

Anglicans and Roman Catholics Together

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- [0 : 00] The very first thing that I must say to you, friends, to establish the wavelength for this presentation, is that we are going to talk together about the Church of Christ.
- Our Lord Jesus Christ is head of the Church, the Church is his body, and the conversation between Anglicans and Roman Catholics must be approached as a conversation within the body, rather than between one group of people who are the body of Christ and another group of people who aren't.
- But whatever anyone else may think about the situation, that's how I see it, and that's how I hope that you see it too, and that's the perspective from which I'm going to be speaking.
- So, never forget, as we are in the presence of Christ by the Holy Spirit, so we are talking about the body of Christ, which one of the collects of the prayer book describes as that sacred mystery.
- And that thought, surely, must set the tone for all our own thoughts and all our exchanges. Within that frame of reference, then, you can see the first thing we had better do is pray.
- [1 : 37] Please pray with me. Our gracious Heavenly Father, as we explore difficult questions and points of real tension concerning the life of the fellowship, which is the body of your Son, that new human community, which you have called to yourself here on earth and are preparing for glory with you eternally.
- So, we pray. Sanctify our thoughts, Lord. Unite our hearts. Give us wisdom and good judgment. And make our exchanges now fruitful for the practice of godly fellowship in the Church in days to come.
- We ask it for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Now, this is a presentation that was requested.
- And I don't think I would have volunteered it if it hadn't been requested. But the request came to me, really, in three forms.
- Or, shall I say, there are three factors operating in the making of the request. There's the political factor, which is a matter of cultural memory.
- [3 : 24] We are Anglicans and Anglicanism. Various Anglican churches in this world have been separated from the Roman Catholic Church since the 16th century.
- And inheriting that cultural fact inevitably molds our minds a bit. It's hard, in other words, to keep in mind always that they aren't necessarily the outsiders that the political history suggests that they are and should continue to be.
- No. Then there's the personal factor. I am a member of a body which has been meeting since 1992.
- It's called Evangelicals and Catholics Together. Now, I think there were...
- No, I think I am the only Evangelical Anglican on that body. But it exists. It's doing a job which I consider essential.
- [4 : 44] I shall invite you to agree with me that at least it's worthwhile. And I have often been quizzed about it.

What are you doing in this project? What's it all about? And so on. And in the course of my presentation, I shall attempt to tell you.

And then there's a third factor that has come over the horizon just within the last few weeks.

I've spoken of... or I've referred to a political factor and a personal factor. This is a papal factor. The Pope has made an announcement about an arrangement that he is offering to Anglicans if they wish to take it.

And we'll say something about that too. I'd like to enlarge a little bit, actually, on all those three realities before I go any further.

[5 : 45] So back to the political one to start with. Yes, in the Middle Ages, the Pope claimed a certain amount of political authority in Christian states.

And in the 16th century, Henry VIII of England declared independence of the Bishop of Rome.

He was declared, in turn, head of the Church of God in England. His Archbishop, Thomas Cranmer, was with him in this.

And when opportunity came, as it did under Edward VI, Cranmer became the master reformer that we think of him as.

He really was. He produced the classic original version, actually the two versions, but I'll treat them as one.

[6 : 53] The classic original version of the Book of Common Prayer. He was responsible for the drawing up of the articles. There were 42 of them.

They were later boiled down to 39. But all the positive drafting is done by Cranmer and his colleagues. He did actually compose a full-scale system of canons, that is, church law, but it was never enacted and it's never been significant in Anglican community life.

And, well, scholars differ as to whether they think that's a pity or a fact which is not really of historical importance.

Anyway, Cranmer shaped the Church of England. The Church of England became the ancestor of all Anglican churches everywhere.

And one of the things which the Church of England carried into the future was the experience of extreme political hostility between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England during the reign of Elizabeth I.

[8 : 16] In 1570, when Elizabeth had been reigning since 1558, in 1570 the then Bishop of Rome excommunicated Elizabeth and declared that anyone who shortened her life would be blessed.

