ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

Background, documents, issues

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PLAN OF PRESENTATION

- A bit of history
- An overview of the dialogue
- The documents and the issues
- Discussion (at any time!)


[http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_anglican-comm.htm](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_anglican-comm.htm)
In 1960, an informal meeting took place when Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher was received in the Vatican by Pope John XXIII. This was the first meeting between a Pope and Archbishop of Canterbury since the Reformation. This was followed, after the Second Vatican Council, by a formal visit by Archbishop Michael Ramsey to Pope Paul VI in 1966.
Of all Fisher’s journeys his visit to Jerusalem, Istanbul, and Rome at the end of 1960 was the most memorable. No archbishop of Canterbury had talked with the pope since 1397. Geoffrey Fisher and John XXIII got on well. ‘We talked as two happy people who had seen a good deal of the world, and of life, and of the churches’ (Carpenter, Fisher, 737) was how Fisher described his meeting afterwards. In speaking to the pope, he said: ‘We are each now running on parallel courses; we are looking forward, until, in God’s, good time, our two courses approximate and meet.’ After a momentary hesitation the pope replied: ‘You are right’ (DNB).

Pope John said to an Anglican visitor the following year: ‘There is a straightforward man, of high ideals and great sincerity. I see many people here from kings to the least of men; but I knew at once that he was a man of God’ (private information). This conversation opened a new era in Roman Catholic–Anglican relations which was further encouraged by the Vatican Council and despite many set-backs has continued, especially among the lay people of the two churches throughout the world.

1960
The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ Himself were divided. Such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

7. There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from renewal of the inner life of the minds, from self-denial and an unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way. We should therefore pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them.
A BIT OF HISTORY

- 1517 Wittenburg
- 1531 Henry VIII
- 1570 Elizabeth I
- 1896 Anglican Orders
- 1910 World Missionary conference
- 1914-1918 WWI
- 1948 WCC
- 1939-1945 WWII
- 1960 Archbishop Fisher
- 1963-65 Vatican II
- 1966 Archbishop Ramsey
- 1970-1981 ARCIC I
- 1983-2011 ARCIC II
- 1990 and 1992 Women’s ordination
- 1999 Joint Declaration on Justification
- 2000 Dominus Jesus
- 2006 IARCCUM
- 2009 Anglican Ordinariate
- 2011 ARCIC III
"Their desire that all those Christians who belong to these two Communions may be animated by these same sentiments of respect esteem and fraternal love, and in order to help these develop to the full, they intend to inaugurate between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion a serious dialogue which, founded on the gospels and on the ancient common traditions, may lead to that unity in truth, for which Christ prayed".
The first phase of work was completed with the publication of the Final Report in 1981, dealing with three topics: The Eucharist, Ministry and Authority.
Salvation and the Church, 1986; The Church as Communion, 1991; Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church, 1993; The Gift of Authority, 1999, and culminating in the publication of Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ in 2005.
3. I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”. The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.

ARCIC III

ARCIC III met for the first time in Bose, Italy, in 2011, in 2012 in Hong Kong, and in 2013 in Rio de Janeiro. ARCIC is working on the theme of the Church local and universal, and how the Church comes to discern right ethical teaching.
ARCIC I

- Eucharist
- Ministry
- Authority
Eucharist: “mere” memorial or actual repetition?

