

COMMENTS BY ROBERT WRIGHT ON THE STORRINGTON DRAFT

These comments are disparate, many being minor points of drafting and a few being substantial. I comment on Storrington rather than Graymoor, since Storrington is the latest text I have received and because on the whole I like it much better. My numbers refer to Storrington paragraph numbers, not page numbers.

2. Middle of paragraph: "the Church of England came later to understand that Decree as a repudiation of its position": Do we really mean the Church of England, or rather "Anglican writers" or perhaps "Anglican theologians"? If we mean the Church of England we have to be able to cite some official document that said this, and if so what will it be? I do not see that any of the Articles clearly say this, but perhaps there is some other official document?

2. Third line from the end of the paragraph, at the beginning of the last sentence: What does "It" refer to--the narrower issue of justification or the wider issue of salvation? This is unclear. "It" must have a singular antecedent in the previous sentence.

4-7. These paragraphs set forth the four major difficulties or disagreements we claim to have been present at the time of the Reformation, over the topics of faith, justification, good works, and the church. Only one of these four paragraphs, no. 6 on good works, refers to "Anglican theologians" and names one (Cranmer). Paragraph 4 speaks only of Protestants, 5 of Reformation theologians (with a footnote about Anglicans), and 7 of Protestants. I am quite content to leave these references somewhat vague in the document, and we have covered ourselves in the first half of paragraph 2. But for the purpose of explaining this "agreement" once we finalize and issue it, I think it will be necessary, at least in the North American context, for me to have one or two specific Anglican writers of the 16th or 17th centuries in mind who can be cited for each of the four topics as examples, and in fact I think it would be good for the Commission as a whole to know in a general way what authors it is speaking of in these paragraphs. My own specialization is not the Reformation anyway, and at least in North America such authors are not everyday knowledge even among Anglicans. So, could the author/s of these four paragraphs please be prepared at Llandaff to identify who these English theologians were? My question also takes point from the comment of Fr. John Hotchkin of the U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops' Ecumenical Secretariat, who when I shared the draft with him asked, "How were these particular Reformation teachings engaged in an Anglican context?" I know this question will be asked later, and -- without changing the text at all -- I would like for us to have something of an agreed answer.

4. Has it ever been suggested that the difference between us concerning the understanding of the faith through which we are justified was related to the difference between the fides que and the fides qua? The paragraph does not quite say this, although the second sentence seems to hint at it.

5. In the second line of the first sentence of this paragraph, are the three underlined words intended to be a sequence? If so, should not "and" replace "or"? Or does the sentence mean that the

difficulty really concerned only two terms or words, the second being "justice or justification"? If the latter meaning is intended, then it would seem that "and" should be inserted before "justice". Would it make more sense, in view of what the paragraph says, to omit the word "justice" altogether?

5. Does the paragraph overall intend to say that the difficulty was about justification, or about righteousness (upon which justification depended)? It reads as the latter. Furthermore, it clearly identifies "imputed" righteousness with the Reformation theologians, but not "imparted" righteousness with the Catholics. Is this what we want to say, perhaps implying that Catholics comprehended both positions? I think it is more common today to identify the Catholic position at that time with the "imparted" view.

5. Footnote 1: A related problem. "Imparted" righteousness is introduced here, rather than in the text, and so is unclear. Do we not mean that the "habitual and actual righteousness" in the last sentence of the text of para. 5 is the "imparted" variety? If so, I think we had best say it in the text, by somehow introducing "imparted" into one of the last two lines of the paragraph. Furthermore, does the footnote mean that whereas the Reformation emphasis generally was on the imputed sort of righteousness (first half of paragraph 5), the particular Anglican approach balanced them rather equally in the way the footnote implies? The footnote says that Anglicans believed that imputed and imparted were distinct, but does it mean that Anglicans placed almost equal emphasis upon both? The Anglican position, the general Reformation position, and the Catholic position, are not sufficiently distinguished in this footnote and in the text of para. 5.

10. In the third line at the top of page 7, is "the gift and pledge of the Holy Spirit to every believer" placed in apposition to and explanation of Christ's definitive atoning work, or is it the second item in a series of three things that the Gospel proclaims? If the latter, which I suspect, then I think a comma is needed on the next line after "eternal life."

11. In the next to the last sentence, on the second line of page 8, what is "the gift on final perseverance"? If it is not a technical theological term, then it is vague: Does it, by using the word "final," refer to a perseverance at the end of life, or always throughout life? Furthermore, is it to be understood as the same as the "assurance" mentioned in paragraphs 4, 10, and 11 above, or is it something different? It is not a term commonly used among North American Anglicans. It does have a technical usage among some Protestants, as meaning "once in grace, always in grace," but there is significant debate about its validity or truth even among them today. For a modern Protestant theological study rejecting the doctrine and the term, see Robert Shank, LIFE IN THE SON: A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINE OF PERSEVERANCE (Springfield, Missouri, 380 pages, fourth printing 1961, 22,000 copies). Since its technical meaning and truth is controverted and its non-technical meaning here is unclear, it might better be omitted or find some substitute wording.

