

REMAPKS ON THE  
SACRED CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH'S  
"OBSERVATIONS ON THE FINAL REPORT OF ARCIC"

BY

An Anglican Sub-Committee Of  
The Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada

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(Final Version)

The Anglican members of the Canadian Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue read the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (SCDF) document entitled Observations on the Final Report of ARCIC (hereafter Observations) with great interest. As with the Roman Catholic Sub-committee of our Dialogue which has submitted its Remarks (April 8, 1983), we as Anglicans, have been encouraged to prepare our written comments so as to contribute to the on-going dialogue.

### Comments on "A - OVERALL EVALUATION"

#### A - 1 - General Response:

We gratefully acknowledge the overall support to the dialogue represented by the SCDF's evaluation. Its support will carry great weight and encouragement for the continuation of this dialogue in faith as it moves towards reconciliation in a fully experienced and expressed unity.

#### A - 2 - Points for Clarification:

##### A - 2.i. "Failure to revise original statements"

While ARCIC could have rewritten the earlier documents to ensure the harmony and homogeneity which the Congregation desires, we feel that at this stage in our journey it is helpful to read the Statements and Elucidations separately and in sequence. This makes it easier for those who did not participate directly in the process of reaching agreement, to enter into the thinking of those who did. To review the progress made since the second Vatican Council, and to see this reflected in the Final Report, is in many ways more encouraging than a simple statement of the present position in our agreement. The Final Report allows us to see how far we have come, and, discerning the trajectory, to believe that we are accurately aimed at unity in truth.

Nevertheless the Congregation's comment provides a timely warning about difficulties we might encounter in seeking a positive answer to the questions of whether the Final Report is consonant in substance with the faith of Roman Catholics and Anglicans, and of whether it offers sufficient basis for taking the next concrete step towards the reconciliation of our churches grounded in agreement in faith. In this process in our two sister churches we hope that those responsible will make it clear that ARCIC did not intend to provide an ambiguous report allowing different or contradictory readings, and that the texts must be evaluated as a whole.

This methodology of evaluation requires that before making a negative assessment of one of the original statements (i.e. Eucharistic Doctrine, Ministry and Ordination, Authority in the Church I & II), the content of the appropriate Elucidation should be considered. An "authoritative" reading would be the original Statement clarified and amplified in the light of the Elucidation. If a problem is detected in an Elucidation, then it must be understood that the Elucidations are not meant to stand on their own, but only to be read in conjunction with the original statements which are not replaced or superseded but elucidated. (We do, however, recognize

that Para 24 of Authority I is not dealt with in an Elucidation, but became the basis for Authority II). In general we believe that the correct hermeneutic principle in reading the Final Report is that where there is apparent conflict or ambiguity, the more precise of two statements should be taken as authoritative and used to clarify the meaning intended by the members of ARCIC. This will eliminate the danger that a less precisely worded sentence dilutes the meaning of a clearer affirmation elsewhere in the report. If this principle is adopted, the Final Report is very clearly a strong and orthodox statement of the catholic faith.

#### A. 2. ii. The ambiguity of the phrase "substantial agreement"

Our Canadian Dialogue is conducted in English and French and we have not encountered any difficulty with ARCIC's use of the term "substantial agreement" "accord substantiel" particularly when one accepts as authoritative ARCIC's definition of the phrase in part 2 of the 1979 Elucidation on Eucharistic Doctrine.

#### 'Hierarchy of truths'

We were surprised to find a reference to the "hierarchy of truths" in Observations, since ARCIC appears to have deliberately avoided the use of the term. We fear that, even though the Congregation introduced it merely in order to exclude it, the reference may lead to a confusion for which ARCIC cannot be held responsible. The Malta Report of the Joint Preparatory Commission did cite Vatican II's use of this concept as one which might be helpful in the dialogue. But the "hierarchy of truths" has remained primarily a Roman Catholic formulation, which is not commonly utilized amongst Anglicans. We do not wish to deny its possible usefulness in the future, but we do wonder in which areas of our dialogue the Congregation believes that it would be helpful. Of the three examples excluded by Observations, Papal Primacy is one that we agree must not be subject to anything which would lead Anglicans to suspect us of using a strange concept to introduce a theological device which leads them to concede something that they would not otherwise allow. Yet, the questions of Eucharistic adoration and the Marian dogmas have closely interwoven within them cultic practices in which faith statements are not precisely defined. Somewhere in these areas there are points at which we, too, would want to distinguish between what is primary and secondary, original and derivative, or essential and non-essential... and to that end a notion such as the "hierarchy of truths" may well be helpful. However, it must be made clear that the term does not appear in the Final Report.