Bread and wine: in memory of or the gift of himself now?
5. Christ's redeeming death and resurrection took place once and for all in history. Christ's death on the cross, the culmination of his whole life of obedience, was the one, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world. There can be no repetition of or addition to what was then accomplished once for all by Christ.
Any attempt to express a nexus between the sacrifice of Christ and the eucharist must not obscure this fundamental fact of the Christian faith. Yet God has given the eucharist to his church as a means through which the atoning work of Christ on the cross is proclaimed and made effective in the life of the church. The notion of memorial as understood in the Passover celebration at the time of Christ, i.e. the making effective in the present of an event in the past has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the eucharist. The eucharistic memorial is no mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but the church's effectual proclamation of God's mighty acts. Christ instituted the eucharist as a memorial (anamnesis) of the totality of God's reconciling action in him. In the eucharistic prayer the church continues to make a perpetual memorial of Christ's death, and his members, united with God and one another, give thanks for all his mercies, entreat the benefits of his passion on behalf of the whole church, participate in these benefits and enter into the movement of his self-offering.
6. Communion with Christ in the eucharist presupposes his true presence, effectually signified by the bread and wine which, in this mystery, become his body and blood. The real presence of his body and blood can, however, only be understood within the context of the redemptive activity whereby he gives himself, and in himself reconciliation, peace and life, to his own. On the one hand, the eucharistic gift springs out of the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, in which God's saving purpose has already been definitively realised. On the other hand, its purpose is to transmit the life of the crucified and risen Christ to his body, the church, so that its members may be more fully united with Christ and with one another.
The word transubstantiation is commonly used in the Roman Catholic Church to indicate that God acting in the eucharist effects a change in the inner reality of the elements. The term should be seen as affirming the fact of Christ's presence and of the mysterious and radical change which takes place. In contemporary Roman Catholic theology it is not understood as explaining how the change takes place.
8. The sacramental body and blood of the Saviour are present as an offering to the believer awaiting his welcome. When this offering is met by faith, a life-giving encounter results. Through faith Christ's presence—which does not depend on the individual's faith in order to be the Lord's real gift of himself to his church—becomes no longer just a presence for the believer, but also a presence with him.

9. The Lord's words at the last supper, "Take and eat; this is my body", do not allow us to dissociate the gift of the presence and the act of sacramental eating. The elements are not mere signs; Christ's body and blood become really present and are really given. But they are really present and given in order that, receiving them, believers may be united in communion with Christ the Lord.

Thus, in considering the mystery of the eucharistic presence, we must recognise both the sacramental sign of Christ's presence and the personal relationship between Christ and the faithful which arises from that presence.
MINISTRY + ORDINATION

- Three-fold order of Bishop, Priest and Deacon
- The two NT sacraments and the five other sacraments
14. In this sacramental act, the gift of God is bestowed upon the ministers, with the promise of divine grace for their work and for their sanctification; the ministry of Christ is presented to them as a model for their own; and the Spirit seals those whom he has chosen and consecrated. Just as Christ has united the church inseparably with himself, and as God calls all the faithful to life-long discipleship so the gifts and calling of God to the ministers are irrevocable. For this reason, ordination is unrepeatable in both our Churches.

FN 6: Anglican use of the word ‘sacrament’ with reference to ordination is limited by the distinction drawn in the Thirty-nine Articles (Article XXV) between the two ‘sacraments of the Gospel’ and the ‘five commonly called sacraments’, but differentiates between them and the ‘two sacraments ordained by Christ’ described in the catechism as ‘necessary to salvation’ for all men.
AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH

- Mutual learning
- The bishop of Rome
The consensus we have reached, if it is to be accepted by our two communities, would bring changes not only to the Anglican Communion but also to the Roman Catholic side the readiness to learn, necessary of such a wider koinonia, would demand humility and charity. The prospect should be met with faith, not fear. Communion with the see of Rome would bring to the Churches of the Anglican Communion not only a wider koinonia but also a strengthening of the power to realise its traditional ideal of diversity in unity.

Roman Catholics, on their side, would be enriched by the presence of a particular tradition of spirituality and scholarship, the lack of which has deprived the Roman Catholic Church of a precious element in the Christian heritage. The Roman Catholic Church has much to learn from the Anglican synodical tradition of involving the laity in the life and mission of the Church. We are convinced, therefore, that our degree of agreement, which argues for greater communion between our churches, can make a profound contribution to the witness of Christianity in our contemporary society.
12. The theological interpretation of this primacy and the administrative structures through which it has been exercised have varied considerably through the centuries. Neither theory nor practice, however, has ever fully reflected these ideals. Sometimes functions assumed by the see of Rome were not necessarily linked to the primacy: sometimes the conduct of the occupant of this see has been unworthy of his office: sometimes the image of this office has been obscured by interpretations placed upon it: and sometimes external pressures have made its proper exercise almost impossible. Yet the primacy, rightly understood, implies that the bishop of Rome exercises his oversight in order to guard and promote the faithfulness of all the churches to Christ and one another. Communion with him is intended as a safeguard of the catholicity of each local church, and as a sign of the communion of all the churches.
24c Anglicans find grave difficulty in the affirmation that the pope can be infallible in his teaching. It must, however, be borne in mind that the doctrine of infallibility is hedged round by very rigorous conditions laid down at the First Vatican Council.

