

Progress in talks on unity between the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches - Archbishops.

Good progress was being made in fostering unity between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, two Australian Archbishops said today.

The Anglican Primate of Australia, Peter Carnley and the Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, John Bathersby returned home optimistic from the second meeting of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) in Malta last week.

Speaking in Perth, Dr Carnley said IARCCUM was a vital instrument for fostering unity between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

He said good progress continued to be made in measured and deliberate ways.

"A year ago we embarked upon a carefully considered process under which sub- groups would continue to work on central issues between meetings of the Commission," Archbishop Carnley said.

"The sub-groups are tackling the task of recording the fruits of over 30 years of dialogue and the practical outcomes of that dialogue, as well as ways forward.

"Importantly, our meetings have been characterised by great goodwill and cooperation," he said. "We appreciate how much we have in common as we seek to further Christ's Great Commission in a troubled world."

Archbishop Bathersby, who is Catholic co-chair of IARCCUM, said the Malta meeting, held 35 years after the inaugural meeting of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission, sought to renew the optimism and hope of the original discussions.

"The meeting recognised that substantial progress had been made by the Committees of IARCCUM in areas of a common statement of agreement, of the reception of ARCIC (Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission) documents, and of practical initiatives to bring our two communions closer to the unity desired by Christ" he said.

"The presence at the meeting of Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, was welcomed and his advice, particularly in regard to the common statement was valued."

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