



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS
TO HIS GRACE JUSTIN WELBY,
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND HIS ENTOURAGE**

Monday, 16 June 2014

*Your Grace,
Cardinal Nichols,
Cardinal Koch,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!” (*Ps* 133:1). Once again we meet, Your Grace, as co-workers in the Lord’s vineyard and fellow pilgrims on the path to his Kingdom. I welcome you and the distinguished members of your delegation, and I pray that today’s meeting will serve to strengthen further our bonds of friendship and our commitment to the great cause of reconciliation and communion between Christian believers.

The Lord’s question – “What were you arguing about on the way?” (*Mk* 9:33) – might also apply to us. When Jesus put this question to his disciples they were silent; they were ashamed, for they had been arguing about who was the greatest among them. We too feel ashamed when we ponder the distance between the Lord’s call and our meagre response. Beneath his merciful gaze, we cannot claim that our division is anything less than a scandal and an obstacle to our proclaiming the Gospel of salvation to the world. Our vision is often blurred by the cumulative burden of our divisions and our will is not always free of that human ambition which can accompany even our desire to preach the Gospel as the Lord commanded (cf. *Mt* 28:19).

The goal of full unity may seem distant indeed, it remains the aim which should direct our every step along the way. I find a source of encouragement in the plea of the [Second Vatican Council](#)’s Decree on Ecumenism that we should advance in our relationship and cooperation by placing no obstacle to the ways of divine providence and by not prejudicing future promptings of the Holy

Spirit (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 24). Our progress towards full communion will not be the fruit of human actions alone, but a free gift of God. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength not to grow disheartened and he invites us to trust fully in the power of his works.

As disciples who strive to follow the Lord, we realize that the faith has come to us through many witnesses. We are indebted to great saints, teachers and communities; they have handed down the faith over the ages and they bear witness to our common roots. Yesterday, on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Your Grace celebrated Vespers in the Church of San Gregorio al Celio, from which Pope Gregory the Great sent forth Augustine and his monastic companions to evangelize the peoples of England, thus inaugurating a history of faith and holiness which in turn enriched many other European peoples. This glorious history has profoundly shaped institutions and ecclesial traditions which we share and which serve as a solid basis for our fraternal relations.

On this basis, then, let us look with confidence to the future. The *Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission* and the *International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission* represent especially significant forums for examining, in a constructive spirit, older and newer challenges to our ecumenical engagement.

At our first meeting, Your Grace and I discussed our shared concerns and our pain before a number of grave evils afflicting our human family. In particular, we shared our horror in the face of the scourge of human trafficking and forms of modern-day slavery. I thank you for the leadership you have shown in opposing these intolerable crimes against human dignity.

In attempting to respond to this urgent need, notable collaborative efforts have been initiated on the ecumenical level and in cooperation with civil authorities and international organizations. Many charitable initiatives have been undertaken by our communities, and they are operating with generosity and courage in various parts of the world. I think in particular of the action network against the trafficking in women set up by a number of women's religious institutes. Let us persevere in our commitment to combat new forms of enslavement, in the hope that we can help provide relief to victims and oppose this deplorable trade. I thank God that, as disciples sent to heal a wounded world, we stand together, with perseverance and determination, in opposing this grave evil.

(Pope Francis)

Don't forget the three "p":

(Welby)

Three "p"?...

(Pope Francis)

Prayer, peace and poverty. We must walk together.

(Welby)

We must walk together.

Your Grace, I thank you once more for your visit. I ask the Lord to shower his blessings on your ministry and to sustain you and your loved ones in joy and peace. Amen.