. Can the next millen-

nium see a healing of them? In some countries churches are losing members and seem less able to speak to the people. Are our churches complacent about the effect of their differences and division? Can we foresee a conversion and reconciliation which will enable Christians to preach the gospel and give witness to it in service, together, vigorously and effectively?

It is with some of these thoughts in mind that we present, for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 1996, a text prepared by an ecumenical team in Portugal. They have chosen to reflect on the letter to the Church of Laodicea (*Rev 3:14-22*), the last of seven letters in the Book of Revelation addressed to differ-

ent churches in the early Christian world. In this letter, the Lord, the one who is faithful and true, stands at the door and issues a challenge. He knows them. They are neither hot nor cold, just lukewarm. They are content with themselves, complacent. They have lost touch with reality. He reproves them, urging them to a new zeal, to repent and to open the door to him. Will they hear his appeal? Will they yet share in his victory?

This letter is addressed to each of our present-day churches as well. It summons us to take stock, together. Christ is at the door, knocking. Are we listening? Are we in touch with reality when we look at ourselves? Which values really determine our actions? Is there hope that in real repentance we may be reconciled? The sequence of themes provided by our sisters and brothers in Portugal encourages us to face some of these issues and to

pray for all that we still need for the healing of our divisions. In particular, when we listen to verse 20 of the letter on Day 6, we cannot avoid thinking of our divided eucharists. The Lord asks us there to open the door so that he may come in and eat with us. Even though we will be praying about this verse together in our ecumenical service, we know that we do not at present all sit down together to eat with him and he with us. Individually, we may feel powerless to bring about this reconciliation. But we continue to pray together in hope, that the Lord is making our churches understand more clearly how they are to overcome what at present separates them. We continue to pray in hope for full communion in faith, life, and united witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in the third Christian millennium. Let us have ears to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches!

## I. ECUMENICAL WORSHIP SERVICE

### INTRODUCTION

The four parts of this service find their unity in and take their distinctive accent from *Revelation* 3:20, the text chosen as the theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

In the first part of the service (I. Opening of the Service: "I am standing at the door...") one may underline those signs which, in the local situation, speak most effectively of Christ's presence in our midst and in our lives. Testimonies from persons or groups whose lives have been transformed by the dynamic presence of the Lord may help prepare the congregation to hear his voice, and to "open the door" to him.

The Lord speaks to us immediately through his word (part II. Celebration of the Word: "... and I knock"). He knocks on the door of our hearts, our churches and our communities, calling us to repentance and to unity, through a full communion which is reached only through conversion.

The third part (III. Celebration of our Unity in Faith, Mutual Sharing and Intercession: "If you hear my voice and open the door...") includes the common confession of our faith, an exchange of the sign of Peace, and the collection. This is already a response on our part to Christ's insistent "knocking at the door". As such it expresses our bonds of unity, bonds which, if we are serious about answering Christ's call, we can only seek to strengthen.

In the fourth part (IV. Celebration of our Expectation of the Full Communion which is Promised: "... I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me") the congregation is invited to affirm the full significance of Christ's desire, as expressed in the text from Revelation, for the churches' search for visible unity. In a manner appropriate to the local situation we will share in singing, saying the Lord's Prayer, and gathering to stand together, possibly around the Lord's Table. In this way we underline the desire of Jesus himself to see us sharing all together with him the eucharist: the meal of unity.

\* \* \*

Communities organizing an ecumenical service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity should form a preparatory group composed of representatives of all the participating churches. This group can then choose the parts of the service to be used, as well as those which need to be adapted in order to respond to local needs.

While the parts of the service spoken by the officiating minister are indicated by a single "M", it is desirable that persons from all the participating churches should take part in leading the service. In the course of preparing the service, the parts of the text may be assigned to various persons as appropriate.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR AN ECUMENICAL SERVICE

*Theme: "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking;  
if you hear my voice and open the door,  
I will come in to you and eat with you,  
and you with me" (Rev 3:20)*

M = Minister

C = Congregation

### 1. OPENING OF THE SERVICE: " I AM STANDING AT THE DOOR..."

*Procession of officiating ministers during the singing of a hymn.*

#### OPENING SENTENCES

M: Thanks be to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who has called us together in this place.

C: Amen.

M: "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me" (Rev 3:20).

Brothers and sisters, these words invite us to discover signs of God's presence in our own lives and in our midst.

