FULL-TEXT
Interconfessional Dialogues

CENTRO PRO UNIONE
"Ut Omnes Unum Sint"

AC-RC
Assyrian-Catholic

Website
www.prounione.it

Document Online
www.prounione.it/dialogues/ac-rc

AC - RC

JOINT COMMISSION FOR THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE
BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

PRESS RELEASE
Rome, 11 November 2001

The Joint Committee for Theological Dialogue (JCTD) between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East held its 7th annual meeting from 7-11 November 2001, at the Domus Internationalis Paulus VI in Rome.

The members of the JCTD first took notice, with particular gratitude, of the recently issued "*Guidelines for Admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East*" and the related article "*Admission to the Eucharist in Situations of Pastoral Necessity. Provision between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East*" (in: *L'Osservatore Romano,* Venerdì 26 Ottobre 2001, p. 7-8; Weekly Edition in English, 31 October 2001, p. 4). Given the great distress of many Chaldean and Assyrian faithful, in their motherland and in the diaspora, impeding for many of them a normal sacramental life according to their own tradition, and in the ecumenical context of the bilateral dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, the request had been made to provide for admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, in cases of pastoral necessity. The principal issue for the Catholic Church in agreeing this request, related to the question of the validity of the Eucharist celebrated with the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, when used in its short formula, i.e. without coherent or "*ad litteram*" recitation of the Institution Narrative. After a long and careful study, from a historical, liturgical and doctrinal perspective, the Catholic Church authorities concluded that the Anaphora of Addai and Mari can be considered valid. Based on this recognition, the present guidelines subsequently were elaborated by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, in agreement with the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. They open the way for the competent authorities of both the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East to establish particular procedures and provide appropriate pastoral means to implement this Eucharistic provision, taking into account concrete circumstances and conditions.

Since the third phase of the JCTD program deals with questions related to the constitution of the Church, three papers were discussed regarding "Petrine Ministry": *Petrine Ministry in the New Testament* (Fr. Matthew Vellanickal); *Can two Primacies be in Communion? The Identity of St. Peter and Place of the See of Rome, according to the Church of the East Liturgical and Patristic Tradition* (H.G. Mar Bawai Soro); *Petrine Ministry in the First Millennium* (Dom Emmaunuel Lanne, o.s.b.). Both the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East acknowledge the particular role given to Peter by Jesus Christ, a role which can be defined as a "ministry of unity". Both their liturgical traditions, moreover, give witness to that particular position and mission of Peter. Some conclusions of this discussion will now be brought together into a draft text, which eventually might become a comprehensive JCTD document on the Constitution of the Church.

In continuation of last year's discussion on Christology, two papers were presented by H.G. Mar Bawai Soro: « *Nestorius of Constantinople; the relationship between the Church of the East and the context and content of his condemnation at Ephesus* », and « *Theodore of Mopsuestia and the relationship between him, his teachings and the Church of the East, with a special reference to the Three Chapters Controversy* ». As per the continuation of this matter, a methodological proposal was agreed upon, aiming at the elaboration of a JCTD document on « *Understanding the Christological Patrimony of the Church of the East* ». This document would be based on the already existing achievements, reached by theologians and academic colloquia, as well as on further historical and doctrinal research.

On Friday the 9th of November, priests of both the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, who study or live in Rome, joined the JCTD meeting. They all assisted the Holy Qurbana celebration, that was presided over by H.G. Bishop Bawai Soro. Afterwards they were invited for supper and met with JCTD's members. On Saturday the 10th of November, the JCTD meeting had the honour to welcome H.B. Patriarch Mar Raphael Bidawid, who happened to be in

Rome. His Beatitude underscore the importance of the JCTD's activities, particularly in view of the further rapprochement between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.

The next meeting of the Joint Committee is planned to be held in Rome, from the 5th to the 10th of November 2002. Two major themes will be on the agenda. First, regarding the constitution of the Church, three papers will be prepared on Petrine Ministry in the canonical sources of the Church, including the Code of Canon Law of the Latin Church, the Code of Canon Law of the Eastern Catholic Churches and the canonical tradition of the Church of the East. Besides, regarding Christology, a first outline of a possible future document on « *Understanding the Christological Patrimony of the Church of the East* » will be submitted for further deepening and completion.

The participanTs from the Catholic Church were: Bishop Marc Ouellet (co-chair), Archbishop Cyrille Selim Boustros, Bishop Antoine Audo, Reverend Father Sarhad Jammo, Reverend Father Matthew Vellanickal and Reverend Father Johan Bonny. The participants from the Assyrian Church of the East were Bishop Mar Bawai Soro (acting co-chair), Reverend Archdeacon Yonan Y. Yonan, Reverend Father George Toma and Reverend Father William Yakob. Metropolitan Mar Aprem was prevented to take part in this meeting.

http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiesa-assira-dell-oriente/commissione-internazionale-di-dialogo-tra-la-chiesa-cattolica-e-/sessione-plenarie---rapporti/en4.html]