

*Diocesan Bulletin for Christian Unity
Archdiocese of Southwark*

February 2005

Vol 23, No. 71
80p



TOGETHER IN CHRIST



C O N T E N T S

Page

- 4 Mgr Timothy Galligan introduces himself
- 7 Sharing Our Thoughts – Developing Our Vision
Barbara Wood
- 11 Celebrating the 1400th Anniversary of
The Rochester Diocese, Canon Derek Carpenter
- 14 Terry Davies gives an account of his visit
to Rochester to celebrate ‘The Day’
- 17 Unity in Diversity, Canon Bill Clements
- 22 ‘*homonoia* and *koinonia*’, A Talk given by the
Rt Revd Dom Christopher Butler, 6 May 1960



EDITORIAL

Welcome to our February issue, and many thanks to all our contributors. We offer a special welcome to our new Chairman, Mgr Galligan, with gratitude for his introduction and for sharing his wide ecumenical experience.

Barbara Wood has kindly supplied an excellent summary of the listening and discussion process, which should be an inspiration to us all.

Canon Derek Carpenter and Terry Davies have given us a great insight into the celebration of the 1400th anniversary of the Rochester diocese. It was clearly a splendid occasion. May the diocese continue to flourish in the future.

Canon Clements has enriched us by sharing his talk on “Unity and Diversity”, including his setting out of some particular beliefs. We thank him for this, and for inspiring us in his sterling work for Christian Unity.

We are grateful for the helpful talk given by the Rev. Dom Christopher Butler which clarifies especially *homonoia* and *koinonia* and is still very relevant.

Please keep your contributions coming in. We need them!
Thank you.



**Mgr Timothy Galligan,
our new Chairman writes:**

Since Archbishop McDonald has appointed me to take up the chairmanship of the diocesan Christian Unity Commission in succession to Bishop Charles Henderson, the editor has asked me to write a little about my background and previous work. Before doing so I would like to pay tribute to Bishop Charles for generously guiding the Commission and the Area commissions since their beginning. I have been very struck, though not surprised, by the high regard the Commission members have for him.

Since January 2002, I have been Parish Priest of Sydenham in south-east London. Previously, after eleven years of seminary work, I became a staff member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in the Vatican. In fact, I took over that position in 1993 from our present Archbishop, who had worked there for eight years from 1986.

The Pontifical Council is the Vatican department which assists the Pope and the whole Catholic Church in the search for Christian Unity. During my time there, it was headed first by Cardinal Edward Cassidy, an Australian, and then by Cardinal Walter Kasper from Germany, both chosen for this by the Holy Father. The Council's staff came from around the world, including Kenya, Colombia, Poland and the USA, and each was charged with certain specific ecumenical relationships. Our tasks included working with Bishops' Conferences and their Unity Commissions, following the development of initiatives for Christian unity in specific parts of the world, assisting in and planning the frequent visits of church leaders to the Holy Father, and organising the many ecumenical

theological dialogues which the Catholic Church has set up jointly with other Christian denominations.

At the start of my time at the Pontifical Council, the new 'Ecumenical Directory' (The Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism) was published at the request of Pope John Paul II. The 'Directory' gathers together all the Church's norms about our search for Christian unity in the light of the experience of thirty years ecumenical engagement, and it is the handbook that is to govern all that we do ecumenically. It is this 'Directory' that guided the Bishops of Britain and Ireland in producing their own text, *One Bread, One Body*.

At the Second Vatican Council the Church declared that the search for Christian unity was one of its principal concerns. Over the forty years since then, the Catholic Church has been open to entering into dialogue with any other Christian community that wished to explore theological differences in the hope of their resolution. Some dialogues have been ongoing throughout most of that time – such as the international dialogue with the World Methodist Council, or the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC); others have proceeded in fits and starts – such as the dialogue with the Orthodox Churches; others again took place for specific periods with a more limited purpose – such as the dialogue in the 1980s with Evangelicals about mission (ERCDOM).

During my years at the Pontifical Council my particular denominational responsibilities concerned the Catholic Church's relations with the Anglican Communion, with World Methodism, and with the World Evangelical Alliance (formerly, World Evangelical Fellowship). As such, I was the secretary of ARCIC, of the Catholic-Methodist International Commission, and of a series of theological conversations with Evangelicals.

