

ECUMENICAL TRENDS

Vol 47 No 1 ■ Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute ■ January 2018

A Ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement

Models of Ecumenism: Recent Anglican-Lutheran Dialogues and their Successful Attainment of Full Communion in the U.S., Canada, and Northern Europe

By Elizabeth M. Smith

*Editor's Note: What follows are the second two parts of a four part series by Dr. Elizabeth Smith, entitled **Apostolic Succession as a Central Issue in Ecumenical Dialogues among Anglicans, Lutherans and Catholics**, the theme of Dr. Smith's doctoral dissertation. **Ecumenical Trends** is pleased to present these papers.*

An under-discussed conversation among Anglicans and Lutherans in the U.S., Canada, and Northern Europe succeeded in attaining their full communion between the Anglican or Episcopal and Lutheran Churches in these locations. Extreme differences in each denomination's ecclesiology of apostolic succession created an impasse that seemed insurmountable. While there have been many dialogues among these denominations, the ones mentioned in this article led to full communion.

First, a mention of the insurmountable obstacle. As mentioned in the first article in this series, the Anglican/Episcopalian communion believes the historic succession of bishops to be constitutive of a legitimate Christian communion. Legitimacy in office constitutes legitimacy of apostolic teaching. On the other hand, the Lutheran communion understands apostolic succession in a broader sense;

namely, the entire Church, as protector and proclaimer of the Gospel, stands in historic succession to what has been handed down through successive generations of Christians. Anglicans inherited from their Catholic heritage an emphasis on the historic episcopate as the essential form of apostolic succession. Lutherans, on the other hand, have historically rejected the idea that apostolic succession must be understood in terms of the historic succession of bishops, instead emphasizing successive faithfulness to the entire Gospel as the way to ensure that the Church is apostolic.¹

The second article in this series explored the degree to which each denomination is justified in its claim about
continued on page 2

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☪ IN THIS ISSUE ☪

Models of Ecumenism: Recent Anglican-Lutheran Dialogues and their Successful Attainment of Full Communion in the U.S., Canada, and Northern Europe

Elizabeth M. Smith.....1

A Way Forward: The Impasse Regarding Apostolic Succession between Catholics and Protestants and the Possibility of a Solution in the Concepts "Broad" and "Narrow"

Elizabeth M. Smith.....7

Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to a Delegation of the Lutheran World Federation

Thursday, 7 December 2017.....12

apostolic succession. Scripture is vague about the nature of apostolic succession. Key passages give a clear basis for what the Tradition more fully articulated as a theology of apostolic succession – and the important role of historic episcopal succession – in the centuries following the writing of Scripture. Different emphases on the degree to which Tradition is revelatory, however, mean that Catholics and Anglicans are likely to emphasize the office of bishop and succession in legitimate office to a greater degree than Lutherans, who will place more emphasis in what is present in Scripture alone and less on how the Tradition developed.

Even with these differences keeping Anglicans and Lutherans from entering full communion prior to the 1990s, they finally did enter full communion in the U.S., Canada, and Northern Europe during this time. Apostolic succession was the topic that was the most difficult on which to find common ground. This article explores the avenues these conversations took to overcome the impasse. The final article in this series will explore what Catholicism can learn from these theological moves.

The Primary Documents in Europe

In Europe, the 1988 German document *The Meissen Agreement Texts: On the Way to Visible Unity*² represents a German-Church of England discussion, and while it did not lead to full communion, it is only five years later that joint work between the British and Irish Anglican Churches together with the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches resulted in the 1993 document *Together in Mission and Ministry: The Porvoo Common Statement with Essays*,³ which did.

The *Meissen Report* sees itself and its “growing together” as “part of a wider movements towards unity within the one Ecumenical Movement. It resulted in the Church of England and the Evangelical Churches in East and West Germany entering “mutual Eucharistic hospitality, a limited degree of sharing ordained ministry, occasional joint celebrations of the Eucharist and a commitment to common life and mission.”⁴

Porvoo stemmed from talks that began in 1988 between the churches of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales and

all the Nordic and Baltic churches.⁵ In 1989, the Church of England and Nordic and Baltic churches (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia) begin conversations; Anglican churches in Ireland, Scotland and Wales and the Church of Lithuania join shortly after.⁶ In 1989, the first Anglican bishop participated “in a consecration of a Finnish bishop First participation by an Anglican bishop in a Baltic consecration.”⁷ It led to a relationship of full communion and mutual recognition of ministries among the churches⁸ that “would bring the majority of Christians in Northern Europe (about 50,000,000) into full communion.” By 1996, “ten of the twelve churches involved have accepted this report’s proposals, either unanimously or with a very substantial majority. Only one church has not approved the report (Denmark). And one decision is still missing (Latvia).”⁹

The *Porvoo* statement examined doctrinal agreements reached in previous dialogues and focused specifically on the problem of episcopal ministry in relation to historic succession.¹⁰

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The Primary Documents in Canada

In Canada, *Called to Full Communion: A Study Resource for Lutheran-Anglican Relations Including the Waterloo Declaration*¹¹ (1998) (Hereafter *Called to Full Communion*) represents work done by the Joint Working Group of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada in December of 1997. It is the document that announced full communion.

continued on page 3

Ecumenical Trends

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Manuscripts sent to the editor should be in either WordPerfect or Microsoft Word. It is preferable to electronically transfer submitted texts using the software above via e-mail to jlgeii@aol.com. *Ecumenical Trends* is published eleven times a year (monthly except August) by the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute. *Ecumenical Trends* is a member of the Associated Church Press and the Catholic Press Association. This periodical is indexed in the Catholic Periodical and Literature Index (CPLI), a product of the American Theological Library Association, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606, USA. email atla@atla.com, www. [Http://www.atla.com](http://www.atla.com). Microfilm copies are available from National Archive Publishing Company: P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. Subscription Rates: Print and digital version, US Domestic \$30.00 USD/1 yr; \$56.00 USD/2 yrs. Canadian & Foreign \$40.00 USD/1 yr.; \$66.00 USD/2yrs. Digital version only: \$15.00/ 1 yr. Bulk rates are available upon request. Address for Subscriptions: Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute PO Box 333, Garrison, NY 10524-0333 (ISSN 0360 9073) Periodicals Postage Paid at Garrison, NY 10524 and additional Mailing Offices. Website: www.geii.org

In 1983, Lutherans and Anglicans “met to discuss the implications for the churches in Canada of the ongoing dialogue between Lutherans and Episcopalians in the United States. From this meeting emerged the Canadian Lutheran-Anglican Dialogue (CLADI), whose first series of meetings led to the publication of its Report and Recommendations (April, 1986).”¹² The report included “the background to the dialogue; Agreed Statements on Justification, the Eucharist,”¹³ in addition to “declaring agreement in the faith and calling for extensive cooperation between the two churches, including an interim agreement on sharing the Eucharist.”¹⁴ In 1989 a second series of discussions (CLAD II) resulted in the interim Sharing of the Eucharist and common life in mission and service,¹⁵ which we see is a common first step in entering full communion. 1995 witnessed Canada establishing a joint working group in order “to bring forward proposals for full communion by 2001.”¹⁶ This same year, a Canadian evaluation of their Agreement on Interim Sharing of the Eucharist called “for mutual recognition of each other’s members without requiring reconfirmation, and extends the possibilities for pastors/priests to serve in each other’s churches when both bishops agree.”¹⁷

Called to Full Communion spends an extensive number of pages offering contextual information about the two communions in Canada at the time. It highlights that “the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the largest Lutheran body in Canada...is a member church of the Lutheran World Federation. Other Lutheran church bodies, namely Lutheran Church – Canada (Missouri Synod), Wisconsin Synod, Lutheran Brethren, and others, are not part of the conversations.”¹⁸ It acknowledges the extent to which the conversations taking place in Canada are “paralleled by agreements agreed to in Europe and under consideration in the United States, and there are ongoing conversations and common work in other places such as Namibia, Tanzania, and Malaysia.”¹⁹

The Primary Documents in the U.S.