*Before the hymn to Christ is sung, the presence of Christ, who calls us to repentance and to unity, may be indicated through testimonies and through signs.*

*Testimonies: persons (or groups) may share how they have responded to the Lords "knocking at their door" This might be, for example, through the story of their conversion or how they have worked for Christian unity. Care should be taken that these testimonies are received in a climate of silence — that stillness which is itself a sign of the presence of God.*

*Signs: The minister may also draw attention to two signs of the presence of Christ: the Bible and the Cross.*

*In some services, for example those for young persons, forms of communication such as dance, mime, or slides may be used.*

#### HYMN TO CHRIST

M: Let us together praise the Lord who is present, he who is " the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation" (Rev 3:14).

#### HYMN

*Here a hymn stressing the presence of Christ, perhaps drawing on the themes of Col 1:15-20, may be used.*

#### OPENING PRAYER

M: Let us pray.

*Silence.*

Lord our God,  
we give you thanks,  
because in your mercy  
you have come to us  
and made yourself one of us in Jesus Christ,  
so that we might be made one in you.  
You have taken the initiative:  
you have broken into our silence.  
You have crossed the wall of our isolation and  
division.  
You call to us all,  
knocking at the door of our lives  
and the door of our world.  
You manifest your presence in many different  
ways.  
May the presence of your unifying and  
quickening Spirit  
not pass unnoticed in our midst.  
May your voice constantly make itself heard  
through the din of our own voices.  
Come, Lord, and knock at our door.

### 2. CELEBRATION OF THE WORD: "... AND I KNOCK"

*Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 41:8-10*

But you, Israel, my servant  
Jacob, whom I have chosen,  
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;  
you whom I took from the ends of the earth;  
and called from its farthest comers,  
saying to you, "You are my servant,  
I have chosen you and not cast you off";  
do not fear, for I am with you,  
do not be afraid, for I am your God;  
I will strengthen you, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my  
victorious right hand.  
"Alleluia" (*sung*).

*Reading from the Gospel of Luke 14:15-24*

One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, "Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" Then Jesus said to him, " Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ' I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.' Another said, ' I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.' Another said, ' I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.' So the slave returned and

reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, \* Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' And the slave said, ' Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.' Then the master said to the slave, ' Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.' "

*Brief introduction of the reading from the Book of Revelation*

*Reading of Revelation 3:14-22*

"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation: I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you say, \*I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.' You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable poor, blind, and naked. Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. "

*Sermon*

Silence.

3. CELEBRATION OF OUR UNITY IN FAITH,  
MUTUAL SHARING AND INTERCESSION: "*If you hear my voice and open the door...* "

*Confession of Faith*

M: Let us open the door of our heart as we confess together our common faith.

*Here the Nicene Creed or another profession of faith may be used.*

*The Peace*

M: Let us welcome the Lord as he enters in with us. In sharing a sign of peace we celebrate our unity in the love of Christ, for we form one body in him.

*Here the participants may share the Peace according to local custom.*

*The Collection*

*Here a member of the assembly may indicate the purpose for which the offering is intended. Music may be played during the collection.*

M: Lord our God,  
you are the source of all good things.  
In your infinite generosity  
you give us everything.  
You have gathered us together here  
so that we may experience the joy of the fellowship  
which identifies us with you.  
Accept these offerings  
which we have received from your generosity.  
May they be an expression of the unity  
which we wish to build  
in your Son Jesus Christ  
through the power of the Holy Spirit,  
and also of our unity  
with all human beings,  
whom you have formed in your image and likeness.  
We pray especially for...

*Here a prayer may be said for the persons or programmes for which the offering is intended.*

C: Amen.

*Intercessions*

M: Let us offer our intercessions for those situations of concern to us.

*Here the local ecumenical group, or the officiating minister, or the congregation in open prayer, may mention items of major local or world concern such as unemployment, famine, war, or protection of the environment.*

*After each intercession a Kyrie or other response may be sung.*

*The intercessions may conclude with the following prayer:*

M: Let us bring before God our concern for Christian unity.

We confess, O God, our failure to communicate with one another,

and to see beyond our present possibilities.

You alone can show us how partial is our understanding of the paths towards unity.

Help us to see the real contribution of all our brothers and sisters to the building up of the body of Christ.

Strengthen us as we continue to work for unity, and grant us inspiration, energy and imagination as we confront the divisions among your people.

We ask you this who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

4. CELEBRATION OF OUR EXPECTATION OF THE FULL COMMUNION WHICH IS PROMISED "... I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me "

M: The Lord expects of us a more complete unity than that which we have just celebrated as we confessed our common faith, shared the Peace, and expressed our solidarity with those in need.

