

International Commission of the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue

June 20-26, 1989 COMMUNIQUÉ
New Valamo, Finland

The International Commission of the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue agreed in the future to "concentrate its efforts on working towards an understanding of the theological foundations of ecclesiology."

It is with great joy and gratitude to our Lord that the members of the Commission, as it has been recently reconstituted, have met in Valamo Monastery, Finland, as guests of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Orthodox Church of Finland. We, Orthodox and Anglicans from all over the world, met in the hope that our work together would be fruitful, and would promote the growth towards unity of the Orthodox and Anglican Churches by enabling us to understand one another better, and to reach a common mind about the truth of the Gospel and the will of God.

Since the Commission last met in plenary in 1984, some important changes have taken place in its composition. The Commission now consists of 14 members and one administrative secretary from each side. New members have been appointed, so that some of us have taken part in the work of the Commission for the first time. In addition, new problems have arisen, particularly since the Lambeth Conference in July of last year, that seem to require study in depth. The Commission has therefore looked afresh at the method and subject matter of its discussions, recognizing that it has already produced an impressive amount of work both in terms of quantity and quality. Outstanding among the fruits of its work are the Moscow Agreed Statement of 1976 and the Dublin Agreed Statement of 1984. These statements constitute a mine of theological reflection which shows the extent to which the two Churches share a common faith in spite of their differences on many points. The Commission has agreed that in the stage of the dialogue which has now begun its work should be organized systematically. After comprehensive discussions on a number of key issues, it was agreed that the Commission should work on ecclesiology. As a first stage it has agreed to concentrate its efforts on working towards an understanding of the theological foundations of ecclesiology. We shall begin at our next meeting in September 1990 by discussing the following topics:

1. Image, Symbol and Language in relation to the Trinity
2. The Holy Trinity as Communion
3. The *Filioque* in relation to the Immanent Trinity.

We shall subsequently go on to discuss:

1. Christ and the Spirit
2. Christ, Creation and Humanity
3. Christ and the Church.

As always when the Commission meets, we have worshipped together each morning and evening, at alternate Orthodox and Anglican services, celebrated in the church of the monastery. We have enjoyed the hospitality of Archbishop John of Karelia and all Finland, Bishop Ambrose of Joensuu, and Archimandrite Panteleimon, Abbot of the Monastery as well as the warm welcome extended to us by the sisters of Lintula Monastery. We are grateful for the opportunity we have had, many of us for the first time, to come to Finland and to enjoy the kindness of its people, its natural beauty, its peace, and the wonderful light of its long summer days.

We believe that the hope in which we met has been abundantly fulfilled. Working together harmoniously, with a sense of genuine Christian affection for one another, we have accomplished successfully the task for which we met, and we now [look] forward confidently to pursuing our work next year.

Metropolitan John of Pergamon
Orthodox Co-Chairman

Bishop Henry Hill
Anglican Co-Chairman

New Valamo, Finland
26th June 1989