In a 1984 report on the historic episcopate, the Lutheran churches in the Lutheran Council in the U.S. reaffirmed the traditional Lutheran position “that the historic succession of bishops is not essential for the office of the ministry.”²⁰ Yet, Lutheran and Episcopal churches in the U.S. moved in 1986 into “interim Eucharistic fellowship.”²¹

The Division of Theological Studies, Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., and the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations of the Episcopal Church conversed with each other beginning in the 1970s, realizing large areas of agreement while naming the hurdle of apostolic succession. While their 1991 document *Toward Full Communion And “Concordat of Agreement”*: Lutheran Episcopal Dialogue Series III²² and the accompanying *Concordat of Agreement: Supporting*

Essays (1995)²³ was rejected in 1997 by just six votes, its revision, a 1999 document *Called to Common Mission: A Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the Concordat of Agreement* (hereafter *Called to Common Mission*)²⁴ was adopted by both the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church and led to full communion. It was approved by the Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA August 1999 and by the General Convention of the ECUSA in July 2000. It went into effect January 1, 2001.²⁵ This revision only slightly amended the rejected *Concordat*.

In 1997, the only two Lutherans to vote against the Concordat created a “dissenting report in which they objected that the historic episcopate is made [in the document] to be a necessity for church fellowship and thus essential to the unity of the church...To introduce the historic episcopate into the ELCA under the terms of this ‘Concordat’ is to make an *adiaphoron* into a matter of necessity.”²⁶

What sense is to be made of the rejection of the first proposal? Francis Sullivan regards it in a positive light, noticing that it was only “the next day [that] the Churchwide Assembly passed overwhelmingly a resolution ‘to seek conversations with the Episcopal Church, building on the degree of consensus achieved at this assembly.’”²⁷ Thomas Baima emphasizes the lessons to be learned from the rejected proposal, emphasizing certain

lessons [that] could not have been learned in any other way and thus the Concordat vote in the 1997 ELCA Churchwide Assembly can be considered as a laboratory of ecumenism. This event allows scholars of the ecumenical movement to acquire data and to make observations on the methods and processes of the bilateral dialogue.²⁸

In particular, he suggests that it tells us that even after thirty years of dialogue, the theology emphasizing the importance of the historic episcopate had not been received into the mind of the ELCA. Second, it indicates the extent to which each church had maintained and developed a separate notion of ministry.

International Primary Documents

In addition to the aforementioned regional documents, noteworthy are international documents not representing one particular country or region. *The Niagara Report: Report of the Anglican-Lutheran Consultation on Episcopate 1987*²⁹ (1988) (Hereafter *The Niagara Report*) and the 2003, *Growth in Communion: Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group 2000-2002*³⁰ (Hereafter *Growth in Communion*) are central to this discussion.

Articulation of the Impasse

The Anglican/Episcopalian communion sees itself as standing in the line of apostolic succession because their

continued on page 4

bishops are part of an unbroken line of ordination by the laying on of hands by bishops ordained by bishops ordained by bishops (etc.) ordained by the original bishops, the apostles. As one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, the Anglican/Episcopalian communion believes this historic succession of bishops to be constitutive of a legitimate Christian communion. On the other hand, the Lutheran communion understands apostolic succession in a broader sense; namely, it is succession of the entire apostolic faith. Thus, Lutheran ministers to be ordained “legitimately” by Anglican/Episcopalian bishops is to require something unnecessary and to fail to recognize that Lutherans stand in legitimate succession in a broader sense.

Toward Full Communion (U.S., 1982) summarizes that:

The historic impasse, as we have inherited it, seems simple but irreconcilable. If Anglicans insist on the historic episcopate as an essential dimension of the church’s catholicity and therefore as a pre-condition for full communion, then Lutherans insist that something is being added to the gospel; and therefore the gospel itself is being undermined if not actually vitiated.³¹

In other words, “Anglicans are convinced that catholicity is being compromised. Lutherans are convinced that ‘evangelicity’ (the gospel) is being compromised.”³²

As one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, the Anglican/Episcopalian communion believes this historic succession of bishops to be constitutive of a legitimate Christian communion.

A Way Forward: A Legitimate Diversity

One method in the primary documents is emphasizing a “legitimate diversity”³³ in practices. This method does not aim to change either Church’s theology, but offers yet a way to sit comfortably with them.

The *Porvoo Common Statement* (Europe, 1993) points out, “The Holy Spirit bestows on the community diverse and complementary gifts.”³⁴ Although not uniform in their understandings of the historic episcopate, *Porvoo* urges churches to consider that “visible unity, however, should not be confused with uniformity.”³⁵ We see a similar method in *Toward Full Communion* (US, 1991) which states, “Both Lutherans and Anglicans recognize that the ordained ministry in its various developed forms, including the episcopate, is a gift of God to the church. And both of us agree that the

historic episcopate can be ‘locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.’”³⁶

Growth in Communion (international, 2003) states, “Within each Communion, there are diverse traditions of theological method and of spirituality and liturgy. Such diversity is understood to be a desirable dimension of the catholicity of the Church.”³⁷ It is this document which uses the specific phrase, “legitimate diversity,” in stating, “Within each Communion mechanisms are evolving which can assist with the task of discernment of legitimate diversity.”³⁸ Without attempting to negate the significance of the historic episcopate, it acknowledges that “some differences cause strains within each Communion as well as between Churches of the two Communion. They are potentially or presently Church dividing and require ongoing dialogue.”³⁹

A Way Forward: Highlighting Existing Unity

Another method seen in the primary documents is characterizing their relationship as already deeply united. *Called to Full Communion* (Canada, 1998) cites a piece written for the first joint Eucharist service in 1993, “A Tale of Two Sisters: A Reflection on Christian Unity,” which portrays each communion as a sister who grew up in a different country to rediscover the other as adults.⁴⁰ It goes on to say that “Lutherans and Anglicans are graced in that we can respond to this prayer for unity without having experienced formal separation from one another. We share a common heritage as catholic churches of the Reformation.”⁴¹

The *Porvoo Common Statement* (Europe, 1993) begins with the notion of familial rediscovery stating, “Through the gracious leading of God Anglicans and Lutherans all over the world are sharing together in mission and service, and discovering how much they have in common.”⁴² It, too, makes a lengthy list detailing commonalities among the two denominations.⁴³

The Niagara Report, (international, 1998) lists several “affirmations” articulating the “common sharing of fundamental beliefs and practices.”⁴⁴ *The Pullach Report* (international, 1972) offers a similarly extensive list of ecclesiological commonalities.⁴⁵ The *Concordat of Agreement* (US, 1991 precursor to the 1999 revision which was accepted) perhaps treats this theme most succinctly: “We receive with thanksgiving the gift of unity which is already given in Christ.”⁴⁶

Accommodations and Adaptations Offered by Lutherans

Beyond merely looking at the existing division in a new light, these dialogues reflect a willingness on behalf of both sides to adapt theologically and in praxis to accommodate

continued on page 5

Beyond merely looking at the existing division in a new light, these dialogues reflect a willingness on behalf of both sides to adapt theologically and in praxis to accommodate what is vital to the other.

what is vital to the other. The main feature of Lutheran accommodations is acknowledging the significance of historic succession or recognizing themselves in it.