He knocks at the door of our hearts, of our churches and of our communities. He calls us insistently to fulfill his desire that we become brothers and sisters, reconciled with one another and sharing in his one eucharistic meal.

This is why we will now gather around the Lord's Table in order to say together the prayer which the Lord has given us.

*The congregation may now gather around the altar, while singing an appropriate song or as music is played.*

*This gathering of the worshippers around the Lord's Table should not be done so as to emphasize the divisions among them. Rather its purpose is to declare their hope of arriving at that full communion which the common celebration of the eucharist, which is yet to come, will both express and realize. Therefore it is essential to consider the sensitivities of the situation, and to determine what is appropriate for the specific congregation and worship space.*

*— If the congregation does gather around the altar, which in some traditions is a sign of Christ's presence and the table of the Lord's supper, the Bible or a lighted candle could be placed on it to indicate the Lord's calling us together there.*

*— In other situations, such as where the congregation would not normally enter the area around the altar, or where there is no table for the Lord's Supper, a table could be set up elsewhere for people to gather round.*

*— Where the place of worship makes this impossible, the congregation could simply hold hands or stand in a circle.*

*Whatever is actually done the essential signs for expressing our shared hope of full communion are, on this occasion, the coming together of the congregation, and their praying together the 'Our Father' and an appropriate hymn.*

*When the congregation has gathered and is ready, the service continues.*

*Song*

*Here may be sung a hymn on the theme of Christ inviting us to his meal.*

*Solemn proclamation or singing of Revelation 3:20 by a member of the congregation*

*The Lord's Prayer*

M: Let us say together the prayer which our Lord has taught us:

*The officiating minister may here briefly emphasize the significance of the petitions in the Lord's Prayer, in the context of common prayer for unity in anticipation of that day when we may share fully at the Table of the Lord*

C: Our Father...

*Blessing*

*The officiating ministers may say the Grace together or everyone may say it together, in which case the last line becomes 'be with us all.'*

M: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

C: Amen.

## II. BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS FOR THE EIGHT DAYS

*Day 1:*

*I am standing at the door, knocking (Rev 3:20a)*

*Isaiah 54:1-3: "Enlarge the site of your tent."*

*Psalms 8: "How majestic is your name in all the earth!"*

*Hebrews 2:9-11: "By the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." [or Rev 3:14-22]*

*Matthew 18:10-14: "He came to save that which was lost."*

COMMENTARY

We begin the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity by proclaiming the Lord's initiative; it is he who comes towards us and knocks at our door. He comes to save that which is lost and to gather in God's scattered children.

Isaiah's prophetic announcement calls on the people to enlarge the site of the tent where the multitude saved by God will be gathered.

It was Jesus who brought salvation to humanity, though leaving us free to receive this gift.

For us who are believers, Jesus Christ is the one

around whom we must build the fraternal community which he wanted to save and our prayer is a hymn of praise acknowledging "his majesty in all the earth".

#### PRAYER

Your presence among us, Lord Jesus, has shown us our shortcomings and our failures. Increase in us the humility of the wise and wisdom of the humble, following the example of John the Baptist who was able to stand aside when your glory was known and proclaimed.

Break the yoke of our self-satisfaction which cools the ardour of our love, and come quickly to heal our divisions.

Restore unity to your scattered flock; make it faithful to your Gospel. Make us zealous to take our part with you in your work of salvation, so that together we may be witnesses to it and receive the Kingdom which is to come.

We ask you this who live and reign for ever and ever.

#### Day 2:

*I know your works (Rev 3:15)*

*Isaiah 1:11-17:* "Your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves."

*Psalms 51 [50]: 1-9:* "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

*1 Cor 13:1-13:* "If I do not have love, I am nothing." [or *Rev 3:14-22*]

*Matthew 7:13-21:* "Do the Fathers' will."

#### COMMENTARY

Before the Lord who comes to meet us we cannot but be ashamed of the disfigurement caused by our sin.

We both hear Isaiah telling us to wash our hands which are stained with blood and, at the same time, the Psalmist trusting that God is ultimately concerned to pardon and purify us.

Our prayer will only be an offering acceptable to God if it is accompanied by deeds that show it is real. It is precisely about this that Jesus is speaking when, in John's Gospel, he says, "if you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love" (*Jn 15:10*).