Like almost any time since Vatican II, with the possible exception of the very first years, it was a period of hopes and

disappointments. Opening up an avenue for discussion with the very important but decentralised world of evangelical christianity, for example, is potentially very important. While evangelicals differ greatly from Catholics over their understanding of the Church, there is the potential for considerable common witness over some of the most important moral questions of our time.

In those years, ARCIC managed to dialogue further about the difficult topic of authority in the Church and, in *The Gift of Authority* statement, the commission members came much closer than had been possible before to articulating a shared understanding of the Church's need for Papal authority. At the same time, however, the Anglican Communion was engaged in debating its own understanding of authority, and events on the ground were revealing just how far from having a settled shared view of authority it remains. The resolution about human sexuality at the 1998 Lambeth Conference illustrated this particularly clearly, with a range of interpretations of whether or not the resolution should have any bearing on official decisions taken in different parts of the Anglican world. The range of these positions reflected the lack of underlying agreement about what should unite Anglicans that has been so much in the news more recently.

At the local level, we aim to work within this wider context: attempting to respond to the Church's teaching about the centrality of the search for Christian unity and in fidelity to the principles and norms it has laid down; giving thanks for the discovery of what Christians held in common and the convergence of recent years, but without disregarding the real difficulties, some longstanding and others new, which still need to be resolved.

Sharing Our Thoughts – Developing Our Vision

Ecumenical work takes place in many different ways and at different levels. Recently both Archbishop Kevin (at the Southwark Unity Commission AGM) and our new chairman, Mgr Tim Galligan, (at Area Commission meetings) have shared something of their experiences, working in Rome at the highest level with Church leaders and theologians. In our Commissions we have tried to study some of the outcomes of the work done at this level: Documents from the Vatican, from ARCIC, as well as international and national statements and agreements have been on our agendas over the years. Educating and informing ourselves is part of our brief.

However, unless this knowledge is put to practical use the Commission is not doing its job. The great challenge for each Area Commission is: ‘How can we encourage, inspire and support those working at the local level in our parishes?’

The South West Area has been grappling with this challenge. We have been asking ourselves what we can do to help our Parish Unity Contacts (PUCs). How we as a Commission can be relevant to their needs?

The first step has been to listen to what they have to say. We called the process ‘Sharing our Thoughts – Developing our Vision’. At our special annual meeting for PUCs everyone was given post-it notes on which to write down first, three positive experiences of local unity work, second, three negative experiences, and third, something they would like to see happen in their area. These were all stuck onto a large sheet of paper on the wall and grouped into common topics within the three categories to give an overall picture of how the PUCs were finding their work.

It became clear that when PUCs felt supported their experience was positive. Such support could come from the parish priest, the

parish community, or other local churches. Negative experiences focussed almost exclusively on a sense of ‘working alone’ because of a lack of support.

With this overall picture in mind we divided into small groups to discuss together our vision for the future. Or to put it more simply ‘What does “good” look like in local ecumenism?’ It was clear that there was no lack of vision; ideas came up thick and fast. But the key theme was the role of the clergy. There was a profound feeling of sympathy for our parish priests who often feel overwhelmed by demands from every side. It was unrealistic and unfair to expect them to play an active role in the initiation or organisation of local ecumenical initiatives. What PUCs wanted most from their priests was, firstly, a real sense that ecumenism was taken seriously and that they had his blessing on their endeavours. Secondly, they wanted this support to be visible from the pulpit in sermons, and by enthusiasm in encouraging the congregation to participate in ecumenical activities. One way this enthusiasm could be shown was by avoiding holding ‘rival’ parish activities at times, such as Lent, when there was a special focus on doing things together.

Many of the ‘vision’ ideas will be on our agenda over the next year as we seek ways of supporting our PUCs in their important work. The issue of clergy support remains crucial and our task will be to encourage activists to seek to reassure their clergy that the kind of support that is required need not increase their work load, but is moral support based on trust and blessing.

Barbara Wood

A summary of the four areas of our listening and discussion process is given below.

Sharing Our Thoughts – Developing Our Vision

Positive aspects of local unity work

Supportive clergy.

Lay unity committee – with the blessing of the clergy.

The liturgical year provides a framework for action:

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity action / services.
- Lent groups / lectures.
- Good Friday processions.
- Pentecost prayer:
 - in one area there was a 24–7 prayer vigil.
- Combined Advent Service / Carols.

Other successful activities:

Youth working together – Traidcraft

Soul in the City

Christian Aid

Negative aspects of local unity work

Lack of support from clergy.