Called to Full Communion (Canada, 1998) emphasizes the extent to which Lutherans, by participating in the laying on of hands, by having bishops, and by standing in line with the historic episcopate, would do so in continuity with, and not in opposition to, its own history. It states,

Lutherans wonder, “Will the Declaration change the role of Lutheran bishops?” The ELCIC has had bishops since its inauguration in 1986, and one of its predecessor bodies has had bishops since 1980. Bishops currently are installed by a liturgical rite that has come to include the laying on of hands by the national bishop and synod bishops.⁴⁷

Sure to highlight that “it was because of particular historical circumstances, and not for theological reasons, that some Lutheran churches did not have bishops ordained in exact continuity by the laying on of hands by other bishops,”⁴⁸ *Called to Full Communion* offers the Lutheran communion a way to adopt historic succession without highlighting it as a theological accommodation.

The *Concordat of Agreement* (U.S., 1991) failed to pass in 1997 in the Churchwide Assembly at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by just six votes, but the Lutheran proposal for its revision, entitled *Called to Common Mission*, was accepted in 1999. In this document, Lutherans express a desire to be grafted into legitimate succession so important to The Episcopal Church through joint ordinations. Thus, the ELCA “promise(s) to include regularly one or more bishops of the other church to participate in the laying-on-of-hands at the ordinations/installations of their own bishops.”⁴⁹ Though the text immediately indicates that this act would be a “sign, though not a guarantee of the unity and apostolic continuity of the whole church,”⁵⁰ to agree to this is extraordinary.

There was only a slight change from the *Concordat* to the amended *Called to Common Mission*. The *Concordat* called for three Episcopal bishops to be present at Lutheran ordinations, while *Called to Common Mission* calls for three

bishops in historical succession, only one of whom would be from the Episcopal Church. Thus, the ELCA could invite bishops from Sweden and Finland, whose succession the Anglicans recognize to be present, to participate in the laying-on-of-hands as part of the event.

Porvoo (Europe, 1993) acknowledges that the historic episcopate does not guarantee apostolic succession, but proclaims that “all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession. This means that those churches in which the sign has at some time not been used are free to recognize the value of the sign and should embrace it without denying their own apostolic continuity.”⁵¹

Although the Lutheran communion approached these accommodations with a certain degree of reluctance based mainly on the concern that it would unintentionally admit illegitimacy to the existing order of Lutheran ordinations, it is a true model of ecumenism to witness such accommodations. The Anglican/Episcopalian side has made similar accommodations worthy of praise.

Accommodations and Adaptations Offered by Anglicans/Episcopalians

The central theme of the Anglican accommodations offered in the primary documents is that of a broader definition of apostolic succession than merely historic succession. They acknowledge that the office of bishop (and hence the historic episcopate) has gone through development, rather than remaining unchanged, throughout Christian history and that historic succession does not guarantee apostolic fidelity. These statements create space for them to agree to acknowledge legitimacy of existing Lutheran ordinations.

The *Concordat* states that “the Episcopal Church hereby recognizes now the full authenticity of the ordained ministries presently existing within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.”⁵² We see in *Called to Common Mission* (U.S., 1999) a commitment that the Episcopal Church “recognizes the ministers ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its predecessor bodies as fully authentic.”⁵³ In so doing, it acknowledges that the episcopate must always serve the gospel, repeating verbatim the information contained in the *Concordat*.

Called to Full Communion (Canada, 1998) expresses a commitment on behalf of both churches “to welcome persons ordained in either of our churches to the office of bishop, priest/pastor or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations...without re-ordination.”⁵⁴

The *Porvoo Common Statement* (Europe, 1993), spends a great deal of time reflecting on the concept of the apos-

continued on page 6

tolicity of the whole church, a broader definition than simply the historic episcopate in the form of ordination through the laying on of hands. It states, "The threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons became the general pattern of ordained ministry in the early Church, though subsequently it underwent considerable change in its practical exercise and is still developing today."⁵⁵ Historic succession is thus but one part of apostolic succession, as "the continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be divorced from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called"⁵⁶ because "the whole Church is a sign of the Kingdom of God; the act of ordination is a sign of God's faithfulness to his Church, especially in relation to the oversight of its mission."⁵⁷

The Niagara Report (international, 1988) states, "It is the whole Christian Church which has been sent on its mission and been given the necessary gifts. God's plan is the unification of all things in Christ; that, and nothing less, is the goal."⁵⁸ Further, "Every member of the Church is an integral part of its witness and its mission; and every member has received a gift of the Holy Spirit so that the whole may flourish."⁵⁹ As such:

Study of the life of the early Christian communities reflected in the pages of the New Testament should make it unthinkable for us to isolate ordination at the hands of someone in linear succession to the apostles as the sole criterion of faithfulness to the apostolic commission... Thus to speak of 'apostolic succession' is to speak primarily of characteristics of the whole Church; and to recognize a Church as being 'in the apostolic succession' is to use not one criterion of discernment, but many.⁶⁰

The Niagara Report concludes, "The apostolicity of the Church is the mission of self-offering (not self-preservation) for the life of the world. The Church thus serves the reign of God, not the reign of sin and death. The Church serves the mission of God's suffering and vulnerable love, not a mission of its own devising."⁶¹ In highlighting that an emphasis on self-preservation through the historic episcopate somewhat negates the Christian call to self-offering, *The Niagara Report* shifts focus from questions of legitimacy to quest for unity. It then paints the separation of Lutheran and Anglican/Episcopalian communions with appropriate candor: "What evaluation is, then, to be given of a situation in which there is a material rupture in the succession of presiding ministers in the name of preserving the continuity of apostolic faith?"⁶²

The Niagara Report also makes mention of the fact that "the Reformers believed themselves authorized to act in this manner in an emergency situation, appealing to Jerome's position on the original unity of the office of bishop and presbyter. The authority of a bishop's office is thus present in the pastors. The succession of a presiding ministry is thus preserved, though in an unaccustomed form."⁶³

Growth in Communion articulates the following Anglican accommodations:

On the Anglican side, the following three features are understood to be crucial: (1) an awareness that the threefold ministry should not be seen as the only theologically possible ministerial form, but rather comes through as the structure which benefits the mission and service of the church in the best way, (2) a realisation that the church's apostolicity can be kept up also in times when some of its signs have been lost; (3) an understanding of the historic episcopate as 'a sign, though not a guarantee' without reducing this sign to a mere 'optional extra' in the life of the church.⁶⁴

Conclusion

The kenotic and charitable spirit of Christ is evident in the way both partner churches are willing to depart from the rigidity that was dividing them from their sister church. These denominations serve as a true model for the creative work of ecumenism, and these discussions offer a nuanced treatment of a weighty issue. Anglicans and Lutherans have set the stage for further dialogues with other Christian communions, giving hope for the unity of Christendom. 