These conditions preclude the idea that the pope is an inspired oracle communicating fresh revelation, or that he can speak independently of his fellow bishops and the Church, or on matters not concerning faith or morals.

For the Roman Catholic Church the pope's dogmatic definitions, which, fulfilling the criteria of infallibility, are preserved from error, do no more but no less than express the mind of the Church on issues concerning the divine revelation.

Even so, special difficulties are created by the recent Marian dogmas, because Anglicans doubt the appropriateness, or even the possibility, of defining them as essential to the faith of believers.
The claim that the pope possesses universal immediate jurisdiction, the limits of which are not clearly specified, is a source of anxiety to Anglicans who fear that the way is thus open to its illegitimate or uncontrolled use. Nevertheless, the First Vatican Council intended that the papal primacy should be exercised only to maintain and never to erode the structures of the local churches. The Roman Catholic church is today seeking to replace the juridical outlook of the nineteenth century by a more pastoral understanding of authority in the Church.
12. The doctrine that a universal primacy expresses the will of God does not entail the consequence that a Christian community out of communion with the see of Rome does not belong to the Church of God. Being in canonical communion with the bishop of Rome is not among the necessary elements by which a Christian community, is recognised as a church.

For example, the Roman Catholic Church has continued to recognise the Orthodox churches as churches in spite of division concerning the primacy (Vatican II, Unitatis Redintegratio, para. 14).

The Second Vatican Council, while teaching that the Church of God subsists in the Roman Catholic Church, rejected the position that the Church of God is co-extensive with the Roman Catholic Church and is exclusively embodied in that Church.

The Second Vatican Council allows it to be said that a church out of communion with the Roman see may lack nothing from the viewpoint of the Roman Catholic Church except that it does not belong to the visible manifestation of full Christian communion which is maintained in the Roman Catholic Church (Lumen Gentium, para. 8; Unitatis Redintegratio, para. 13). (Authority II)
ARCIC II

- Salvation and the Church, 1986
- The Church as Communion, 1991
- Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church, 1993
- The Gift of Authority, 1999
- Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ in 2005.
IARCCUM

- Produced a significant summing up in 2006
- GROWING TOGETHER IN UNITY AND MISSION Building on 40 years of Anglican – Roman Catholic Dialogue
IARCCUM: SHARED FAITH

1. Belief in God as Trinity
2. Church as Communion in Mission
3. The Living Word of God
4. Baptism
5. Eucharist
6. Ministry
7. Authority in the Church
8. Discipleship and Holiness
9. The Blessed Virgin Mary
Hand in hand with the work of theological dialogue, relationships have been developing between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in a variety of ways. As Archbishop George Carey and Pope John Paul II noted, “in many parts of the world, Anglicans and Catholics, joined in one baptism, recognise one another as brothers and sisters in Christ and give expression to this through joint prayer, common action, and joint witness”.

In diverse contexts, Anglicans and Catholics attempt to witness together in the face of rapid change, globalisation and fragmentation, growing secularism, religious apathy and moral confusion. In places, Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops meet regularly for consultation and prayer.

Representatives of each tradition are invited to be observers at the conciliar gatherings of the other. Since the Second Vatican Council, Archbishops of Canterbury and Popes have met together on frequent occasions, praying together for the Church and for the world.

Their joint declarations affirm the degree of communion that is already shared, as well as the urgency of continuing together on the way to visible unity.
93. The Commission gratefully acknowledges that the faith we hold in common is given to us by God. In this statement we have attempted to harvest the fruits of forty years of dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. As we reviewed the experience of our Churches it became clear to us how increased interaction has led to greater mutual understanding, and at the same time how this greater awareness of the extent of our shared faith has set us free to witness together more effectively. We celebrate and praise God for this.