Actions that lack love and prayers made without conviction lie at the source of our conflicts and divisions. It is through the change of outlook and behaviour which God brings about in us (*metanoia*) that we are able to accept others and to see them as persons loved by God with whom he wishes to reunite us.

#### PRAYER

We thank you Lord for graciously acting to restore to us our original beauty which has been tarnished by our sins.

May our prayers have the ardour that befits your holiness, so that what we do may be in keeping with your divine will.

Help us to stand firm in difficulties so that we can persevere in searching for unity. Guide us towards the light of your Word by your Holy Spirit present among us. Unite us and make us holy. Amen.

#### Day 3:

*You are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked (Rev 3:16)*

*Isaiah 58:6-7:* "Do not hide yourself from your own kin."

*Psalms 34 [33]: 12-23:* "Depart from evil, and do good."

*1 John 3:14-18:* "We ought to lay down our lives for one another." [or *Rev 3:14-22*]

*Luke 18:9-14:* "Some trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt."

#### COMMENTARY

God shows us our poverty and this is already our salvation. We recognize the riches of others: other churches, other people, including those who are materially or spiritually poor, so we no longer look on them with contempt but can love them instead.

God's love was made manifest in Christ who in the same mystery divested himself of everything, gave himself and received the name above all other names.

The churches today must learn afresh to recognize their poverty and share their riches. In this way they will show that they are Jesus' disciples, putting themselves at the service of the world for love of which God gave up his only Son.

#### PRAYER

Eternal Lord, all-loving Father, we give you thanks for the love with which you surround us. Teach us to love with the love of your Son, who became poor that he might enrich us from his poverty.

Grant, Lord, that we may receive your love humbly, that we may love our brothers and sisters in the faith and our brothers and sisters who are the most neglected.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Day 4:

*I counsel you to buy from me white robes (Rev 3:18)*

*Isaiah 1:18-20: "Your sins shall be like snow."*

*Psalms 23 [22]: "You anoint my head with oil."*

*Rev 7:13-17: "Who are these, robed in white?" [or Rev 3:14-22]*

*Luke 15:11-32: "Quickly, bring out a robe — the best one — and put it on him."*

COMMENTARY

Christians have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; Christ has made them members of his body. They are the object of his constant care, for they remain sinners and their sin affects the body of the Church. For this reason Christ has to bring about reform in his body, the Church, a purification and continual renewal, which take the form of the churches correcting each other fraternally and emulating each other spiritually. In this way they come closer to each other and to their unity.

PRAYER

Lord, your churches still undergo trials and tribulations but you are leading them out of the valley of darkness. Take them where you, not they, would have them go.

Let them not rely upon their own strength, but let them trust in you! Then they will shine like bright lights in the midst of this world and will show forth the glory which radiates from the face of the Risen One, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Day 5:

*Open the door... (Rev 3:20b)*

*Genesis 18:1-8: "You have come to your servant."*

*Psalms 24 [23]:7-10: "That the King of glory may come in."*

*Eph 1:11-14: "We who first hoped in Christ." [or Rev 3:14-22]*

*Luke 10:38-42: "Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching."*

COMMENTARY

In today's theme we are reminded of God's desire to come to us. We are assured that he will indeed come to us if we "open the doors". The theme, therefore, is a reminder of our responsibility to be *open* to him.

We can recall how Abraham responded by being open to God's call. In the Gospel of Luke we read how Martha and Mary received Jesus into their home. But, while Martha was busy making preparations to serve him, Mary engaged herself in listening to the message of Jesus.

In our day to day activities we are often busy in doing things without giving enough scope to reflection on the meaning of the Word of God for us today. "Hearing" and "doing" are two complementary words in Christian thinking. There can be a danger in excessive activity without enough listening to the Master.

We are also reminded of the complementary roles each one needs to play in this world. Sometimes we need to listen to the different insights of the churches. God has placed us in this world, not only for our spiritual growth and well-being, but also to be bearers of the good news to those who need it.

PRAYER

Lord, we thank you for continuing to knock at our doors.

Help us to open at your call.

Help us to listen to the words you now wish to speak in our hearts...

Often times we have been restless,

trying to respond to our tasks,

unmindful of your word,

unmindful of what you want us to do.

Lord, teach us to act

give us courage to act.

But let that action be derived

from the very core of your living *Word*.