Notes:

1. Francis A. Sullivan, "Dialogues and Agreements Between Anglican and Lutheran Churches," *Sapere teologico e unità della fede: Studi in onore del Prof. Jared Wicks*, Edited by Aparicio Valls, Carmen, Carmelo Dotolo, and Gianluigi Pasquale (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2004), 591.
2. *The Meissen Agreement Texts: On the Way to Visible Unity*. The Council for Christian Unity of the General Synod of the Church of England. Meissen, March 18, 1988. Occasional Paper No. 2. (Hereafter *The Meissen Agreement*)
3. *Together in Mission and Ministry: The Porvoo Common Statement With Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe. Conversations between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches*. London: Church House Publishing, 1993. (Hereafter *Porvoo*).
4. *The Porvoo Common Statement 4*.
5. C.f. "Dates of Interest in Anglican-Lutheran Relations," in *Growth in Communion*, 60-63
6. Fuchs, 542-550.
7. C.f. "Dates of Interest in Anglican-Lutheran Relations," in *Growth in Communion*, 60-63.
8. C.f. "Dates of Interest in Anglican-Lutheran Relations," in *Growth in Communion*, 60-63.
9. Ola Tjorhom, "Apostolic Continuity and Apostolic Succession in the Porvoo Common Statement: A Challenge to the Nordic Lutheran Churches," *Louvain Studies* 21:2 (1996), 131.
10. Garijo-Guembe, 72.

continued on page 14

A Way Forward: The Impasse Regarding Apostolic Succession between Catholics and Protestants and the Possibility of a Solution in the Concepts “Broad” and “Narrow”

By Elizabeth M. Smith

Summary of the Major Issues

As a Catholic looks at the Anglican-Lutheran primary materials surveyed in the previous article in this series, one major issue that seems to surface is the issue of how “narrow” or “broadly” to consider apostolic succession. The Anglican-Lutheran agreements accommodate a wider understanding of apostolic succession than merely a succession of episcopal ordinations. What can the Catholic Church take from this move?

In response to this, Catholic Church is likely to emphasize the degree to which there is an inherent danger, in this theological move, of understating the significance of the historic succession. Gassmann remarks, that while the *Porvoo Statement* “presents a solution of the problem of the historic episcopate ... Roman Catholic reactions are slightly worried, fearing that the concept of apostolic succession is watered down.”¹ What do the official Catholic documents say about the issue of narrow vs. wide understanding of apostolic succession?

Catholic theologian Richard J. Schlenker² comments that “the Catholic Church recognizes in the apostolic succession both an unbroken line of episcopal ordination from Christ through the apostles down through the centuries to the bishops of today and an uninterrupted continuity in Christian doctrine.”³ Although it does consider succession of the entire doctrine, he believes its emphasis on historic succession means that the “official Vatican view is narrow.”⁴

Francis Sullivan observes that, “it not merely a matter of canon law but a matter of doctrine for the Catholic Church that bishops must be ordained by bishops in the apostolic succession,”⁵ indicating that it seems theologically unjustifiable to consider apostolic succession apart from historic succession.

Ut unum sint, even in placing Christian unity at having the utmost theological importance in the Catholic Church, also demonstrates a commitment to what we are calling the “narrow” definition of apostolic succession, i.e., historic succession. It lists, as one of five “areas in need of fuller study before a true consensus of faith can be achieved,”⁶ the “Magisterium of the Church, entrusted to the Pope and the Bishops in communion with him, understood as a responsibility and an authority exercised in the name of Christ for teaching and safeguarding the faith.”⁷ Elsewhere, it states, “The Catholic Church, both in her *praxis* and in her sol-

emn documents, holds that the communion of the particular Churches with the Church of Rome, and of their Bishops with the Bishop of Rome, is – in God’s plan – an essential requisite of full and visible communion.”⁸

Catholic teaching on the episcopacy is most fully articulated in *Lumen gentium*. It mentions that Christ sent forth the apostles and “willed that their successors, namely the bishops, should be shepherds in His Church even to the consummation of the world. And in order that the episcopate itself might be one and undivided, He placed Blessed Peter over the other apostles, and instituted in him a permanent and visible source and foundation of unity of faith and communion.”⁹ It emphasizes that “through those who were appointed bishops by the apostles, and through their successors down in our own time, the apostolic tradition is manifested and preserved.”¹⁰ It is through the office of bishop that the entirety of the deposit of faith is guarded. The Church is apostolic in that it guards the faith of the apostles, as per the “broad” view of the episcopate. Nevertheless, “the Sacred Council teaches that bishops by divine institution have succeeded to the place of the apostles.”¹¹

On the other hand, Catholic theology is not willing to go so far as to say that all that matters regarding the concept of apostolic succession is a succession of episcopal ordinations. The succession of the whole college of bishops is of superior importance to individual succession. Burgess and Gros consider the above line of thinking in which “apostolicity is defined so as necessary to include apostolic succession through episcopal consecration. However, it is dubious that apostolicity should be so defined. In the first two centuries of Christianity apostolic succession in doctrine (fidelity to the gospel) was considered more important than simple succession in office or orders.”¹² They

continued on page 8

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concludes that “undoubtedly apostolic succession through episcopal consecration is a valuable sign and aspect of apostolicity, for in church history there is a mutual interplay between doctrinal integrity and the succession of those who are its official teachers”¹³

Burkhard describes the image of historical succession, a chain of episcopal ordinations assuring the validity of ministry, as “rather mechanical,” emphasizing that Catholic theologians are, more recently, “paying increased attention to the importance of apostolic doctrine.”¹⁴ Thus, he continues, “it is my contention that just as Roman Catholics and Lutherans had to find new language for new insights on justification, the same will have to be the case for apostolic succession.”¹⁵

Yarnold comments, “Few theologians would now wish to defend a narrow ‘pipe-line theory,’ which would base the bishop’s authority on the historical succession of episcopal ordinations alone without reference to the succession maintained by the Churches themselves.”¹⁶

Burkhard describes the image of historical succession, a chain of episcopal ordinations assuring the validity of ministry, as “rather mechanical,” emphasizing that Catholic theologians are, more recently, “paying increased attention to the importance of apostolic doctrine.”

Of special note is the thought of Yves Congar, who “came to consider apostolicity essentially as apostolicity of doctrine and apostolicity of ministry, stressing the intimate relationship between these two dimensions.”¹⁷ His writing emphasizes “two components of the notion of apostolic succession: valid ordination and authentic mission.”¹⁸ Congar’s ecclesiology is based on the entire “People of God” rather than the hierarchy; as such, he denounces legalism and emphasizes what he calls an “apostolic” rather than “ritual” understanding of the priesthood.¹⁹ Congar is “concerned with liberating the Gospel from outmoded sociological, pastoral, and liturgical forms.”²⁰ He believes that rituals and symbols can come to be seen just as “things” if we outgrow them, which gives Catholic thinkers permission to question whether the historic episcopate is such a thing. Fidelity to the form of something rather than the faith itself runs the “risk of things being cut off from the living heart of the Gospel.”²¹

Thus, we can see two strands of thought in Catholic thinking: one preserves a “narrow” understanding that requires historic succession for apostolic succession, while the other allows for a “broad” understanding of apostolic succession that might not include the historic episcopate and might more broadly refer to succession of apostolic doctrine. How are we to confront the two strands? Their interplay is most evident in Catholic reactions to the phrase “sign, though not guarantee” in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM). In the document, “apostolic succession in the episcopate is considered as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church.”²² The Catholic Church has responded negatively to the phrase, even while it seems to agree with the tenor of the phrase. It acknowledges apostolic succession to be wider than historical succession in the Vatican’s 1988 response to BEM in stating, “We appreciate the fact that ordained ministry is not treated in isolation but rather in its wider ecclesiological context”²³ It elaborates:

A number of questions on authority are raised for us by the BEM text. What are the constitutive elements of authority and order in the church? What is the nature and role of decisive authority in the discernment of God’s will as to the development of ministry in the church in the past and with regard to the present needs of the church?...Concerning episcopal succession, when it is said that it is a ‘sign’ of continuity and unity in the church, what does ‘sign’ mean here? What is the ecclesiological meaning of the episcopal succession for ordination? What is the precise difference and relationship between the priesthood of all, and the priesthood of the ordained? What are the ecclesiological dimensions of the authority of the ordained minister?”²⁴

Elsewhere, it praises the extent to which, in the document, “Episcopacy is rightly described as ‘a focus of unity’ (20), as necessary to express and safeguard the unity of the body (23).”²⁵ Catholic understanding of episcopacy is presented as having a strong focus on the role of the historic succession of bishops, such that the idea that it does not guarantee apostolicity is misleading. The notion that it is not a guarantee, it suggests, leads focus away from episcopacy to too great an extent.