#### A. 2. iii "Twofold interpretation of texts"

We have already agreed that it is important to avoid confusion. We doubt if it will ever be possible absolutely to prevent manifold interpretations. We are satisfied that in the Final Report there is no deliberate use of mystification or contrived ambiguity but a consistently sincere search for clarity. We are also satisfied that if individual statements from the Final Report are read in the light of the whole document and seen in the context of our journey towards reconciliation, they will not give rise to divisive or destructive interpretations.

As Anglicans, we venture the comment that we have noticed within the Roman Catholic Church considerable diversity in the interpretation of some of the documents of, say, the Second Vatican Council. But this has not hampered the creative Spirit's work. The whole Christian world has witnessed and rejoiced in the renewal of the Church facilitated by important new documents and by the overall leadership of the Council. We trust that the Final Report will similarly win acceptance by our Churches, and contribute towards our continuing renewal and reconciliation.

In A.2. iii par 3, Observations points to the ambiguity of "we" in "the consensus we have reached". Does this refer only to the members of the Commission? We suppose this will be answered by the response of the two Churches to the Final Report. As persons who have experienced dialogue in depth, we believe it is important for churches to recognize that in the words of the report on Anglican-Lutheran Conversations:

.... in every ecumenical conversation the delegates from both sides develop an increasingly friendly relationship; understanding develops, deep spiritual fellowship grows, and with it a strong desire to express the maximum agreement possible. Those they represent are not going through the same experience, and there is a danger that both sides, or at least one, will prove to be so far ahead of their constituency that little good will come from the encounter.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of ARCIC we are sure that similar dynamics were present but we are convinced that they were aware of the danger and avoided it.

If we regard the Final Report as part of a process and not merely an attempt to state a position, then the difficulty about "we" is lessened. In our experience dialogue neither destroys the integrity of the participants nor dilutes their loyalty to their own faith - community. It does, however, indicate an avenue of progress which is open to all who are themselves open to change.

From our experience of Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue, and from our observation of others participating in this process, we believe that a pattern can be discerned. When Anglicans and Roman Catholics meet to discuss their faith as openly and honestly as possible they find that attentiveness to the other's articulation of his or her own faith leads to a point of recognition when each discerns their faith in the other's articulation of their belief. At this stage there develops a deep conviction that at a fundamental level, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are in agreement in the living faith once delivered to the Apostles. When we are scrupulously frank with each other about what we believe now, and when we seek clarification from as early a stage as possible in our common original tradition, we find that certain difficulties originating in the intervening period of Church history become more manageable. With the aid of our present living faith and the guidance and insights of the Scriptures and the Early Fathers, we are able to approach the formulae of the divided Church in a context which renders them less divisive. The problem then becomes one of expressing our present agreement, which we believe to be in harmony with our ancient agreement, in words which will be heard as adequate by those who have not shared

deeply in the dialogue which discerned the agreement. This problem cannot be ignored, but it is a technical problem that will be solved. We believe that the solution will be integrally related to the degree of encouragement given to the development of dialogues around the world.

### "Thirty Nine Articles"

As Anglicans, we would put primary importance upon the identification of an adequate expression of our common faith today, such that we can discern means of achieving full organic unity in the faith, and for the strengthening of our witness to the world.