94. There have been failures on the way and opportunities missed. We recognise that the obstacles that prevent us from receiving together all that God offers damage the effectiveness of our mission to the world. The Commission has become more profoundly aware of how intimately connected are understanding and cooperation, faith and mission. It is our conviction that, as we grow towards full, ecclesial communion and respond afresh to the common mission entrusted to his Church by our Lord, the remaining Church-dividing issues will be resolved more effectively.
IARCCUM: PART II

I. Visible expressions of our shared faith

Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Churches of the Anglican Communion are liturgical Churches in which God is glorified in common public worship. We invite Anglicans and Roman Catholics to develop strategies to foster the visible expression of their shared faith.
IARCCUM: PART II

2. Joint study of our faith

Given the degree of agreement in faith outlined in this statement, we wish to promote joint study in order to deepen the faith we share.
IARCCUM: PART II

3. Co-operation in ministry

We encourage co-operation wherever possible in lay and ordained ministries.
4. Shared witness in the world

We encourage fostering a mission-orientated spirituality of engagement with the world and developing joint strategies of outreach so as to share our faith.
We the bishops of IARCCUM strongly commend these suggestions to members of the episcopate around the world, mindful of the specific responsibilities of bishops for the promotion of Christian unity and the mission of the Church. We give thanks to God for the extensive theological consensus articulated in this document – fruits of the last forty years of dialogue – and we pray that God will richly bless all that we are now called to do in His Name. We call on all bishops to encourage their clergy and people to respond positively to this initiative, and to engage in a searching exploration of new possibilities for co-operation in mission.
ARCIC III - THE NEXT STEPS

- Communiqué from the meeting of ARCIC III in Rio de Janeiro 2013
- Communiqué from the meeting of ARCIC III in Hong Kong 2012
- Communiqué from the Meeting of ARCIC III at Bose 2011
ARCIC III has decided that it will address the two principal topics together in a single document. It has drawn up a plan for its work that views the Church above all in the light of its rootedness in Christ through the Paschal Mystery. This focus on Jesus Christ, human and divine, gives the Commission a creative way to view the relationship between the local and universal in communion.

The Commission will seek to develop a theological understanding of the human person, human society, and the new life of grace in Christ.

This will provide a basis from which to explore how right ethical teaching is determined at universal and local levels. ARCIC will base this study firmly in scripture, tradition and reason, and draw on the previous work of the Commission.

It will analyse some particular questions to elucidate how our two Communions approach moral decision making, and how areas of tension for Anglicans and Roman Catholics might be resolved by learning from the other. ARCIC III does this conscious of the fact that what unites us is greater than what divides us.
At this meeting, the Commission built upon the schema it had prepared at its first meeting. The schema seeks to address the interrelated ecclesiological and ethical questions of its mandate under four headings: the identity and mission of the Church; the patterning of the Church’s life that undergirds local and universal communion; shortcomings in the churches which obscure the glory of God; and ethical discernment and teaching. Members presented papers in each of these areas which were discussed both in plenary and in small groups.

To assist its own understanding, the Commission is preparing case studies in three ethical areas: matters which historically once seemed settled but which, upon reflection, have come to be viewed quite differently by both traditions (slavery); issues on which Anglican and Roman Catholic teaching is at variance (divorce and remarriage, contraception); and evolving issues (a theology of work and the economy). It is not intended that the Commission will seek to resolve disputed ethical questions. Rather, its purpose is to analyse the means by which our two traditions have arrived at or are currently determining ‘right ethical teaching’.
Members of the Commission spent most of a day in the City of God, one of the many favelas (neighbourhoods housing large numbers of the poor and displaced) that surround Rio de Janeiro. They were warmly welcomed by the Roman Catholic parish and their priest Fr Marcio Jose’.

Fr Nicholas Wheeler, the Anglican parish priest, arranged for the Commission to visit three projects in the community (a day centre for seniors, a community development centre, and a mural project that portrays the community’s history and provides a vision of the City of God from Revelation), and to learn from the local police how officers engage positively with the community.

The evening concluded with ecumenical vespers. As one member of the Commission wrote in reflection, ‘In offering thanks, one of our bishops said he was trying to think of a word to sum up our visit, and could only think of ‘hope’. Hope sprang from real ecumenical activity (unashamedly from a Christian base but working to support any community good), and the sheer hard work and organising by local people.’
CONVERSATION

• Very substantial conversations and convergences
• A vast amount is held in common without dispute
• There are contentious issues which continue to appear: authority, primacy, ethics, orders.