And today, even churches which have not retained the episcopate are able to appreciate the episcopal succession ‘as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the church’ (38). It is said that there is willingness expressed among them ‘to accept episcopal succession as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church’ (38). The text speaks further on of ‘a need to recover the sign of the episcopal succession’ that will strengthen and deepen that continuity with the church of the apostles (53b). We agree that the ‘episcopal succession’ is of the order of the sign that can signify, through the image of historic transmission, the fact that the church is rooted in the apostolic church around Christ and there-

continued on page 9

fore shows its fundamental apostolicity. However, the meaning of ‘sign/expression’ needs to be clear. In the previous version, *One Baptism, One Eucharist, and a Mutually Recognized Ministry* (34), the text spoke of an ‘effective sign.’ This indicates better the unique importance of the episcopal succession for the edification of the church through the ages. This is immediately related to the meaning which the ministry of the bishop has in a Catholic ecclesiology: it is more than a function of oversight next to other functions and ministries. In his very personal ministry, the bishop represents the local church entrusted to him. He is its qualified spokesperson in the communion of the churches. At the same time he is the first representative of Jesus Christ in the community. By his ordination to the episcopacy he is commissioned to exercise leadership in the community, to teach with authority and to judge. All other ministries are linked to his and function in relationship to it. Thus his ministry is a sacramental sign of integration and a focus of communion. Through the episcopal succession, the bishop embodies and actualizes both the catholicity in time, i.e., the continuity of the church across the generations, as well as the communion lived in each generation. The actual community is thus linked up through a personal sign with the apostolic origins, its teaching and way of living. In this perspective, episcopal succession can rightly be called a *guarantee* (cf. 38) of the continuity and unity of the church, if one recognizes in it the expression of Christ’s faithfulness to the church to the end of time. At the same time it lays upon each individual office-bearer the responsibility to be a faithful and diligent guarantor.²⁶

What is key here is the way the Catholic Church is using the word guarantee. As Michael Root says, an Arian bishop ordained validly in the historic succession does not by itself guarantee apostolicity.²⁷ So it is obviously using the word in a more figurative sense. It clarifies this in the next paragraph when it states that, in ordination, “the reality granted is the power of the Holy Spirit (42).”²⁸ With the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Church reasons, a new spiritual relationship is formed, symbolized by the laying on of hands. Moreover, in the sign of the laying on of hands, “Catholics would like it to be stated clearly that ordination is not only a sign, but an effective sign.”²⁹ The efficacy of the sacrament of ordination, then, seems to be what Catholics take issue with regarding the phrase “sign but not guarantee.” The phrase seems to imply that a sign does not itself become or cause what it signifies, reducing the term “sign” to something that merely represents an external reality. Catholic sacramental theology, however, holds that for ordination and all other six sacraments, the symbols effect what they signify, such that the notion of signifying something without guaranteeing its reality is incongruous with reality.

It is, of course, plain that since a validly ordained bishop can manifest teachings or practices that stand outside of the apostolic faith (Arianism is a clear example), historic succession does not by itself guarantee apostolic succession.

It is, of course, plain that since a validly ordained bishop can manifest teachings or practices that stand outside of the apostolic faith (Arianism is a clear example), historic succession does not by itself guarantee apostolic succession.

Thus, the Catholic concern about the phrase “sign but not guarantee” seems to be more reflective of Catholic sacramental theology and the precise terminology therein than it is of the idea that historic episcopacy alone is a standalone criterion through which the Church is apostolic. Indeed, Catholicism shows its support of the belief that things other than historic succession constitute apostolicity when it states, in its response to BEM, that “the connection of the apostolic succession with the apostolic tradition, understood as ‘the continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles,’ in their witness, proclamation, celebration, service etc. (34) is legitimate.”³⁰ Indeed, it goes so far as to even say that “It will not be an opportunistic ‘recovering of the sign of episcopal succession’ that will solve the problem...The recognition of ordained ministry cannot be isolated from its ecclesiological context. The recognition of the ordained ministry and of the ecclesial character of a Christian community are indissolubly and mutually related.”³¹

This discussion raises differences between Catholics and Protestants over the sacramentality of ordination. This difference seems to be at the heart of the Catholic Church’s concern with the phrase “sign but not guarantee.” The document states, “Our view, however, is that ordination is a sacrament. The valid minister of this sacrament is a bishop who stands in the authentic apostolic succession and who acts in the person of Christ. We therefore ask the Commission on Faith and Order to reflect on the ecclesiological meaning of the episcopal succession of ordination...It is rooted in the sacramental nature of the Church.”³² The Catholic criticism of this phrase, then, must not be taken to mean that the Catholic position is that standing in the historic succession *does* guarantee that one stands in the apostolic faith. Rather, it should be taken as a sign that Catholic theology has a truly central place for the role of historic succession in the role of apostolicity, and that it has deep roots in Catholic ecclesiology and sacramental theology. In other words, it is necessary but not sufficient.

continued on page 10

One of the most visceral explanations of the “wider” definition comes from the Lutheran theologian John Rutowicz:

Should Lutherans care about so called apostolic succession? For the most part, the answer should be no. Lutherans have no problem obtaining or maintaining “apostolic succession” for the sake of tradition or for the sake of a weaker brother’s conscience. However, Lutherans ought not be in the business of obtaining “apostolic succession” in order to make some other group or organization see them as legitimate. Chasing after Roman or Eastern or Anglican approval through “apostolic succession” plays into the doctrinal errors of these churches. They make lists of successive office holders the test as to their own orthodoxy, rather than an examination of doctrine that is passed on. If Roman apostolic succession can’t keep Popes from kissing Korans or praying with imams in mosques, I fail to see its value. Likewise, Anglican apostolic succession hasn’t stopped the Archbishop of Canterbury from being an honorary Druid.³³

Thus, when *Toward Full Communion* makes the following statement, it is not merely indicating that apostolic succession is broader than historic succession. It is reinforcing the idea that obsessive focus on the historic succession may detract from true apostolicity:

Apostolic succession is ‘a dynamic, diverse reality’ embracing faithfulness to apostolic teaching, participation in baptism, prayer, and the eucharist; ‘sharing in the Church’s common life of mutual edification and ministry of Word and sacrament;’ and ‘continuing involvement in the apostolic mission’ of the church by proclaiming the gospel through word and deed. Apostolic succession is not to be understood ‘primarily in terms of historic episcopate.’³⁴