Day 6:

*I will eat with you... (Rev 3:20c)*

*Joel 2:21-27: "The Lord has dealt wonderfully with his people."*

*Psalms 146 [145]: "The Lord gives food to the hungry."*

*1 Cor 11:18-26: "Jesus took bread and said 'This is my body which is for you.'" [or Rev 3:14-22]*

*Matthew 22:1-10: "Behold I have made ready my dinner."*

COMMENTARY

God's generosity is most striking in today's readings. The passage from Joel speaks of the graciousness of God towards his people and his fidelity to the covenant with them.

The psalmist praises God for this fidelity because he is a God who reverses the conditions of those in need: prisoners are freed, the blind see and the hun-

gry are fed. For those who seek to do in their lives as the Lord does, there is the reward of God's love, for he loves the just.

The generosity which flows from God finds its fullness in Jesus who is the Just One. It is Jesus who knocks at the door and willingly enters and eats with the person who opens to him (*Rev 3:20c*).

Behind the doors, in the community at Corinth "each one goes ahead with his own meal" (*1 Cor 11:21*) rather than sharing with one another. Paul distances himself from this because it is not the attitude of Christ who shares the Supper with his own by giving them his own body and blood as food and drink.

The churches today need to reflect deeply on the scandal of our divisions which becomes most evident in the fact that we are not able to share fully at the one table of the Lord; the Matthean parable of the banquet puts the question to us painfully. Are we refusing this invitation, if we are unable to take the meal together at the one table?

Through our prayer for Christian Unity, may all hear the urgent call of the Gospel to overcome our divisions so as to be able to accept the invitation to the banquet already prepared by God.

#### PRAYER

Generous God, we thank you for coming to us in many ways and gracing us with many blessings.

Inviting God, you offer ever anew your invitation to come and sit at table with you where you feed us with your Word: the Bread of life and the Wine of gladness.

Give us your Spirit that we may be made worthy to open the door to Christ and that together we may share the meal with him at the one table in your banquet hall. Amen.

*Day 7:*

*I with you and you with me (Rev 3:20d)*

*Genesis 17:1-7:* "I will establish my covenant between me and you."

*Psalms 121 [120]:* "The Lord is your keeper."

*1 John 1:1-4:* "Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." [or *Rev 3:14-22*]

*John 17:18-24:* "That they may all be one."

#### COMMENTARY

God stands at the door and knocks because he knows that we cannot exist without him. He wants to be near us and with us to be our keeper and our helper (*Ps 121*). That is why he established the covenant with Abraham (*Gn 17:1-7*) and with all his people. In Jesus Christ the invitation to join this cove-

nant was extended to all peoples around the world, so that all who enter into it are in "fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ" (*1 Jn 1:3*). This relationship with God therefore binds all Christians together as one body, one flock, one family. And it was Jesus' last will "that they may all be one" as he and his Father are one (*Jn 17:21f.*).

As the churches are all part of the people of God we can recognise an already existing unity. However, we are still challenged as Christians to fulfil Christ's aspiration for us to live together in one faith and as one community. We cannot help but take all opportunities to make this unity visible "so that the world may believe" that God has sent Jesus Christ to save humankind (*Jn 17:21*).

#### PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for your confidence in us, individually and all together.

We thank you for granting us the gift of an eternal covenant with you.

We thank you for the joy of each other and we pray that, through your covenant, we may become one body — sisters and brothers in Christ.

We ask you to show us how to respond to each other with love, to build a true community, so that your will may be done here on earth as it is in heaven. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Day 8:*

*Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches (Rev 3:22)*

*1 Samuel 3:1-10:* "Speak, for your servant is listening."

*Psalms 95 [94]: 1-9:* "Oh, that today you would listen to his voice."

*1 Peter 1:13-25:* "As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves." [or *Rev 3:14-22*]

*Matthew 7:24-29:* "Everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise person."

#### COMMENTARY

In this last day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the key word is the verb *to listen*. This verb is of particular importance in the context of the relationships between God and humankind. God speaks to us, he is the Living God who created the world by his word. He calls women and men to his service (*1 S 3:7-10; 1 P 1:13-25*) and in Jesus Christ, his living Word, calls us to salvation.

Hearing the Word of God, men and women come to the faith, but truly listening means putting into action what has been said. To have faith means put-

ting into practice what Jesus says to the Church (*Mt 7:24-25*).

Throughout this week, God has spoken to the churches. He has called us to heal our divisions and has exhorted us to open the door of our lives so that we may be one with him and one with each other. Now it is up to us to act on the words we have heard.

#### PRAYER

Lord, we thank you for speaking to us and through us.

We pray that you will continue to communicate your wisdom and your will to us.