Change of clergy with sudden loss of support.

Clergy don't meet each other.

Apathy in the parish.

Feeling of working on one's own in isolation.

Many other activities competing for a few activists.

Lack of awareness about unity in parish.

Not enough to engage youth.

Lack of positive publicity.

No parish council or parish forum.

No local *Churches Together*.

Only 30% of deanery churches actively involved in Christian unity

Things we would like to see happen

More of everything:

- Sharing activities, ministries, worship.
 - More positive leadership at all levels.
 - Request for a Pastoral letter.
 - More education and information.
 - Involvement of young people through joint youth clubs and social events.
-

Ideas for the future

Key issue – clergy involvement.

The laity should take the initiative but the clergy should give their blessing and support from the pulpit.

Individual church activities need to be replaced by ecumenical ones by:

- sharing prayer / scripture / study groups.
- reducing own Lent activities to encourage ecumenical participation.
- Joint church study days.

Other ‘vision’ ideas:

Joint action to serve the community and address social issues,

- e.g. Asylum seekers, justice and peace issues.
 - meetings between parish councils and equivalent of other churches.
 - Social activities between churches to build up relationships.
-



**Celebrating the 1400th Anniversary of
The Rochester Diocese**
Canon Derek Carpenter writes:

After months of preparation, there were still many imponderables as ‘The Day’ drew closer, so many things that could have gone wrong, but at 9.30 a.m., as the sun shone and I saw the crowds streaming towards the Cathedral, I knew that it was going to be all that we had hoped for.

Thirty-five coaches or double-decker buses had been booked into the Coach Park, so we could expect fifteen hundred people at least; in the end we distributed over 4,500 badges. The Cathedral was absolutely full for the opening service with folk standing six-deep outside.

The Chatham Salvation Army Band’s music greeted the congregation; we sang ‘Let all the world in every corner sing’; replied with a South African response to a reading; heard prayers from young people; and were ready, with the Bishop’s encouragement, to celebrate ‘The Day’ as we moved out with the Band’s music again reverberating around the Cathedral.

Hundreds stayed, as they did throughout the day, to listen to a whole range of music from the Nave steps from the Choirs of our

Estonian visitors, Beckenham Parish Church, and the Zimbabwe Christian Fellowship, the Tonbridge Christian Arts' Group, and instrumentalists, including the violinist Devorina Gamalova and the Hammig String Quartet.

Hundreds of others moved outside to enjoy all else that was on offer. I only had time to pop into things fleetingly: to the Lectures which attracted good audiences; the cricket match, interrupted by the rain, but ending late in the afternoon with a victory for the King's School with two balls to go (but at least I had a chance to meet our visitors from Kent County sides of the past, Mike Denness, Brian Luckhurst, Graham Johnson, Alan Dixon and David Nicholls); the King's School where the stewards assured me that most of the seminars were well attended; to the Global Cafe where the presentations and singing throughout the day entertained hundreds of people; and what a sight to see the Mission Aviation Fellowship plane in the Moat; to the Castle grounds across which people were flocking to the Castle where youngsters were clearly enjoying themselves and where the bubble-machine produced 'little balloons' later to be followed by 1400 larger ones – and in the morning many were sitting in the sun listening to the Royal Engineers' Band. The only complaint I heard was that there was too much to do – so I knew we had got it right!

The Diocesan Staff sold their wares from the Diocesan Office (more than £2,000 worth of it, I'm told), and around the City the Morris Groups danced and entertained, joined by the Dickens characters and what appears on the video to be the diocesan fortune-teller!

The Cathedral was full for the guided tours. The expected fifty for the Book of Common Prayer Eucharist produced nearly 250 communicants which caused the only, but not unwelcome, blip in our timetable. The staff of the St Andrew's Centre were kept fully stretched meeting orders for food and drink.

The procession of banners, almost a quarter-of-a-mile long, applauded by the crowds in the High Street and preceded by the Salvation Army Band, was a colourful prelude to a splendid open-air Service under the hot sun, and the 1400 red and gold balloons drifting away was an unforgettable-sight.

It can be relived – or some of it can – on the video-recording which shows what a carnival day it was. And for those who stayed, or came later, Cleo Laine and John Dankworth entertained as rotating lights spilled colour over the Castle walls.

Many individuals and parishes have written to me to say how much they enjoyed it and I am very grateful that it was so widely appreciated. In the end, in spite of the headaches beforehand, I enjoyed it too.