This is a concept the Catholic Church can benefit from considering, even if she ultimately decides this conception does not give historic succession enough of a role. To consider that separation from historic succession *for the sake of*, and not in spite of, the Gospel, is a Lutheran way of looking at the situation. Indeed, “the prevalent Roman Catholic view of apostolic succession presented above was unacceptable to the Reformers of the sixteenth century, in whose eyes the authority ascribed to the apostles’ successors was an obstacle to maintaining the purity of the gospel.”³⁵ Further, “John Calvin (1509-1564) contended that the claim of succession is vain unless those who make it ‘conserve safe and uncorrupted the truth of Christ.’ In his view ‘nothing is more absurd than to lodge the succession in persons alone to the exclusion of teaching.’”³⁶

It is in this light that a Catholic can read seemingly anti-Catholic statements as, “Both Lutheran and Anglican reformers rejected the Papacy as the primary focus of continuity in the Gospel”³⁷ and understand that this might be, in disguise, a helpful Lutheran contribution to sound Catholic theology of apostolicity. A Catholic cannot accept the con-

tent of this statement, but, understanding that it is grounded in a fear of papal idolatry for the sake of the Gospel, Catholic theology can appreciate its proper use.

The most recent international Catholic-Lutheran dialogue pertinent to the heading of wide vs. narrow understandings of apostolicity is *The Apostolicity of the Church*,³⁸ which represents the final meeting of the fourth phase of proceedings of the Lutheran-Catholic Commission on Unity (which began in 1995), held on September 22-30, 2005 in Cassano delle Murge (Bari), Italy. Led by co-presidents Dr. B. Harmati (Lutheran), Archbishop Alfons Nossol (Catholic), and Prof. Dr. Cardinal Walter Kasper (Catholic), the Lutheran and Catholic participants took up Catholic issues of apostolic succession.

The Apostolicity of the Church isolates the concept of universality as the site for the disconnect between Lutheran and Catholic understandings of the role of the bishop. It argues that whereas Lutherans, just as Catholics, “presuppose that the congregation assembled for worship stands in an essential relation to the universal church,”³⁹ the Catholic Church has a much more developed framework in which to understand the connection of the many local churches as the one church.⁴⁰ The document represents the most current literature on this topic, and points out that succession in faith is the essential aspect of the concept of apostolic succession; the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, signed by both Catholic and Lutheran churches demonstrates agreement in basic truths of the one apostolic faith.⁴¹ Where they differ, then, is on the historicity of their succession of bishops: “But, they [Lutherans] faced a situation in which for them the elements of apostolicity of ministry, that is, fidelity to the apostolic gospel and canonical ordination by a bishop, had come into conflict with one another, so that they had to make a decision. They opted for fidelity to the apostolic tradition, as they understood it. This should be taken into consideration when Catholics assess the development of the ministry in Lutheran churches.”⁴²

Then, this is the basis of the argument for a wider understanding of apostolic succession:

It is Catholic doctrine that an individual bishop is *not* in apostolic succession by his being part of a historically verifiable and uninterrupted chain of imposition of hands through his predecessors to one of the apostles. It is instead essential that he be in communion with the whole order of bishops which as a whole succeeds the apostolic college and its mission. Thus the consensus of the bishops among themselves is the decisive sign of the apostolicity of their teaching. Catholicity is the means and expression of apostolicity. If catholicity is a sign of apostolicity, then apostolicity is a condition for catholicity. Thus fidelity to the apostolic gospel has priority in the interplay of *traditio*, *successio* and *communio*.⁴³

continued on page 11

“They opted for fidelity to the apostolic tradition, as they understood it. This should be taken into consideration when Catholics assess the development of the ministry in Lutheran churches.”

In this vein, the document argues in favor of accepting a “differentiated consensus”⁴⁴ with regard to succession, Catholics emphasizing the historic episcopate and Lutherans emphasizing apostolicity in doctrine.

In discussing historic succession and ecumenism, it is clear that Lutherans seem to regard that which is to be handed on in apostolic succession to be the entire apostolic faith, rather than the episcopate in isolation. To be apostolic is to have a link to the apostles and what is entrusted to them. It is a holistic picture; nonetheless, it has special room for the identity of the apostles and their successors. Historically, Lutherans felt Catholicism negated the former for the sake of the latter, and they compensated by, in Catholicism’s view, doing the opposite. Yet, if there is appreciation on behalf of Anglicans and Catholics for the former, perhaps Lutherans can develop an appreciation for the latter, which, indeed, we see happening in the primary documents: “The Lutheran participants in these conversations recognize the churches of the Anglican Communion as true apostolic churches and their ministry as an apostolic ministry in unbroken succession, because they see in them true proclamation of the gospel and right administration of the sacraments.”⁴⁵ It is striking, to a Catholic observer, to see the Lutheran communion “granting” recognition of apostolic succession to Anglicans in this light; a Catholic sees the Lutheran communion through the eyes of what they lack and need to be re-given (historic succession). The Catholic Church should consider the fruits of considering what she might lack in the eyes of the Lutheran communion (a holistic understanding of succession). The Lutheran emphasis on what the Catholic or Anglican communion needs to be re-given, far from demonstrating obstinacy, demonstrates to the extent to which they, too, believe that “there can be no creation of an artificial reconciliation of ministries through negotiation. Because we are one in the truth of the gospel we cannot require something of each other which is not essential for salvation.” The center for all communions “is the gospel and its ministry;”⁴⁶ each has a particular emphasis on how this is to be safeguarded. Creative Christian theology needs to consider the value in seeing each communion being faithful to its own standard,

and in looking collectively at the group of communions as a system of checks and balances, lifting up what the other communions might not emphasize.

Perhaps historic succession, and a focus on it, is the particular gift of Catholicism, whereas a mindfulness of fidelity to the Gospel in its purity is the gift of Lutheranism; moreover, perhaps it is fair to say that both are a good and necessary part of apostolic succession in Christianity. This is to reinforce what we find in *Toward Full Communion* as it states, “For the future, we agree that if either communion should be able to receive the gift of the other’s particular apostolicity, without unfaithfulness to its own, the future of the church would be served... Any future unity of the church will be a unity of common confession.”⁴⁷

For both Lutherans and Roman Catholics,

The basic intention of the doctrine of apostolic succession is to indicate that throughout all historical changes in its proclamation and structures, the church in all times referred back to its apostolic origin. ...In the New Testament and the early fathers, the emphasis was obviously placed more on the substance of apostolicity, i.e., on succession in apostolic teaching. In this sense the entire church as the *ecclesia apostolica* stands in the apostolic succession. Within this general sense of succession, there is a more specific meaning: the succession of the uninterrupted line of transmission of office. ... It is in these terms that Catholics today are trying once again to develop a deeper understanding of apostolic succession in the ministerial office.⁴⁸

There exists within Catholicism, like Lutheranism and Anglicanism, room to consider that apostolic succession is wider than merely historic succession. It seems reasonable to say that fruitful to the Catholic Church in these discussions is attentiveness to the nuances and complexities of the issue. As Mary Tanner has said, apostolicity is a “many-stranded rope,”⁴⁹ not the least important of which is historic succession. Yet, though not unimportant, neither is it unilaterally important. This article has teased apart the many issues inherent in the Catholic Church’s response to the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues’ treatment of a “broad” understanding of apostolic succession.

The Catholic Church has much to take from the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues; this consideration of the nature of broad vs. narrow understandings of apostolic succession is but one of them. 

