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Anglican-Catholic Group Focused on "What Unites Us"

ARCIC III Completes 1st Round of Talks

VATICAN CITY, MAY 29, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Anglicans and Catholics are affirming that "what unites us is greater than what divides us" as a joint dialogue commission concluded its work Friday.

The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission met at the ecumenical monastic community of Bose, Italy, for a 10-day series of discussions, following a mandate from Benedict XVI and Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams when the two met in November 2009.

ARCIC I dates back to 1966, in response to the Second Vatican Council and as a result of the visit of the then-Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, to Pope Paul VI. The meetings last week began the sessions of ARCIC III.

The group was charged with considering the Church as communion, local and universal, and how in communion the local and universal Church comes to discern right ethical teaching. They were also asked to examine how commitment to restoring full visible unity is to be understood and pursued today.

According to a statement Saturday from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, ARCIC III decided to work according to a view of the Church "above all in the light of its rootedness in Christ through the Paschal Mystery."

"This focus on Jesus Christ, human and divine, gives the Commission a creative way to view the relationship between the local and universal in communion," the statement proposed.

It added: "The Commission will seek to develop a theological understanding of the human person, human society, and the new life of grace in Christ. This will provide a basis from which to explore how right ethical teaching is determined at universal and local levels."

Tension

ARCIC will draw from Scripture, tradition and reason for its work, as well as the advances of previous commissions, the statement announced. And it said that some particular questions will be analyzed "to elucidate how our two Communion approach moral decision making, and how areas of tension for Anglicans and Roman Catholics might be resolved by learning from the other."

Anglicans and Catholics face an ecumenical dialogue rife with difficulties as the Anglican Communion forges ahead on the ordination of women and homosexuals, despite the dismay of some within the Communion.

In 2009, Benedict XVI established a new ecclesial structure for Anglicans who wish to enter Catholic communion en masse. The first of these structures, the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, has been established in England and Wales, with a group of Anglican clergy set to be ordained Catholic priests beginning this Saturday.

On ZENIT's Web page:

Full text of Pontifical Council statement: www.zenit.org/article-32706?l=english