14. Fourth line from end, at beginning of last sentence, insert comma after "However."

15. After the disagreement about the relation between justification and sanctification has been set out in paragraph 14 and footnote 1, paragraph 15 then presumably states our common agreement on this point, but I am not sure that it does this as well as it could. In particular, I wonder whether or not the Commission believes that our Churches are now in agreement concerning the problem as it is so well set out in footnote 1? The Lutheran/Catholic dialogue statement (para. 156.5), for example, reached an agreement that "By justification we are both declared and made righteous." Is this what we also would say concerning the problem raised in footnote 1, and if so should we not affirm it more clearly either in paragraph 15 or paragraph 18? Or are we content to leave Catholics with the Council of Trent and Anglicans with the New Testament on this question, as the footnote implies?

16 & 22. Do we intend to capitalize the Eucharist but not Baptism?

18. Would we all agree that the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, rather than the resurrection, is the supreme sign of divine love and mercy? (line 5 ff.) If the resurrection were not mentioned here at all I would have no particular difficulty with the sentence, but as it reads it seems to force me to take sides, in a way that I do not wish to do, over the question of which is "supreme."

27. Kingdom is capitalized at the very end of the paragraph, but not earlier.

28. This paragraph as a whole seems rather platitudinous, especially the bold assertion near the middle that "The Church's mission will always involve the direct proclamation of the message of Christ and intercession for the world." Why are these two items linked in the same sentence? Also, is the paragraph as a whole intended to comprise all major points about the mission of the Church? If so, I suspect we can think of a few other points that need to be added. For example, the ARC-USA Agreed Statement on the Mission of the Church stated that the Church's mission includes the worship of God and the teaching of the Catholic faith. Should these be included here?

29. Fifth line, essential is misspelled.

My final comment concerns paragraph 24 of the Graymoor version, about which a number of others have already raised various questions, as well as the proposal of the Steering Committee (and others) that "the paragraph on 'Practices'" (presumably this paragraph) become a short detached Note." I think we have to ask ourselves carefully whether we are, by so doing, subordinating out of the text the real difference that still exists between our Churches on the question of the Church's role in salvation, which is the overall title of the agreement we assert we are reaching? As the document now reads it claims to be reaching agreement on four major related difficulties that separated our Churches, to some extent, at the Reformation, and I think it does a pretty good job of this. But there is another question that must relate to what our Churches presently teach, not

merely what they did teach several centuries ago in the midst of political controversies and without the benefit of modern biblical scholarship. But there is also a modern official Roman Catholic teaching on Purgatory and Indulgences, which has very much to do with the Church as sign, steward, and instrument of salvation (paras. 22-26 of the Graymoor text), and I think we need to be quite certain that we are agreed on this teaching, or that we are agreed that this teaching "need not in any way invalidate or qualify our agreement." (Julian Charley's proposed revision of Graymoor para. 24). Let me now excerpt in chronological sequence this modern official Roman Catholic teaching, to which our Roman Catholic colleagues are presumably committed, and then ask whether the Commission needs to reach some agreement about it.

From the Apostolic Constitution INDULGENTIARUM DOCTRINA of Paul VI (1967): "1. The doctrine and practice of indulgences which have been in force for many centuries in the Catholic Church have a solid foundation in divine revelation which comes from the Apostles...."
"2. It is a divinely revealed truth that sins bring punishments inflicted by God's sanctity and justice. These must be expiated either on this earth through the sorrows, miseries and calamities of this life and above all through death, or else in the life beyond through fire and torments or 'purifying' punishments...."
"3. ... The doctrine of purgatory clearly demonstrates that even when the guilt of sin has been taken away punishment for it or the consequences of it may remain to be expiated or cleansed. They often are. In fact, in purgatory the souls of those who died in the charity of God and truly repentant, but who had not made satisfaction with adequate penance for their sins and omissions are cleansed after death with punishments designed to purge away their debt...."
"8. The taking away of the temporal punishment due to sins when their guilt has already been forgiven has been called specifically 'indulgence.' While it has something in common with other ways of eliminating the vestiges of sin an indulgence is clearly different from them. In fact, in granting an indulgence the Church uses its power as minister of Christ's Redemption. It not only prays. It intervenes with its authority to dispense to the faithful, provided they have the right dispositions, the treasury of satisfaction which Christ and the saints won for the remission of temporal punishment."