But we cannot alter the fact that we have been rooted in what can now be called the "Anglican tradition", and that this tradition has been shaped in part by such historic documents as the Thirty Nine Articles, The Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordinal. We therefore agree with the Congregation that these documents have contributed to our identity. Nevertheless, some of these documents (e.g. The Prayer Book) have gone through significant revisions and provision of alternatives. These modern versions have taken us well beyond our Reformation originals, yet those originals or at least parts of them remain in honoured use. In respect of the Thirty Nine Articles, the previously required subscription for clergy has, in most parts of the Anglican Communion, been reduced to a general assent - yet the fact that they are lifted up for assent signifies the historic and formative role they still play. But critique of such documents, both historic and modern, is basically made by reference to Scripture and the faith of the Apostolic Church. The sufficiency of all our formulations, including the Final Report itself, must stand the rigor of this more essential reference back to Christian origins in Scripture and Tradition.

Finally, despite our commitment to develop full agreement with Roman Catholics (an agreement we believe to be within reach), we do not wish to misrepresent or lay aside the Anglican Communion's comprehensiveness. The historical formulations of the Church of England do make it clear that the Anglican identity is Reformed as well as Catholic. We welcome the multilateral dialogue of the WCC Faith and Order Commission and are encouraged by the Lima Statements. In North America, Anglicans and Episcopalians are making rapid progress in our ecumenical relations with Lutherans. We do not anticipate that this progress with other churches will jeopardize what we believe has become a special dialogue with Rome, or that this commitment will interfere with both Anglican and Roman Catholic wider ecumenical overtures.

### Comments on "B. DOCTRINAL DIFFICULTIES NOTED BY THE SCDF"

#### B. I. 1. Eucharist as Sacrifice

Unlike the SCDF we do not detect a danger of a reading of the ARCIC documents which "does not include an essential aspect of the mystery": On the contrary, the discussion of the Eucharistic sacrifice seemed to us to be very helpful, beginning as it did with the themes of both mystery and sacrifice. In another sense, the Congregation's

comment was very helpful. We presume that ARCIC avoided the language of "propitiatory value" because of the probability of its being misunderstood by some Anglicans, who in the past have been alarmed by the notion of propitiation, applied carelessly or with an imprecise exuberance to the celebration of the Lord's Supper. But we are agreed that the celebration does include an offering of a Eucharistic sacrifice. Still, Anglicans do not want anything to threaten the belief in the uniqueness of the once-for-all sacrifice of Our Lord in his historical crucifixion.

In the Book of Common Prayer, from 1552 to the present day, the words immediately preceding the Sursum Corda at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer have been "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins". (1 John 2:1 - 2) Anglicanism does not avoid the notion of Eucharistic sacrifice but resists anything that would detach that sacrifice from its christological and soteriological roots. Consequently we would look to the biblical use of hilasmos (1 John 2:2) hilasterion (Romans 3:25) to illuminate our understanding of the sacrifice believing that, approached in this way, the notion of "propitiation" cannot contradict the new Testament understanding of God.

We are of the opinion that the SCDF's very precise observation in this area, should help to reassure those who have misunderstood and therefore reacted against Catholic dogma. We too can affirm with the Sacred Congregation that "the propitiatory value that Catholic dogma attributed to the eucharist ... is precisely that of this sacramental offering" (our emphasis), i.e. that which "includes a participation of the Church, the Body of Christ, in the sacrificial act of her Lord, so that she offers sacramentally in him and with him his sacrifice". It seems to us that with this careful wording the SCDF has excluded the interpretations of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and its propitiatory value which have offended Anglicans in the past although further clarification of the way the church is active in the sacrifice could be usefully pursued. Nevertheless we must note that this sympathetic reception of the Congregation's comments was not shared by the authors of Evangelical Anglicans and the ARCIC Final Report.<sup>2</sup> The Sacred Congregation has correctly identified an area in which Anglican comprehensiveness has been strained in the past, and is not yet resolved. We hope that its comments will contribute to the growing consensus on Eucharistic doctrine which is happily replacing the bitter disputes of previous ages.

### B. I. 2. Real Presence

We respect the insistence of the SCDF on clarity and consistency. The difficulty raised by the Congregation could be resolved, at least in part, by applying the hermeneutic method we have recommended above. A clear and unambiguous statement in one part of the text becomes authoritative in the interpretation of an apparently less adequate statement elsewhere in the text. Now the SCDF "notes with satisfaction that several formulations clearly affirm the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament". We propose that these clear affirmations should be used to interpret those "other formulations ... which ... do not seem to indicate adequately what the Church understands."