We pray that we may be the instruments of your word, the candles that reflect your light.

And that our human arms can embrace all your children,

the ones around us today,

the ones living in poverty,

the ones who are oppressed because of their race or religion,

the ones who are lonely or scared,

and the ones who are separated from you.

We pray that you bring all of us together to complete the work of building your house on earth, a house large enough to embrace everyone.

Amen.

### III. APPENDIX

#### ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

*The following material supplied by the local preparatory group comes from the stock of Portuguese spirituality and can be used in worship during the Week of Prayer or in other ecumenical gatherings in the course of the year. It is printed here with the authority of the preparatory group.*

Lord!

Despite the darkness,

I can see you clearly!

Your hand has not yet touched me,

but I can feel it touching my hair

caressing me like a perfume or a pardon.

Lord!

Despite the darkness,

I can see you clearly!

*Sebastião da Gama (Serra-Mãe)*

\* \* \*

You are in all I think,

you are in all I imagine,

you are in the vast horizons,

you are in the tiny seeds.

You are in the sheep grazing,

you are in the river flowing,

you are in all that is being bom,

you are in all that is dying.

You are in everything,

you never rest,

O being both uniform and varied!

(You were when things began,  
you will be when the universe comes to an end.)

You are in the soul and in the senses,

you are in the spirit,

you are in the letter, and

when time has run its course,

in heaven, in heaven you will be.

*Manuel Bandeira (Brazilian poet),  
"Complete Works"*

God our Father,

you come to us in weakness,

to teach us that greatness

is different from what

we imagine it to be.

In Christ, greatness

is what people call poverty,

servicing our brothers and sisters,

being simple like the lilies of the field.

Teach us, so that we can

open our hearts to poverty

and know our limitations.

Teach us to walk with you,

desiring only your company.

Teach us to be free,

as Jesus of Nazareth was. Amen.

*Prayer by the local group*

\* \* \*

#### THE FIRE PRAYER

Holy Spirit, set me on fire with your wisdom,

so that I may love only that which is holy.

Holy Spirit, enlighten me with your

understanding,

so that I may perceive only that which is holy.

Holy Spirit, kindle in me your counsel,

so that I may see only that which is holy.

Holy Spirit, inflame me with your strength,

so that I may desire only that which is holy.

Holy Spirit, pour out your knowledge upon me,

so that I may do only that which is holy.

Holy Spirit, give me ardent devotion,

so that I may seek only that which is holy.

Holy Spirit, set me ablaze with the fear of God,

so that I may never again lose that which is holy.

*From the "Book of Devotions", or "Devocionario",  
of the Franciscan Congregation of Nursing Sisters  
of the Immaculate Conception (Portugal)*

## SONNET

If you are riches,  
how is it you are naked?  
If you are all-powerful,  
how is it you are despised?  
If you are a king,  
how is it you are crowned with thorns?  
If you are strong,  
how is it you are weak?  
If you are light,  
how is it your light is extinguished?  
If you are the divine sun,  
how is it you are eclipsed?  
If you are the word,  
how is it you are silent?  
If you are life,  
how is it you are put to death?  
If you are God,  
how is it you are on that cross as a man?  
If you are human, how is it that you so powerfully  
declare to a thief that heaven will be his?  
Ah, good Jesus, you are both human and divine,  
dying for Adam as Adam  
and redeeming Adam as God.

*Anonymous, from "Antologia Portuguesa",  
by Teófilo Braga*

God, you create peace and distribute charity undivided. Grant, we beseech you, that we may all be held in the bonds of charity and be united in goodwill and harmony. May the peacemakers persevere in peace, and may those who are in disharmony be converted to charity through the gift of mercy.

*Mozarabic Liturgy, prayer for peace*

## TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

They are knocking at my door,  
the people out there in the snow.  
They are knocking,  
the people who will be cold or thirsty,  
those who long for a caress,  
those who are looked down upon,  
those who have not seen a flower for ages,  
and experience only dust on the road,  
those who do not love, and are loved by no one,  
those who have forgotten how to smile,  
those who have no mother...

They are knocking at my door,  
the unfortunate ones,  
people with calloused hands,  
the rough hands of poverty,  
those who create disturbances in bars,  
and play around with knives,  
those who have neither shelter nor friend,  
those whom fate has rejected,  
those who were born in brothels,  
those who have had no childhood,  
those whom everyone passed by without looking.  
Knock at my door, brothers and sisters,  
come in,  
for I have love to give you...  
And if I too knock  
(for I too often weep out there,  
I too know bitter sadness,  
for I too am unfortunate)...  
So, if I knock,  
come quickly and open the door to me.  
Warm me at my own fire.  
Give me the bread that I have broken,  
and the love that I have given you...

