



UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT ON EUCHARIST HAILED BY U.S. ROMAN CATHOLIC, ANGLICAN REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON--The U.S. Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation has issued a statement which "rejoices" in the "substantial agreement on the doctrine of the Eucharist" made public last month by an international Anglican and Roman Catholic commission.

The U.S. group, headed by Roman Catholic Bishop Charles H. Helmsing of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, and Episcopal Bishop Edward R. Welles of West Missouri, consists of representatives officially appointed by authorities of the two churches in the United States. Commonly known as ARC, it has been meeting since 1965. ARC concluded its 11th meeting, in New York, last week.

The international Anglican-Catholic commission, which was established by Pope Paul VI and Anglican Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury, began discussions on the Eucharist in January of 1970. On December 31, 1971, the international commission released a statement which had been approved at a meeting in Windsor, England, saying, "We believe that we have reached substantial agreement on the doctrine of the Eucharist."

The Vatican press office said at the time that the "substantial agreement" is strictly a "study document" which "commits for the time

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being only the members of the commission." It said the agreement "was not yet complete and that there are still essential points to be clarified."

ARC said: "While at this stage it (the statement of agreement by members of the international commission) has only the authority of the distinguished bishops and theologians who signed it, the statement will serve as an effective instrument for clarifying the degree of convergence to which the Holy Spirit has already led us and for understanding the terminology and emphasis which have grown up in our separate traditions on such subjects as Eucharistic sacrifice and Christ's Eucharistic presence."

"We believe that the Windsor statement," ARC also said, "will be of value not only to the two Churches directly concerned but to the growing Eucharistic consensus foreshadowed by statements in which members of other Churches have participated. All these statements have a background of profound study and exploration by scholars thoroughly faithful to their own traditions and can best be understood in the context of the documentation which lies behind them..."

"Approached in this spirit the Windsor statement represents...a long step in the direction of turning Eucharistic doctrine, formerly an obstacle to unity, into one of the main supports of a shared life in Christ. We hope that it will be widely studied and discussed around the world in all countries where our two communions live side by side."

ARC members also announced they had prepared a statement on Doctrinal Agreement and Christian Unity which sets forth methodological considerations that apply to the study of doctrine in general and in particular to the study of different, but not necessarily conflicting, doctrinal positions of churches engaged in ecumenical dialogue. They expressed the hope these principles will be helpful "to the clergy and laity of our two Churches

as they enter into the serious and prayerful study which the statement of the international commission deserves."

The ARC statement on Doctrinal Agreement and Christian Unity notes that theological language never adequately corresponds to the reality to which it refers; that within a single church one and the same formula often receives different theological interpretations; and that Christians who are orthodox in their faith may express it in varying formulations.

"Since no Church exists by itself in this world, every Church should listen respectfully to what the others find unacceptable in its own formulations, and consider whether its own official doctrinal commitments can be re-expressed in contemporary statements that remove the occasion for offense," it says. "In this way the Churches will be of mutual help to one another in their ongoing expression of the faith."

Participants in the ARC meeting in New York included Bishop Helmsing, Bishop William W. Baum of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Father Edward M. Egan, secretary of the Chicago archdiocesan Joint Commission on Human Relations and Ecumenism, Father Herbert J. Ryan, S.J., Woodstock College, New York, Father George Tavard, A.A., Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio, Father John F. Hotchkin, director of the secretariat of the Bishops' Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Fathers Daniel D. McKenzie and Edward McGlynn Gaffney, associate directors of the bishops' secretariat, and Father Avery Dulles, S.J., Woodstock College.

Also Rt. Rev. John Maury Allin, Episcopal Bishop of Mississippi, Bishop Welles, Rt. Rev. Arthur Vogel, Coadjutor Bishop of West Missouri, Mr. Peter Day, ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church in the United States, Mrs. Sherman Johnson, a theologian and Old Testament scholar from Mansfield, Ohio, Rev. William J. Wolf of the Harvard Divinity School, Rev. J. Robert Wright of the General Theological Seminary, New York, and

Professor George A. Shipman of the University of Washington, in Seattle.

During the ARC meeting in New York, members of the consultation met with Archbishop Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox Church in North and South America, who expressed his desire for the eventual unity of all Christians, and with the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is in the United States to give a series of lectures.

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