

REPLY TO "TIMES" ARTICLE ON CATHOLIC-ANGLICAN RELATIONS

VATICAN CITY, FEB 20, 2007 (VIS) - Made public today was a note signed by Catholic Archbishop John Bathersby and Anglican Bishop David Beetge, co-presidents of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), regarding an article published yesterday in the British newspaper "The Times" on the IARCCUM document: "Growing Together in Unity and Mission."

"'Growing Together in Unity and Mission' has not yet been officially published," the English-language note reads. "It is unfortunate that its contents have been prematurely reported in a way which misrepresents its intentions and sensationalizes its conclusions. The first part of the document, which treats doctrinal matters, is an attempt to synthesize the work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) over the past 35 years. It identifies the level of agreement which has been reached by ARCIC, but is also very clear in identifying ongoing areas of disagreement, and in raising questions which still need to be addressed in dialogue. Those ongoing questions and areas of disagreement are highlighted in boxed sections interspersed throughout the text. It is a very honest document assessing the state of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations at the present moment."

The note continues: "The Times article speculates about the Catholic Church's response to a possible schism within the Anglican Communion. It should be pointed out that the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has consistently spoken of the value of the Anglican Communion remaining a communion, rooted in the Apostolic faith, as indicated in this statement from 2004: 'It is our overwhelming desire that the Anglican Communion stays together, rooted in the historic faith which our dialogue and relations over four decades have led us to believe that we share to a large degree'."

.../IARCCUM/BATHERSBY:BEETGE

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