*Sebastião da Gama (Serra-Mãe)*

## THE VOICE OF SILENCE

If one day I could hear  
the still small voice,  
distant, and yet so near,  
so inward...  
So wise and trusting,  
but anxious because of what people do,  
so powerful, so pure and wise  
that it encompasses wisdom  
in its totality.  
My ears are closed,  
stifled by waves of matter,  
but, serene and patient,  
they await the gentle voice.  
It may be a thousand years,  
it may be a brief moment.  
I live in eternity.  
Eternity is mine.  
And one day, in the radiant silence  
I shall hear my voice speaking  
and then I shall understand.

*Amélia G. Ferreira*

## THE ECUMENICAL SITUATION IN PORTUGAL

*This account was prepared by the local ecumenical group and it is printed here on its authority*

In the 1991 census in Portugal 64.18% of its population of 9,853,588, said that they were Catholics, while only 1.90% said they belonged to other confes-

sions, such as Protestants, Evangelicals or Orthodox. 1,479,748 Portuguese did not declare any religious affiliation.

With such numerical differences between the churches, less today than in the past but still very significant, it is understandable that the ecumenical

movement did not develop easily in Portugal, all the more so since the oldest non-Catholic churches there date only from the last century.

The role played by the Roman Catholic Church in Portuguese life since the founding of the nation ultimately became somewhat embarrassing for ecumenical relations, in that the Roman Catholic Church had been the State Church for many centuries. Those few Portuguese who dared to break the law and join another confession felt themselves to some extent to be socially marginalized and they easily slipped into anti-Catholicism, often associating the Roman-Catholic Church with the State.

Three of the other churches (Presbyterian, Methodist and Lusitanian) were quick to absorb the ecumenical spirit and set up the Portuguese Inter-church Commission in 1956 as a body for cooperation, social action and promotion of ecumenical thinking, linked with the World Council of Churches, and in 1969 they established the Ecumenical Centre for Reconciliation at Figueira da Foz. In 1971 the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches (COPIC) came into being as the successor of the Inter-church Commission with the aim of bringing the Portuguese churches together in cooperation and fellowship. But the time was not yet ripe for such an ambitious project, so that today the membership of COPIC is still limited to those churches. Its creation has, nevertheless, been of use, because of the close cooperation it has made possible between its member churches, and the international relations it has opened up. It is with COPIC that the Catholic Church has ecumenical relationships.

Even before the founding of COPIC, immediately after Vatican II, Catholics and Protestants began to meet for reflection and prayer. In the then political situation in Portugal, under the dictatorship, with a colonial war being waged in Africa which was condemned in Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox circles, such meetings were regarded with some suspicion. Nonetheless, the Week of Prayer came to be observed by a significant number of Portuguese Christians, although there were no relations between the churches at an official level.

In addition to those churches belonging to COPIC there are Evangelical groups which are more numerous. They still maintain an anti-Catholic stance and have not joined COPIC. A younger more enlightened generation is now emerging among those Evangelicals which is beginning to feel the need for greater pluralism and cooperation between the different Christian traditions.

In May 1989 twenty-one Portuguese — fourteen Catholics and seven representatives of COPIC — attended the European Ecumenical Assembly in Basel, organized by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE). Some months afterwards, the Portuguese Bishops' Conference and the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches in a united effort published the Portuguese version of the docu-

ment produced by that historic Basel Ecumenical assembly, Peace with Justice.

Ecumenical thinking is quietly gaining ground in Portugal. Catholic professors have been invited to lead classes at the Protestant Theological Seminary and Protestant professors and pastors have been called on to lecture at the Catholic Theology Faculty and other institutions. In addition, since the 1970s, young Catholics have begun to attend classes at the Evangelical Seminary to study Protestant theology, Greek and Hebrew, while Protestants have taken courses in theology at the Catholic Faculty. A group of priests, pastors and lay people, at the invitation of the Bible Society of Lisbon, began translating the whole Bible into contemporary Portuguese. The text, published simultaneously by the Bible Society and a Catholic publisher, Difusora Biblica, at Christmas 1993, has been warmly received by the public and is rightly seen as a result of good cooperation between Christians.