Notes:

1. Gassmann, 8-9
2. Schlenker, 111.
3. “Rome and Canterbury. The Vatican Response to ARCIC,” *The Tablet* 245 (December 7, 1991), 1523.
4. Schlenker, 119.

continued on page 13

Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to a Delegation of the Lutheran World Federation

Thursday, 7 December 2017

Dear Brother,

Dear Archbishop Musa,

I extend a warm greeting to you, to Dr. Junge, the General Secretary, to the Vice Presidents and to the Delegates of the Lutheran World Federation. In expressing gratitude for your kind words, I offer my congratulations on your recent appointment as President.

Today we can join in commemorating, as Scripture teaches, all that the Lord has accomplished in our midst (cf. *Ps* 77:12-13). We think in particular of the ecumenically significant moments of the recently – concluded Year that marked the fifth centenary of the Reformation. I am especially happy to recall 31 October 2016, when we prayed at Lund, where the Lutheran World Federation was founded. It was important for us to meet first and foremost in prayer, for the gift of unity among believers takes root and blossoms not as a result of human projects but by the grace of God. Only by praying can we care for one another. Prayer purifies and strengthens us; it illumines our path and enables us to move forward. Prayer is like the fuel of our journey towards full unity. Indeed, the love of the Lord, which we experience in prayer, sets in motion the charity that draws us closer; it is the source of our patient expectation, the motive of our efforts at reconciliation, and the power that enables us to go forward together. Prayer is in fact “the soul of ecumenical renewal and the yearning for unity,” the “basis and support” of all dialogue (cf. *Ut Unum Sint*, 28).

Prayer purifies and strengthens us; it illumines our path and enables us to move forward. Prayer is like the fuel of our journey towards full unity.

By praying, we can constantly see one another in the right perspective, that of God our Father, whose loving gaze rests on each of us, without preferences or distinctions. In the Spirit of Jesus, in whom we pray, we realize that we are brothers and sisters. This must be our continual starting point. From it, we can also look to the past and thank God that the painful divisions that kept us distant and in conflict for centuries, have brought us in recent decades to a journey of communion, the path of ecumenism awakened by the Holy Spirit. This has led us to abandon old

biases like those having to do with Martin Luther and the state of the Catholic Church in that period. A significant contribution has been made in this regard by the dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, initiated in 1967. Today, at a distance of fifty years, we can recall that dialogue with gratitude, and acknowledge certain particularly important texts, such as the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* and, most recently, *From Conflict to Communion*.

With a purified memory, we can now look with confidence to a future unburdened by past conflicts and preconceptions, a future whose only debt is that of mutual love (cf. *Rom* 13:8), a future which calls us to discern the gifts coming from the different confessional traditions and to receive them as a common patrimony. Prior to all disagreements, differences and past hurts, there is the present, foundational and permanent reality of our baptism, which has made us children of God and brothers and sisters of one another. Henceforth we will never again allow ourselves to be adversaries or rivals. Although the past cannot be changed, the future challenges us: we can no longer refuse to seek and foster greater communion in charity and faith.

We are also called to be on the watch against the temptation of halting along the way. In the spiritual life, as in ecclesial life, whenever we halt, we are always turning back. To be self-content, to pause out of fear, indolence, weariness or convenience in the midst of our journey to the Lord in the company of our brothers and sisters, is to refuse his invitation. In order to advance together towards him, fine ideas are not enough; there is a need for concrete steps and outstretched hands. That means, above all, spending ourselves in charity, looking to the poor and the least of the Lord’s brethren (cf. *Mt* 25:40): they represent precious signposts to us along our way. It will do us good to touch their wounds with the healing power of Jesus’ presence and with the balm of our service.

By this simple, exemplary and radical way of acting, we are called, today in particular, to proclaim the Gospel, the priority of our Christian life in the world. Reconciled unity between Christians is an indispensable part of that proclamation: “How indeed can we proclaim the Gospel of reconciliation without at the same time being committed to working for reconciliation between Christians?” (*Ut Unum Sint*, 98). Along the way, we are spurred on by the

continued on page 13

A WAY FORWARD:..., from page 11

5. Sullivan, "Dialogues and Agreements Between Anglican and Lutheran Churches," 588.
6. *Ut unum sint* 79.
7. *Ut unum sint* 79.
8. *Ut unum sint* 97.
9. Vatican Council, *Lumen gentium*: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 21 November, 1964, Papal Archive, The Holy See, AAS 57 (1965), 18.
10. *Lumen gentium* 20.
11. *Lumen gentium* 20.
12. "Eucharist and Ministry: A Lutheran-Roman Catholic Statement," *Building Unity: Ecumenical Dialogues with Roman Catholic Participation in the United States*, edited by Joseph A. Burgess, and Jeffrey Gros, (New York: Paulist, 1989), 114-115.
13. "Eucharist and Ministry: A Lutheran-Roman Catholic Statement," *Building Unity: Ecumenical Dialogues with Roman Catholic Participation in the United States*, edited by Joseph A. Burgess, and Jeffrey Gros, (New York: Paulist, 1989), 114-115.
14. Burkhard, 40.
15. Burkhard, 23.
16. Yarnold, 2.
17. Steger, 82, c.f. Congar, L'Eglise une. 214; idem, "Composantes et idee," 69.
18. Steger, 96, c.f. Congar, "Apostolicité," Catholicisme.
19. Yves Congar, *True and False Reform in the Church* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 4.
20. Congar, *True and False Reform in the Church*, 2.
21. Congar, *True and False Reform in the Church*, 47.
22. Kasper, *That They May All Be One*, 22.
23. "Roman Catholic Church Response to 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry,'" *Churches Respond to BEM: Official Responses to the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" Text 6*, Edited by Max Thurian (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1988).
26. (Hereafter "Roman Catholic Response to BEM")
24. "Roman Catholic Church Response to BEM," 9.
25. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 31.
26. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 33.
27. Personal conversation.
28. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 34.
29. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 34.
30. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 32.
31. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 36.
32. "Roman Catholic Response to BEM," 35.
33. Rutowicz, 25.
34. *Toward Full Communion*, 29.
35. Carlos Alfredo Steger, *Apostolic Succession in the Writings of Yves Congar and Oscar Cullman*, translated by Ruth C. L. Gritsch and Eric W. Gritsch (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1993), 25.
36. Steger, 31, c.f. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.2.2 (trans. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. John T. McNeill, LCC, 21:1043)
37. Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue, 33.
38. "The Apostolicity of the Church," Lutheran-Catholic Commission on Unity, Accessed March 5, 2016, http://www.prounione.urbe.it/dia-int/l-rc/doc/e_1-rc_ap-01.html.
39. "The Apostolicity of the Church" 285.
40. "The Apostolicity of the Church" 287.
41. "The Apostolicity of the Church" 288.
42. "The Apostolicity of the Church" 289.
43. "The Apostolicity of the Church" 291.
44. "The Apostolicity of the Church" 293.
45. The Pullach Report 90.
46. *Toward Full Communion*, 34-35 c.f. Paul Berge, "A Response to Bill Countryman's paper, 'The Gospel and the Institutions of the Church'" (Unpublished paper, Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue III, June 10-13, 1984), 2.
47. *Toward Full Communion*, 28-29.
48. "Eucharist and Ministry: A Lutheran-Roman Catholic Statement," Burgess/Gros, 118.
49. Mary Tanner, "The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity and Apostolic in the Porvoo Common Statement," 123.