Christ. And the immediate effect of that was to turn individual Jesuit clergy who came to England in hope of reconverting Englishmen to what they regarded as the true faith they were categorised at once as traitors and a number of them as perhaps you know does the name of Edward Campion mean anything to you?

Well he was perhaps the best known of them. A number of them were hung, drawn and quartered. That's the terribly inhuman way in which traitors were punished in those days.

Catholics would say they were the English martyrs but in Elizabeth's day they were the English traitors and that's why they were treated in that fashion.

Hostility continued between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church until the 19th century. In the 19th century the Roman Catholic community in England was emancipated that is to say Roman Catholic lay folk could be elected to Parliament and occupy offices in public administration in England and shortly after that the Roman Catholic hierarchy was restored and it had been abolished by Henry VIII now it was restored and so since then Roman Catholics have been citizens on a par with the rest of Britain's citizens and Roman

[10 : 49] Catholic bishops have been looking after dioceses in England and this pattern has been exported so that throughout the Anglican communion the story is the same.

In the younger Anglican churches I don't suppose because I've never been able to check this out but I don't suppose that the memory of the history is as strong or the suspicion that that history has left in a lot of English minds is as vivid but inevitably with a history like that there's a certain amount of historical suspicion and prejudice in the situation and the first thing to do is to acknowledge it and recognize that one of our duties is to try and get beyond it.

So in Canada and in the United States nowadays that's what we try to do although a hundred years ago Anglicans were not trying to do it and the tensions between Catholics and Anglicans both sides of the border were great.

Of course there are still tensions when intermarriage raises the question of changing denominations well again and again there's tension tension in the family and as long as the Catholics and the Anglicans remain separate that is bound to go on.

So I'm not saying that the situation has become easy I'm simply saying that both sides of the division the effort is being made these days to transcend the division in serious discussion serious talk and reflection on how Anglicans and Roman Catholics should relate for the future which is a step forward I think you'll agree.

[13 : 18] enough then about the political heritage a further word now about Evangelicals and Catholics together this project in which I am engaged as I said it began in September 1992 it began with a distressed discussion between a Roman Catholic who had been a conservative Lutheran before becoming a Roman Catholic he's dead now died last year his name was John Richard Newhouse and Chuck Colson who thank God is still with us and whose name you will know well they had been at a meeting at which another man whose name perhaps we ought to know though I don't think we all do Martin is his name he's the sociologist and he was reporting at this meeting on the tensions religious tensions that he had found in Latin

America South America I should be saying where he'd been on a fact-finding mission and at grassroots level tensions he said were running very high and it was sort of low-level persecution really Catholics and Protestants would make unfriendly gestures at each other in the street break each other's windows all that sort of thing and the Protestant leadership which done in South America is mainly Pentecostal Protestant leadership dismissed Roman Catholics as unbelievers and the Roman Catholics in the old-fashioned 16th century manner dismissed the Protestants as heretics and apostates and

Newhouse and Colson looked at each other and said can't we do something which will relieve this situation and to cut the long story short they decided that what they would do was to set up an independent self-funding consultation in which leading Protestant thinkers and leading Catholic thinkers would confer together about matters that were involved in these grassroots tensions that is to say doctrinal questions that had pastoral implications and see if by producing statements and exercising influence in the way that one always hopes to do you know the picture that comes to mind is that you drop a stone into a pond and you want to see the ripples spread out all over the pond they hoped that ripples would spread out from what

ECT was going to do to South America and other places where at grassroots level tensions were high and the tensions could be transmuted into restrained respect well we're still going and going strong as far as administration is concerned and as I said we're self-funding and that continues whether we are having any wide influence of the kind that I was just picturing is a question and I don't really know the answer to it what I do know is that my judgment says this is a worthwhile project and that's why I'm in it and we make a big deal let me tell you this now the big deal of saying we are not speaking for our denominations we are speaking out of our denominations our church affiliations to others both sides of the reformation divide and we have produced statements which I believe are fruitful in mapping the areas of agreement which is what we're trying to do the areas of agreement in the key subjects of justification by faith the authority of scripture the nature of the church as a communion of saints and