But a concern we would want to raise with the Congregation, prompted by its comments on this section, is the ecumenical danger in too strict an insistence on echoing the precise wording of, say, Tridentine formulations. Of course there is the theological task of ensuring that a popular and contemporary statement does not unwittingly abandon any of the truths which the Council of Trent sought to protect. But we cannot help but observe that, important as the Council of Trent is, its precise language does not seem to spring immediately to the lips of all Roman Catholic theologians and faithful when they attempt to witness to their faith today. It is therefore expecting a lot to look for that language among Anglicans. In this matter of language we have been encouraged by papal statements such as that of John XXIII at the opening of the Second Vatican Council, when he said, "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing. The way in which it is presented is another". Paul VI, emphasizing the importance of transubstantiation in Mysterium Fidei, also recognized the validity of newer terms provided that they express the truth that transubstantiation also seeks to express.

John Paul II in 1980 commented on ARCIC's method in his address to the Commission

Your method has been to go behind the habit of thought and expression born and nourished in enmity and controversy, to scrutinize together the great common treasure, to clothe it in language at once traditional and expressive of an age which no longer glories in strife but seeks to come together in listening to the quiet voice of the Spirit.

#### Anglican-Lutheran International Conversations 1970 - 72

In a footnote to B.1.ii. we find a quotation from the Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Conversations, 1970/72. It should be clearly understood that the Conversations were authorized by the Lambeth Conference and the Lutheran World Federation. The Report itself is the report of the participants of the conversations and has not been adopted in any official way (as have the ARCIC documents in diocesan and provincial synods throughout the Anglican Communion). Further, the Anglican Consultative Council in Dublin, 1973, examined the paragraphs on Eucharist and Ministry "with the question especially in mind as to whether what was being said to the Lutherans differed from what was being said to the Roman Catholics."<sup>3</sup> It was felt no contradictions had been made. The passage cited by the Congregation does not exclude Catholic doctrine and is far from being a key point in the text. Perhaps SCDF's very raising of such a point may suggest that the time is approaching for the bilateral dialogues (Anglican/Lutheran, Lutheran/Roman Catholic) to become tripartite on certain levels. However, individual dialogues should not be interpreted as reducing the credibility of internationally agreed statements (such as the Final Report) especially when those statements have already begun a procedure for official reception in synods and councils of the church.

### B. I. 3. Reservation and Adoration of the Eucharist

We are not in a position to comment internationally on "the current status in the Anglican Communion of the regulation called the 'Black Rubric'". We point out that the offending line quoted from the Rubric by the SCDF was omitted from the Book of Common Prayer (Canada, 1959), and this is the authoritative Prayer Book of the Anglican Church of Canada. We know of nothing like this regulation in contemporary revisions of Prayer Books or Alternative Services Books. This ought well to illustrate that what it represents just is not part of contemporary Anglican catechesis, just as what it was opposed to is not found in current Catholic teaching. We hope that this Anglican reaction will be remembered as no more than a warning of the danger of excesses which may provoke it. Most would no longer accuse the Roman Catholic Church of promoting an independent cult of devotion to the Eucharistic elements divorced from the Eucharist, and we trust that Roman Catholics can discern in Anglican piety a proper reverence and devotion to the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Each of our churches has its means for correcting its own abuses, excesses, etc., and these have been instances of such self-correction.

But the "Black Rubric" well illustrates a problem we could encounter with other historical statements. If some Roman Catholics insist on official Anglican repudiations of problem passages from the past, then some Anglicans will probably start asking for official Roman Catholic repudiations of ancient abuses. This is difficult for both of us because we have ties of love and loyalty with our predecessors which encourage us to adopt a most sympathetic understanding of their words and behaviour. We do not want to break those ties. However, if as Anglicans and Roman Catholic we move forward together in stating the truth now, and experience ties of love and loyalty with each other, than our predecessors' difficulties may have to be seen from a different perspective and we should not hold ourselves apart by them. It might be much better to rejoice in what has been a slow but solid healing of ancient wounds.