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS..., from page 12

example of all those who have suffered for the name of Jesus and are already fully reconciled in his Paschal victory. How many there are, even in our own day, who are suffering for their witness to Jesus! Their heroism, shown in meekness and peace, urgently summons us to an ever more authentic fraternity.

Dear Brother, I cordially invoke upon you every blessing of the Lord. I ask the Holy Spirit, who unites what is divided, to pour out upon us his gifts of wisdom, meekness and courage. And I ask each one of you here present, please, to pray for me. Thank you. 

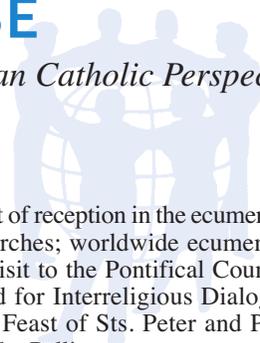
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11. *Called to Full Communion: A Study Resource for Lutheran-Anglican Relations Including the Waterloo Declaration*, The Joint Working Group of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada, December 1997 (Toronto, Ontario: Anglican Book Centre, 1998), hereafter *Called to Full Communion*
12. *Called to Full Communion* 4, 8.
13. *Called to Full Communion*, 64-66.
14. C.f. "Dates of Interest in Anglican-Lutheran Relations," in *Growth in Communion*, 60-63.
15. *Called to Full Communion* 5, 8.
16. C.f. "Dates of Interest in Anglican-Lutheran Relations," in *Growth in Communion*, 60-63.
17. C.f. "Dates of Interest in Anglican-Lutheran Relations," in *Growth in Communion*, 60-63.
18. *Called to Full Communion*, 15.
19. *Called to Full Communion*, 25.
20. *Toward Full Communion*, 20.
21. *Meissen agreement* 14.
22. "Toward Full Communion" And "Concordat of Agreement": *Lutheran Episcopal Dialogue Series III*. Ed. William A. Norgren and William G. Rusch. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1991. (Hereafter *Toward Full Communion and Concordat of Agreement*)
23. *Concordat of Agreement: Supporting Essays*. Ed. Daniel F. Martensen. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1995. (Hereafter *Concordat of Agreement Supporting Essays*).
24. *Called to Common Mission: A Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the Concordat of Agreement. An agreement of Full Communion with the Episcopal Church as amended and Adopted by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August 19, 1999*. Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1999. (Hereafter *Called to Common Mission*)
25. *Called to Common Mission*, 13 and 18, 7-9.
26. Sullivan, "Dialogues and Agreements between Anglican and Lutheran Churches," 585, c.f. *Toward Full Communion*, 111.
27. Sullivan, "Dialogues and Agreements between Anglican and Lutheran Churches," 586, c.f. *Ecumenical Trends* 27.4 (April 1998) 10.
28. Thomas A Baima, *Lessons on the Way Toward Full Communion: A Critique of the Doctrinal Decision-Making Processes of the 1997 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as the Basis for an Inquiry Concerning the On-Going Opposition to the Theology of the Concordat of Agreement*. (Doctoral Dissertation, Apud Pontificiam Universitatem S. Thomae in Ubre. Rome: 2000), 6.
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30. *Growth in Communion: Report of the Anglican – Lutheran International Working Group 2000-2002*. Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2003. (Hereafter *Growth in Communion*).
31. *Toward Full Communion*, 20.
32. *Toward Full Communion*, 20.
33. *Growth in Communion* 145.
34. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 19.
35. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 23.
36. *Toward Full Communion* 39.
37. *Growth in Communion* 138.
38. *Growth in Communion*.
39. *Growth in Communion* 153.
40. *Called to Full Communion*, 38, c.f. The Rev. Iain Luke, Humboldt, Saskatchewan; written for the first joint Eucharist November 1993.
41. *Called to Full Communion* 2, 7.
42. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 1.
43. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 32.
44. *The Niagara Report* 72.
45. *The Pullach Report*, Report of the International Anglican-Lutheran Conversations, in *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue*, 138.
46. *Concordat of Agreement*, 105.
47. *Called to Full Communion*, 22.
48. *Called to Full Communion*, 22.
49. *Called to Common Mission* 12, 7.
50. *Called to Common Mission*, 12, 7.
51. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 56, 29.
52. *Concordat of Agreement* 4, 99.
53. *Called to Common Mission* 15, 8.
54. *Called to Full Communion*, 12.
55. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 41.
56. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 49.
57. *The Porvoo Common Statement* 50.
58. *The Niagara Report* 15.
59. *The Niagara Report* 17.
60. *The Niagara Report* 20 cf. BEM, 35.
61. *The Niagara Report* 23.
62. *The Niagara Report* 54.
63. *The Niagara Report* 58.
64. *Growth in Communion* 134.

ANNUAL SUMMER COURSE

Introduction to the Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Roman Catholic Perspective

25 June – 13 July 2018 • Centro Pro Unione



AIM

This course is designed to introduce participants to the ecumenical and interreligious movements from a Roman Catholic perspective. It will offer a historical and theological overview of the issues that divide Christians as well as the bonds that unite them. The program will explore relations with other religious traditions. The course, which is in English, is for men and women who are in preparation for ministry or religious life, who are in the mission field, who are ecumenical officers or members of ecumenical commissions, or who are looking for a sabbatical experience led by qualified professors and ecumenists.

FACULTY

The faculty includes, but is not limited to, staff members of the Centro Pro Unione (Rome) and the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute (New York). The Course is "Recognized and Endorsed" by the Graduate Theological Foundation (USA) which can grant up to six graduate credits for qualified graduate students.

SCHEDULE

The schedule for the three weeks is the same Monday through Friday: morning prayer followed by three 60-minute lecture segments. The afternoons are for on-site excursions and lectures (*Roman catacombs, Basilica of St. Peter and excavations, St. Sabina, St. Clement, Colosseum, "Roman ghetto," Synagogue and museum, Mosque and Islamic center and others*). Weekends are free.

TOPICS COVERED IN WEEK I

Biblical foundations; factions and divisions within the Church; the modern ecumenical movement; Vatican II and the principles of Catholic ecumenism; ecumenical documents; dialogues overview;

reading of ecumenical texts; concept of reception in the ecumenical movement; World Council of Churches; worldwide ecumenical and interreligious organizations; visit to the Pontifical Councils for Promoting Christian Unity and for Interreligious Dialogue; Eastern Christianity. On June 29, Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, participation in the Papal Mass of the Pallium.

TOPICS COVERED IN WEEK II

An overview of the Reformation and catholic Reform movement, and exploration of the various dialogues which exist between the churches, their context and results.

TOPICS COVERED IN WEEK III

Jewish-Christian relations; Christian responses to people of other faiths; fundamentalism as a worldwide phenomenon; Roman Catholicism and Islam in dialogue; religions of the sub-continent of India; new religious movements; grassroots ecumenism.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The cost of the course is US\$300 (non-refundable) which is payable at the time of application. **Deadline for application is March 31, 2018.**

Upon acceptance of application, a list of possible lodgings in Rome will be mailed or faxed. Booking of lodgings is the responsibility of applicant. Housing cannot be guaranteed after application deadline. Transportation (from North America), lodgings and meals will be approximately US\$3,500 (from North America).

The Centro Pro Unione is located on the historic Piazza Navona in the heart of Rome.

Centro Pro Unione

A Ministry of The Franciscan Friars of the Atonement

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APPLICATION FORM

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Religious Affiliation _____

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Profession, Occupation or Ministry _____

Highest Theological Degree _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Please return this form with non-refundable tuition before March 31, 2018 to:

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