After the Ecumenical Encounter at Santiago de Compostela in 1991, a further joint activity of CEC and CCEE, the Portuguese participants were inspired to take a fresh initiative and there began to take place regularly in Portugal what are called National Ecumenical Encounters. These gatherings, where bishops, priests and pastors pray together and study subjects of common interest, have attracted the attention of the media and news of them has certainly helped members of parishes to dare to accept differences and discover the enrichment that can come through dialogue and cooperation between Christians.

Much remains to be done. But we have a great desire to move forward along this path which the Lord has opened up before us. The subject we have chosen for this Week of Prayer has something to do with the ecumenical situation in Portugal. The Lord is calling us to carry out a task and, if we obey him, we shall have the blessing of fellowship with him.

The members of the ecumenical group which produced the preparatory material, on which these Week of Prayer texts have been based, are:

- Manuel P. Cardoso, Presbyterian pastor;
- João Soares de Carvalho, Anglican canon;
- Ireneu da Silva Cunha, Methodist pastor;
- Manuel da Rocha Felício, Roman Catholic priest;
- Nelson P. Horta, Anglican pastor;
- António Monteiro, Roman Catholic bishop;
- João S. Neto, Presbyterian pastor;
- Jorge F. C. Ortiga, Roman Catholic bishop;
- Manuela Silva, Roman Catholic lay woman;
- Fernando da L. Soares, Anglican bishop;
- Manuel A. Trindade, Roman Catholic bishop;
- Míriam Lopes Valente, Methodist pastor

#### IV. SOME KEY DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

- ca. 1740 In Scotland we find a pentecostal movement 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 " Unife Chrétienne " (Lyons, France) and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches begin cooperative preparation of materials for the Week of Prayer.
- 1964 The " Decree on Ecumenism " of the Second Vatican Council 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 text.
- 1968 For the first time the "Prayer for Unity" is celebrated on the basis of texts prepared jointly by " Faith and Order" and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.
- 1994 Representatives of YMCA and YWCA join the international group preparing the texts for the Prayer for Christian Unity 1996.

#### V. LIST OF THEMES OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

*elaborated in collaboration between the WCC "Faith and Order " Commission and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity since 1968*

- 1968 "To the praise of His Glory" (*Ephesians* 1:14)
- 1969 " Called to Freedom " (*Galatians* 5:13)
- 1970 "We are fellow workers for God" (*1 Corinthians* 3:9)
- 1971 "... and the Communion of the Holy Spirit" (*2 Corinthians* 13:13)
- 1972 "I give you a new Commandment" (*John* 13:34)
- 1973 " Lord, teach us to pray " (*Luke* 11:1)

1974 "That every tongue confess: Jesus Christ is Lord" (*Philippians 2:1-13*)

1975 "God's purpose: All things in Christ" (*Ephesians 1:3.10*)

1976 "We shall be like Him " (*1 John 3:2*) or "Called to Become What we are"

1977 " Enduring together in hope " (*Romans 5:1-5*)

1978 " No longer strangers " (*Ephesians 2:13-22*)

1979 " Serve one another to the Glory of God " (*1 Peter 4:7-11*)

1980 " Your Kingdom Come " (*Matthew 6:10*)

1981 " One Spirit - many gifts - one body" (*1 Corinthians 12:3b-13*)

1982 " May all find their home in you, O Lord " (*Psalms 84*)

1983 " Jesus Christ - the Life of the World " (*1 John 1:1-4*)

1984 " Called to be One Through the Cross of our Lord " (*1 Cor 2:2 and Colossians 1:20*).

1985 "From Death to Life with Christ" (*Ephesians 2:4-7*)

1986 " You shall be my witnesses " (*Acts 1:6-8*)

1987 " United in Christ - a new creation " (*2 Corinthians 5:17-6:4a*)

1988 " The Love of God casts out fear" (*1 John 4:18*)

1989 "Building Community: One Body in Christ" (*Romans 12:5-6a*)

1990 "That they all may be one... That the world may believe" (*John 17*)

1991 " Praise the Lord, All you nations!" (*Psalms 117 and Romans 15:5-13*)

1992 "I am with you always ... Go, therefore" (*Matthew 28:16-20*)

1993 " Bearing the Fruit of the Spirit for Christian unity" (*Galatians 5:22-23*)

1994 "The Household of God: Called to be one in heart and mind" (*Acts 4:23-37*)

1995 "Koinōnia: communion in God and with one another" (*John 15:1-17*)

1996 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (*Rev 3:14-22*)