## B. II Ministry and Ordination

### B. II. I. Ministerial Priesthood

We agree with the Sacred Congregation that "this formulation only means that he is a priest, in the sense of Catholic (i.e. also Anglican) doctrine, if one understands that through the priest the Church offers sacramentally (our emphasis) the sacrifice of Christ". This we believe is the teaching of the Final Report. We acknowledge the SCDF's helpfully concise formulation "the priestly nature of the ordained minister depends upon the sacrificial character of the eucharist". Probably the reason many Anglicans believe this to be the case, is why they continue to speak of "priests" as opposed to "ministers". But we may add that such a characteristic should not limit the ministry of the ordained priesthood to this one aspect of their calling. We recall that the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests says "it is the first task of priests as co-workers of the Bishops to preach the Gospel of God to all men". Vatican II clearly taught a balanced doctrine of the ordained ministry.



in which the acknowledgement of "Priests as Ministers of God's word" was inseparable from "Priests as Ministers of the Sacraments and the Eucharist". With such a balance, we would concur.

### B II.2 Sacramentality of Ordination

We believe that the ARCIC Final Report's statement quoted in Observations is sufficient. To say more along the lines suggested by the SCDF might not achieve agreement amongst Roman Catholics let alone Anglicans.

We would be interested to know whether or not the SCDF would accept an approach to the institution of the sacraments by Christ following the line suggested by Karl Rahner in The Church and the Sacraments:

From the principle that the Church is the primal sacrament, it would be possible to see the existence of true sacraments in the strictest traditional sense is not necessarily always based on a definite statement, which has been preserved or is presumed to have existed, in which the historical Jesus Christ explicitly spoke about a certain definite sacrament .... The institution of a sacrament can ..... follow simply from the fact that Christ founded the Church with its sacramental nature.<sup>4</sup>

Anglicans would have no difficulty if this approach were acceptable.

Obviously there is a need to clarify the status of history and historical criticism in our theologies. The Congregation seems to us to be too fearful of the corrosive effects that criticism might have on theology. Without in any way suggesting that the truths of revelation are subject to the whims of historians, we believe that it is important to remember that Christianity is based on historical and not purely mythological events. The historian is therefore very important in the theological task, and "the authentic interpretation of the Scriptures" cannot ignore the historical method. We note that this concern about historical criticism returns in Observations B.III. i. Perhaps this springs from a particular Roman Catholic anxiety about the state of philosophical and theological studies in Catholic seminaries and universities. We note for example an anxiety in this area in the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education's discussion of Current Difficulties in Philosophical Studies in "The Study of Philosophy in Seminaries" where the danger is seen that,

Philosophy has lost its importance for religion and for theology: theological studies must detach themselves from philosophical speculation as a useless word-game and must build up in full autonomy on a positive basis, furnished by historical criteria and by special methods of exegesis. Theology of the future will, therefore, be the special competence of historians and philologists.<sup>5</sup>

If there is an internal controversy about the place of historical criticism within the Roman Catholic Church, we must be careful not to let that distort the ecumenical task.

B. II. 3.

The issue of the ordination of women is to be dealt with by ARCIC-II and we eagerly await their comments.

We want to reaffirm that from the Anglican point of view "where canonical ordinations of women have taken place, the bishops concerned believe that their action implies no departure from the traditional doctrine of the ordained ministry" (Final Report, - Ministry Elucidation, Section 5). Since the "intentio faciendi quod facit Ecclesia" remains clear this action ought not to raise suspicions that Anglicans are moving away from their Catholic doctrine in an attempt to accommodate to secularism or liberal protestantism.

But footnote 2 in Observations raises a question for us. It omits some words, and summarized the quotation from the Declaration Inter Insigniores in such a way which could be understood to go beyond the teaching of the Decree:

This practice of the Church therefore has a normative character: in the fact of conferring priestly ordination only on men, it is a question of an unbroken tradition throughout the history of the Church, universal in the East and the West, and alert to repress abuses immediately. This norm, based on Christ's example, has been and is still observed because it is considered to conform to God's plan for his Church.