On 18 July I went into retirement again, this time for good!

Terry Davies gives an account of his visit to Rochester to celebrate 'The Day'

In 597 AD, Augustine was sent by Pope Gregory to evangelise England. He founded the Diocese of Canterbury with his fellow-monks. Shortly after, he sent Justus on to found England's second diocese at Rochester in 604. So this year, on Saturday, 17 July, I joined a coach full of Anglicans. The coach was chartered by St George's, which has been the Parish Church of Beckenham for 900 years. Due to the expansion of the railways in the late nineteenth century and the growth of the population, Beckenham now has SEVEN Anglican churches.

Then I spent the day, not with just a coach-load of eager Anglicans, but with what seemed like 5000, all needing feeding. I was there to worship and to pray with them, and that is just what I did! It gave me great joy, and it was fun too! During the day, from ten till four, I managed to attend four services in the Cathedral, as well as several concerts, and managed to fit in a light alcoholic lunch at a pub cleverly placed about 50 yards from the Cathedral door.

At 4 p.m. I joined a large and swelling throng for the closing service. This was held in the open in the gardens of the Castle, looking threateningly Norman. The service was conducted by Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, assisted by his suffragan, Bishop Brian

Castle. The liturgy for the service was arranged by the current Rector of Beckenham, the Rev. Malcolm Hancock. The sun shone brightly for the whole service and for the rest of the evening. During his talk, Bishop Michael paid tribute to the Benedictine monks for their spirit of ‘hospitality’ and for their long years of service to Rochester Diocese until Bishop John Fisher and Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, were both beheaded in 1537. At the end of the service, 1400 red and gold balloons were released. When last seen they were heading in the general direction of Norway.

Beckenham contributed much to ‘The Day’. The cleverly produced glossy brochure, which merited the title of ‘The Rochester Record’ was jointly edited by Canon Derek Carpenter and Peter Jones, the Editor of ‘St George’s News’ It sold for £3 a copy and was worth every penny! For the concert given by St George’s Choir, the large nave of the Cathedral was jam-packed. Nigel Groome, Director of Music at St George’s, and Susanna Startup, a soprano in the choir, were both prominent during ‘The Day’.

‘The Day’ was alive with services, concerts, choirs, a procession of parish banners, and talks by experts from various churches. The Zimbabwean choir thrilled and cheered us, as did the Chamber Choir from the Charles Church in Tallin, Estonia, with several performances in various parts of the Cathedral site.

This week, I attended, as an Observer, my fourteenth meeting of the Beckenham Deanery Synod. At it, I signed on to take a seat in a coach to take us to the Cathedral for the evening of Wednesday, 10 November, for the Cathedral Service of Thanksgiving which will end the 2004 celebrations for Rochester's 1400 years as a Cathedral city, and its 1400 years of loving service to God.

A new school has this month (September) been opened by the Anglicans in Bromley. What is it called? *The Bishop Justus School*. Justly and rightly! May it thrive, and may Bromley ever be proud of it and its name. I wonder what the next 1400 years holds for Rochester Diocese?

Terry Davies,
St Edmund's,
Beckenham.

Prayer of St Teresa of Avila

Christ has no body on earth but yours;
yours are the only hands with which he can do his work,
yours are the only feet with which he can go about the world,
yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine
forth upon a troubled world.

Christ has no body on earth but yours.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Each year, during Lent, the Churches of Birchington arrange ecumenical house groups, which meet weekly to discuss a chosen theme, with talks made by the clergy or lay members of the various churches, taped and distributed. The following is my talk given this year (2004) on the theme “Unity in Diversity”. My name is Canon Bill Clements, and I have been the Roman Catholic parish priest of Birchington for thirteen years. In that time I have come to know the clergy of our various churches and their people – Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, United Reformed Church, Baptists, Salvation Army and the Cornerstone Free Methodist Church. We have been able to talk, socialise, pray and work together with increasing friendship and understanding, but there are still barriers of custom, belief and practice which prevent us coming together in full communion, which is surely the ultimate aim of all our work for Christian Unity.