From the new ENCHIRIDION OF INDULGENCES issued by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary (1968), under the "Norms on Indulgences":

"1. An indulgence is the remission before God of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven as far as their guilt is concerned. This remission the faithful with the proper dispositions and under certain determined conditions acquire through the intervention of the Church which, as minister of the Redemption, authoritatively dispenses and applies the treasury of the satisfaction won by Christ and the Saints."

"6. The faithful, who at least with contrite heart perform an action to which a partial indulgence is attached, obtain, in addition to the remission of temporal punishment acquired by the action itself, an equal remission of punishment through the intervention of the Church."

8. It is "the Roman Pontiff, to whom the dispensation of the whole spiritual treasury of the Church has been entrusted by Christ our Lord."

This new Enchiridion does provide specific indulgences for visits to the Patriarchal Basilicas, Catacombs, and Stational Churches of Rome, as well as to other places, and in addition for a number of other reasons including assistance at the first Mass of a newly ordained Priest. (The former indulgence of 100 days for those who devoutly kiss the palms of the hands of a newly ordained priest, both on the day of ordination as well as on the day of first Mass, RACCOLTA no. 676b, is apparently suppressed).

The new CODE OF CANON LAW (1983) in its canon 992 raises to the highest law of the Roman Catholic Church, now with the authority of its supreme "lawgiver" Pope John Paul II and no longer merely under the authority of the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary, the first norm of the 1968 ENCHIRIDION in exactly the same wording quoted above, and adds in Canon 994 that "The faithful can gain partial or plenary indulgences for themselves or apply them for the dead by way of suffrage."

Now all this is fresh teaching, newly proclaimed by highest authority in 1967, 1968, and 1983, not just musty old doctrines that were matters of controversy several centuries ago. It is certainly true that the 1967 and 1968 documents, with the abolition of mathematical counting and other points, marked a definite improvement over the old RACCOLTA, just as the 1983 CODE may be said from a Roman Catholic perspective to be quite an advance over the old one. But these are now fresh authoritative teaching, newly revised presumably in light of the best modern scholarship as well as with an eye to ecumenical considerations. Most of these points from the 1967, 1968, and 1983 documents are not noted in the Schreiter article or the Evans paper submitted to our Commission on the Purgatory and Indulgence questions (Schreiter: ARCIC-II 52/3 (86), p. 171; Evans: ARCIC-II 52/A (86), pp. 7, 15, 24). And they clearly bear upon the ways in which the Roman Catholic Church understands itself as sign, steward, and instrument to be "applying authoritatively" (canon 992) the salvation of Christ. And such teaching can easily give rise to news stories such as the one attached on the following page. Does this freshly proclaimed teaching "in any way invalidate or qualify our agreement"? I think we need to be quite clear about our answer to this, because, if we are not, others will be quite certain to ask us.

P.S. Does the attached article by Fr. Carl Peter, which has just been published, meet the concerns that Anglicans may have?

VATICAN TO ALLOW INDULGENCES BY TV

Faithful Who Watch Pope on
Christmas Will Win Release
From Sin's Punishment

By JOHN TAGLIABUE

Special to The New York Times

ROME, Dec. 18 — The Vatican, in an unusual shift in Roman Catholic devotional practice, said today that Catholics who follow the Pope's annual Christmas benediction on television or radio will partake for the first time in the plenary indulgence reserved until now for those who were physically present at the service.

Indulgences are a release by way of devotional practices from certain forms of punishment resulting from sin.

A plenary indulgence, according to Catholic teaching, represents a total release from the temporal punishment still due from sin after the guilt has been forgiven. It is ordinarily conferred on the faithful who are present at devotional practices with the proper intention and attitude.

In a single-page decree in Latin signed by Luigi Cardinal Dadaglio, who oversees administration of the sacrament of penance, the Vatican said improvements in electronic technology made the change possible. The decision, which the decree said had been approved by Pope John Paul II, seemed to reflect the Pope's openness to modern technology.

The decree said the ruling also applied to local bishops, who are permitted to impart the apostolic blessing to the faithful of their dioceses three times a year.

The Catholic practice of conferring indulgences was at the root of the Protestant Reformation and has been a bone of theological contention between Catholics and Protestants.

The decree, which was dated Dec. 14 but issued today, said those hoping to partake of the plenary indulgence would have to fulfill the same conditions as those physically present, including confession, communion, and prayer.

On Christmas day the Pope delivers his "Urbi et Orbi" message, "To the City and the World," in St. Peter's Square, and imparts his apostolic blessing. In recent years the ceremony has been televised to several countries. Until now, however, the indulgence accompanying the blessing has been reserved to those present in the square.

Reformation leaders such as Martin Luther objected strenuously to the widespread practice of granting indulgences in exchange for money contributions, which were often used for the construction of church buildings. Much of the money used to build St. Peter's Basilica was collected in this way.