It appears to us that Inter Insigniores represents a conservative, cautious, and, we might even allow, prudent judgement on the question of priestly ordination only of men, in 1976. But the declaration we assume deliberately, stops short of settling the question for all time. The practice is still observed because it is considered by proper authority to conform to God's plan for his church. While Observations uses the word "must", we understand the text to allow the possibility that it will not necessarily always be observed if the Church becomes convinced that the ordination of women could also conform to God's plan. As Anglicans we respect the judgement of the SCDF within the Roman Catholic system of discipline. But we hope that Roman Catholics will try to understand how we have come to reach a different decision.

Commenting from a Canadian and North American perspective, we believe that we now see a growing anxiety and concern about the place of women in the Church which was not adequately dealt with by Inter Insigniores. Even on the narrow issue of ordination, which is all we can expect the decree to address, we do not believe that the Decree settled the question for very long, particularly not for North America. As Anglicans who have struggled with the issue, we recognize the difficulties associated with naming so radical a change in practice without appearing to threaten our

ancient faith. However as partners in dialogue we believe we ought at least to emphasize our belief that this issue is extremely important, not only for ecumenical reasons, but also because questions of the roles and nature of both women and men as well as the functions and nature of priesthood urgently require open and careful attention accompanied by a willingness to act on the insights which come from our theological investigations.

### B.III. Authority in the Church

#### B. III, 1. Petrine Texts

Here again we are not sure whether or not we are reading into Observations an excessive anxiety about the possible dangers of historical criticism. We agree that it is not possible for the Church to adopt as the effective norm for reading the Scriptures, "only what historical criticism maintains". However it is also true that any historical claim is subject to historical criticism. In the case of the Petrine texts it was precisely the use of historical biblical criticism by Anglicans and Roman Catholics (and, we also acknowledge, particularly the work of the US Lutheran-R.C. Dialogue) which enabled Anglicans to come to a new interpretation of the texts. This allowed us to leave behind some of our past objections to the Roman Catholic insistence on the importance of a distinctive Petrine ministry. It is becoming evident that historical study increasingly suggests a linkage between the petrine ministry of the universal primate (the Bishop of Rome), with the commission received by Peter directly from Jesus Christ. We regret that the wording of statements of Vatican I should be regarded as creating a problem in this context. We also hope that the carefully negotiated documents Authority I and II will find acceptance from a Roman Catholic point of view, as these sections still represent a considerable struggle, for some Anglicans to appropriate, given the historic antipathy to papal primacy.

#### B. III. 2. Primacy and Jurisdiction

"Observations" is troubled by the "exigencies of the word 'institution'". We do not foresee any diminution of the proper authority of the universal primate if we observe that from a strictly historical perspective it is impossible to establish whether or not a full blown universal primacy was actually established as a permanent institution by Jesus during his life on earth. Rather it seems to us to be important to seize the opportunity of the current dialogue when many Anglicans may sense the hand of God at work in our times, and to believe that a ministry of unity and witness may be offered to the universal Church by Peter's successor.

#### B.III. 3. Infallibility and Indefectibility

After reading this observation we are inclined to the opinion that it would have been better if both ARCIC and the SCDF had made a greater effort to deal quite separately with indefectibility and infallibility, particularly since Hans Kung has tended to confuse

the two concepts.

It is important to recognize that Anglicans who consider 'infallibility' carefully in a non-polemic context can come to a fresh understanding consistent with the strict teaching of Rome. For example, Professor John Macquarrie writes "I once wrote that it seemed to me that papal infallibility is an insuperable obstacle between Roman Catholics and Anglicans, but I no longer think so. I changed my mind ...." He later makes the helpful clarification that for Anglicans "Indefectibility is an eschatological idea, but when we talk of 'Infallibility' we are asking about the kind of guidance available to the church in via"<sup>6</sup>