I suggest that the fundamental beliefs which we share in common are contained in the Apostles’ Creed. We believe in one God, our Creator and loving Father, and in Jesus, who is the Son of God, equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit As promised by the prophets of the Old Testament, he became for us, a little child, born of the Virgin Mary, with no human Father. He lived, taught, gathered disciples, and, out of love for us, suffered and died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. We believe that he gathered his followers into a Church, which He prayed would be one, visible, continuous, holy and universal; one with the saints in heaven and the holy souls, and which would hold out to us all the promise of eternal life, if we believed in Him, obeyed Him and persevered in his love. The Apostles’ Creed is a very ancient profession of faith, and was used in the early Christian Church as a test of belief before baptism. Perhaps you would like to discuss whether the Apostles’ Creed, as I have described it, is what YOU believe.

But why, if we do share those beliefs, are we still apart? Can unity and diversity go together? Although you may not realise it, there is considerable variety among the beliefs and practice of Catholics around the world. Someone once remarked that a Cistercian monastery church, austere and sober, resembled a Friends Meeting House, whereas a Spanish church, all gold, elaborate and filled with statues, was more like a Buddhist temple. But, along with that variety, there are certain fundamental beliefs which we Catholics all share, but which are rejected or misunderstood by the Churches of the Reformation. I will mention three.

1. The Mass and the Priesthood
2. The Virgin Mary
3. Authority in the Church.

1. The Mass and the Priesthood

Jesus promised that he would give us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink. At the Last Supper, the night before he died on the Cross, took bread, broke it and gave it to his apostles to eat, saying “Take, eat, this is my body”. Then, over a cup of wine, “Take and drink, this is the cup of my blood”; “Do this in memory of me”. Catholics everywhere, along with the orthodox Churches, take this literally, and believe, and have always believed, in the real, abiding, adorable presence of Jesus, God made man, in the Holy Eucharist. We cannot explain HOW Christ is present, but we know WHY. At the Last Supper, Jesus looked down the ages to us, and enabled us, in this real, but mysterious way, to join ourselves with him in his total offering of himself to the Father in sacrifice. Not, notice, another sacrifice, but the same sacrifice made sacramentally present. When I was ordained by Archbishop Cyril Cowderoy at St John’s Seminary, Womersley, on 30 May 1953, he laid his hands on my head and transmitted to me the power to offer this sacrifice, to forgive sins and to bless. This power has been handed down in the Church from the time of the Apostles, to whom Jesus said, “Do this in memory of me”. You cannot change what Jesus said and did. You can take it or reject it, but you cannot change it.

2 The Virgin Mary

Compared with Jesus, her divine Son, Mary is very little; indeed, less than nothing. She is a creature, like us, redeemed by her Son. But she was chosen and blessed by God for the unique privilege and task of bearing, in her womb, Christ the Son of God. Churches of the East and the West believe, and have always believed that she was, by God's grace, preserved from all sin; that she intercedes with her Son on our behalf with great power as a loving Mother, and that she was taken up into heaven, body and soul, where she still prays for us and for the whole Church. Of course, we can and do pray to God the Father, and to Christ, his Son, with full confidence. But, just as we pray for each other, we ask Mary to pray for us, and we are sure that her prayers are heard. We venerate statues of Our Lady and the Saints. We do NOT pray to them.

3 Authority in the Church

Jesus commanded the Apostles to go and make disciples of all nations; that is, to teach people. He himself taught with authority, and expected the apostles and their successors down the ages to do the same. Bishops, spread out over the world, are the successors of the apostles, and teach with authority. Priests are sent out by them to do the same. The primary task of the priest is to teach the faith, to teach what Christ taught the apostles, and has been handed on, guarded and cherished, not only in the books of the New Testament, but by word of mouth. Christ promised to be with his Church till the end of time, and Bishops are the guardians of the faith, holding people together in unity of belief. The Bishop of Rome, Pope John Paul II, successor of St Peter, has the task of witnessing to tradition, and, with his fellow-Bishops, holding the whole Church together in unity of faith. They must read the signs of the times, but at the same time hold on to the essentials of the faith. A dogma is simply a truth, formally insisted upon. How authority is exercised is another matter. Authority can be abused. The present Pope has asked all the Churches to tell him how,

saving his office, he should exercise his authority. Handling divisive issues within the Church has never been easy. Modern doctrinal and moral issues, abortion, homosexuality, contraception, divorce, euthanasia, justice and peace, family life, industrial relations – all these things are moral issues where we need someone who speaks with authority. We Catholics believe that the hierarchical structure of the Church is given to us by Jesus, to preserve unity, and yet to embrace diversity.

In essentials, unity,
In non-essentials, diversity
In all things, charity.