Marian Dogmas Observations' summary of the already excessively concise ARCIC statement on Marian definitions (Authority II. 30) seems to us to be inadequate and therefore perhaps unfair in failing to acknowledge the positive affirmations about Marian dogma which are present in the Final Report. We must wait for an expanded statement, we hope from ARCIC II, before we can comment adequately on agreement about the dogmas themselves. However we observe that the modern definitions of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary were formulated in the context of a cult of Marian devotion which has not been shared by the majority of Anglicans in the way in which it has been experienced in Roman Catholic piety. By going behind the formulations we may reach theological agreement. But a theological understanding alone will not enable someone outside of the devotional tradition to hear the words in the same way as a person who habitually prays to, through or with Our Lady. Since the Roman Catholic Church, and some Anglicans, believe that there are graces to be received through this devotion, then the attempt should be made to welcome Anglicans into full communion where they would have an opportunity to share. We think that we can satisfy Roman Catholics that Anglicans do not believe anything which demeans the truths that the Marian dogmas attempt to express. We hope that Roman Catholics would not expect Anglicans eagerly to embrace many aspects of Marian devotions some of which appear to have less than universal acceptance and usage throughout the world-wide Roman Church. We believe that when there is agreement in faith, a pluralism of religious expression (while always subject to theological criticism) ought to be welcomed rather than feared.

This question emphasizes again the importance of agreeing on how we are to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials. Anglicans would be sympathetic towards the Augustinian sentiment cited by J. A. Comenius in his Didactica Magna:

There should be unity in essentials, liberty in non-essentials and charity in all things.

We shall follow with great interest the discussions of Marian dogmas in the Roman-Catholic-Orthodox dialogue.

#### B. III. 4. General Councils

The Congregation asserts that what the Final Report says about General Councils is not exact. We agree that the bishops united in council have a mission which "extends to the entire domain of faith and morals". However the point ARCIC makes is in the context of the magisterium, and the Anglican ability to accept it.

In the past Anglicans have suspected and feared that the Roman Catholic Church assumed that it had the power in its teaching authority to add to the truth. Historically certain Roman Catholic teachings have been dismissed as "novelties", when considered directly in the light of scripture. It came as a surprise of dialogue for many Anglicans, to discover that the Roman Catholic Church does not claim the power to create new truths. It is in this context that Anglicans are helped by ARCIC's clarification in Authority I (19) that Councils "do not add to the truth ... they clarify the Church's understanding of it".

Yet Anglicans will always critique any such clarification thoroughly, to ensure that it is a faithful interpretation of scripture and the Apostolic Tradition. This is not an attempt to restrict legitimate authority only to "fundamental matters of faith" but to make it clear that we do not add to the content of revelation when we recall and emphasize some important truth.

#### B. III. 5. Reception

It is important to remember that in the present stage of progress towards unity, Anglicans are searching for sufficient reason - as to why they ought to accept a Petrine ministry identified with the Bishop of Rome - a ministry which they have managed to do without for some considerable time. They will be helped if the universal primacy is clearly Petrine rather than imperial in its operation. The Final Report (Authority II, #29) should be seen as addressing the drawing together of Anglicans and Roman Catholics rather than as merely pointing out a difference between them. This is why it is dangerous to speak, as the Congregation does, of the "Anglican position" in opposition to "Catholic Doctrine". As a general rule of dialogue it is better to avoid where possible the language of "positions". When we negotiate about positions we seek compromises and trade-offs, or accept winners and losers. If we concentrate instead on our underlying interests, our concerns, beliefs, practices and behaviour .... then we can find agreement in truth without there being losers. There is a big difference between being led by the Spirit of truth and defending a position.

On the particular point raised here, it seems to us that what SCDF sees as a statement of "the Anglican position", is by no means held only by Anglicans. We know many loyal Roman Catholics who would be very surprised and indeed seriously disturbed if a "definition proposed for assent were not manifestly a legitimate interpretation of biblical faith and in line with orthodox tradition". The distance between us may be very small. The clarification of the role of 'reception' in Roman Catholic teaching may help some Anglicans to lose their fear that authoritarian excesses or novelties might be in principle unavoidable if Anglicans were to accept the teaching

authority of the Bishop of Rome.

## C. OTHER POINTS OF VIEW OF FUTURE DIALOGUE

### C. 1. Apostolic Succession

ARCIC did not claim to make an exhaustive statement about apostolic succession, but merely to outline "the essential features of what is meant in our two traditions by ordination in the apostolic succession" We have no doubt that it would be beneficial, particularly in our relationships to churches with non-episcopally ordained ministries, to extend and deepen the study of apostolic succession and to produce a joint statement on the matter. Meanwhile we believe that Anglicans and Roman Catholics have a sufficient and substantial theological agreement, and should proceed with whatever steps remain to be taken towards the mutual recognition of our ordained ministries. We agree with the Sacred Congregation that our continuing study of apostolic succession needs to be "above all confronted by the facts of Church life and practice in the two Communions". This continuing process will be facilitated if our two sister churches worship work and witness together in every way possible.

### C. 2. Moral Teaching

The Congregation rightly emphasized the importance of moral issues which were beyond the mandate of ARCIC I but are within the terms of reference of ARCIC II.

We are hopeful that this discussion, if carried on widely throughout our communion, will lead to great benefits for the whole church. Anglicans have a long experience of emphasizing the importance of the individual's responsibility as a moral agent. We have learned something of the dangers and benefits in maximizing personal freedom and attentiveness to conscience. Roman Catholics have on the whole been far more attentive than Anglicans in taking seriously the Church's responsibility corporately to provide moral guidance and reliable help for the individual (informed) conscience. Finding an ecclesial balance between these two forms of commitment to the right, the good, and the true, will be one of the major tasks of ARCIC II in its work.

In general rather than seeing the area of moral concerns as an impenetrable minefield in the path of unity, we see it as providing some of the most promising opportunities for growth in mutual understanding. The benefits will extend beyond our communions to the whole Church and world, when in these days not only are moral values threatened but the very survival of the world hangs on the resolution of some moral issues - (eg disarmament, bio-ethics, global ecology). It is important to note that, through coalitions and joint statements, Anglicans and Roman Catholics (with other Christians) have already spoken in Canada with one voice on many issues: a proclamation of an already existing Christian unity and commitment.

D FINAL REMARKSD. 1. On the Agreement

We agree with the SCDF that the Final Report represents a notable ecumenical endeavour, and rejoice in the plentiful evidence since its publication that it provided "a useful basis for further steps on the road to reconciliation". As continually noted above we recognize the legitimacy of the Congregation's concerns, and are particularly grateful for the careful articulation of problems which must not only be addressed but be seen to have been addressed. We are, however, more convinced than the congregation about the depth and extent of substantial agreement we mutually hold concerning essential elements of the Christian Faith.

D. 2. The Next Concrete Step

We are in complete and enthusiastic agreement with the Sacred Congregation's outline of the next concrete step. We now know that our two churches have agreed with all three of the Congregation's recommendations and that these are included in the terms of reference of ARCIC II.

We believe that the task is now too large to be left entirely to a small international commission. We hope that our Canadian A/RC Dialogue will continue to make contributions and that regional, diocesan and parochial groups will become more and more involved. We also hope that we may look for a continuing interest from the SCDF in the on-going Dialogue, whose contributions and advice doubtless will be amongst the most helpful, informed and perceptive.

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Members of the Anglican Sub Committee of the  
Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada

The Rev. Canon John Baycroft  
Rev. Dr. Lettie James  
Dr. Helen Milton  
The Rt. Rev. G. H. Parke-Taylor  
The Rev. B. Prideaux  
The Rev. Dr. R. Reeve  
The Rev. Dr. D. Thompson

## FOOTNOTES

1. Anglican-Lutheran Conversations (London: S.P.C.K., 1973) p.7f
2. Evangelical Anglicans and the ARCIC Final Report (Nottingham: Grove Book, 1982 ) p.7.
3. Partners in Mission (London: S.P.C.K., 1973) p.6
4. Rahner, Karl The Church and the Sacraments, Trans. W.J.O'Hara (Freiburg: Herder, 1963) p.8
5. "The Study of Philosophy in Seminaries" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1972) p.7.
6. Macquarrie, John, "Structures for Unity" in Their Lord and Ours, ed. M. Santer (London: S.P.C.K., 1982) pp. 125, 126.