May I ask a question? Can you envisage any way in which you could accept that the Bishop of Rome should have an over-arching role of holding all the Christian Churches together in unity of faith and morals? How would HE have to change? How would Rome have to change?

Thinking back over what I have said, it occurs to me that the three items I have offered for discussion:

- The Mass and the Priesthood
- The Virgin Mary
- Authority in the Church

all follow from a full understanding of the Incarnation. What do I really mean when I say:

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us”?

When Jesus stretched out his hand and touched the leper, the Son of God immersed himself in our humanity, with all its earthiness. Does it not seem reasonable, then, that he should wish US to share in an earthy, visible, tangible way with his sacrifice on Calvary; that we should recognise Mary’s unique role in the work of our redemption; and that Jesus should have provided a single, human, earthy, visible focus of authority for his Church?

So, shall we ever come together? I think unity is a mystery, which only God can achieve. It's up to us to seek the will of God together and to be prepared, if necessary, to CHANGE. In God, there is no change, or shadow of alteration. But here below on earth, to live is to change. To be perfect is to have changed often. So, thanks for listening. Over to you, and God bless you.

Canon Bill Clements

Messages from God:

Let's meet at my house Sunday before the game. - God

Come on over and bring the kids. - God

So you think this is hot! - God

What part of '*Thou shalt not . . .*'
did you not understand? - God

Loved the wedding. Invite me to the marriage. - God

That '*Love thy neighbour*' thing – I meant it! - God

Will the road you are on get me to my place? - God

Follow me. - God

Big Bang Theory – You've got to be kidding! - God

Do you have any idea where you are going? - God

My way is the highway. - God

Need directions? - God

Displayed on Billboards across the USA.

Talk by the Rt Revd Dom Christopher Butler, Abbot of Downside at a social gathering of the Legion of Mary together with some members of the Orthodox Church at Sion Convent on 6th May, 1960

I should like to speak particularly of two words - the Greek words *homonoia* and *koinonia*, which correspond to the Latin *concordia* and *communio*, concord and communion. It is the fulness of *koinonia* which inspires our hopes and prayers and such meetings as these and which we know to be Our Lord's intention.

The Fathers of the Church seem to have given more attention to *homonoia*. This may be thought of as an internal bond of union, which is partly the cause and partly the consequence of the fulness of communion. St Paul said: 'Be ye all of one mind': 'Let that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.' The two main constituents of *homonoia* are self-abnegation and charity and we need these qualities if we are to proceed to the closer union of *koinonia*.

The obstacles to *koinonia* may sometimes seem insuperable. But some of them are psychological and these can be overcome by such meetings as the present one, which can remind us that behind our external differences there is the same burning love of Our Lord and of truth. Although we are short of the fulness of communion we should not underrate the degree of *koinonia* already existing, which consists in the participation of believers in the supernatural good things that come through Christ to men. We have a common faith in the Holy Trinity and in Our Lord and that is a great bond as we look out upon the world in which there are so many who do not believe. We have in common the Holy Scriptures, which we accept as the inspired Word of God and part of the Divine Revelation. We have Holy Baptism. Above all, we have the Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist, a common spiritual food and drink and a common sacrifice. We share too, a Christian tradition springing from apostolic times and the close links which continued up to less than a thousand years ago through the great formative period of the

Church, including those General Councils that we accept in common.

Saint Benedict of Nursia lived and died long before the estrangement of East and West. I myself inherit a tradition deriving from the monastic fathers of the Egyptian and Syrian deserts, which has produced not only my own Order but also the communities of Mount Athos. A Benedictine reading of Eastern monasteries feels at home since we may be said to have by-passed the western developments of the high middle ages: we go back to Antony, Paul, Pachomius and Basil. Here is an element of fellowship we can treasure.

Certainly we must look forward with hope to the fullness of *koinonia*, since this is Our Lord's intention. Meanwhile, it is the duty of all of us to engage perseveringly in prayer for this end and to love one another. We have come here this evening because we recognise that obligation of fraternal charity. Now love flows from knowledge, and knowledge from acquaintanceship and that is what we must seek to develop so that knowledge and love may follow.

Please God, the time will come when the wounds of Christendom are healed and the image of the Church shines forth untarnished, so that the world, seeing our unity, may come to recognise the message of Christ, which he conveys through His Church to all generations and all peoples.

Legion of Mary,
Praesidium of Our Lady of the Annunciation,
1, Warwick Road, London, SW5.

Reprinted with permission of Mr Joe Farrelly.