Mary as a model of Christian devotion you can see perhaps from those titles that I am entitled to say both that we've gone for important subjects and that we have tried to approach them in terms of mapping areas of agreement and so areas in which pastorally it's possible for Anglicans and Roman Catholics to come together suspicions continue that I can live through the suspicion that I'm compromising evangelical faith my conscience doesn't tell me that and so ECT goes on then I spoke about the recent papal announcement of an apostolic constitution as it's called whereby bodies of disaffected

[19 : 33] Anglicans are invited to become Roman Catholics and bring their clergy with them and the clergy will be reordained so that they can function as Catholic clergy never mind the fact that most of them married and bring their wives with them and so become an exception to the celibacy rule and this well there are limits the Anglican clergy can't become Catholic bishops but they will function as pastors of the Anglican communities that have come with them in the same way that an ordained Catholic priest is pastor of the Catholic parish which he's put in church will and

Rowan Williams clearly feels the fact that the Pope did this over his head and the Pope did this things that he said and a rush visit to Rome that he paid. But you can see it from Pope Benedict's point of view. Start with the Anglican communion around the world is only about a tenth the size of the Roman Catholic communion. Catholics outnumber Anglicans almost everywhere in the world. And furthermore, this is not a matter of negotiation but of proclamation. Rome makes the decision. Rome issues the invitation. What has the Archbishop of Canterbury got to do with it?

Well, it is possible to say it would have been courteous to give him plenty of notice that this was going to happen and that wasn't done. But beyond that, the Archbishop of Canterbury can only stand by and say, well, if that's what you're going to do, you'd better get on and do it.

And that, in fact, is what Rome has had to do. Meantime, the last half century, there have been official top-level theological discussions between Roman Catholic and Anglican theologians. These have been representative in a way that ECT isn't representative and they've come up with statements that seem to some of us to be needlessly concessive from the Anglican side. But I'm glad to be able to tell you that a Catholic reviewing body has gone over these statements and said they're much too liberal so they don't present a formula for any kind of practical advance towards a relationship between our communions. And you probably know that the Roman Church is committed against gay unions and against the ordination of women. And Anglican leadership, on the whole, has caved in at that point. The older Anglican leadership has more or less caved in at that point. The leadership, shall I say, of the Old West. When I say the Old West, understand I mean Anglicans in Britain and in North America and in Australia. Elsewhere, of course, in the southern segment of the Anglican Communion, there has been no caving in at all. And thank God for that.

Well, I know I'm sorry. I'm not going to say any more about that because, first of all, you know the score there. And I have other things to say, so leave it at that. I am simply saying that's the way things are.

[24 : 12] And the Roman position is that while Anglicans and Roman Catholics should go on talking at every level for the sake of mutual appreciation, peace and love, Anglicans mustn't expect any kind of negotiated togetherness because they have done things which have become, which now stand as real roadblocks.

So that's where we are there. Now, let me enumerate areas of division between the two Communion.

The first enumeration of areas of division, historically, was the 39 Articles.

And I will now go through the list of the points at which the Articles are explicit, not always in the way that they verbalise things, but explicit for substance, on taking a different line from that of the Roman Catholic Church.

Article 6, the sufficiency of Scripture, is affirmed against any version of the Roman Catholic idea that Scripture needs to be supplemented by some form of wisdom from the Church.

[26 : 06] Article 6, the sufficiency of Scripture, is the 1st century, and the Athenian creed, the Creen should be received because their contents may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.

And the point of cleavage there is that the Catholic view was and remains that they should be received because of the authority of the Church. And that brings into focus the thought that for Roman Catholics, who affirm the authority of Scripture for the Church, nonetheless, it is basic to faithful churchmanship that you take your faith, your biblical faith, from the Church, that is, you take it in the form in which the Church presents it to you, and you do not use the Bible in order to critique it.

Well, that's the principle which Article 8 brings into focus. And then Articles 11 through 14 deal with justification by faith and spend a lot of time excluding from the, shall I call it, the divine transaction, which brings us sinners into forgiveness and acceptance with our God.

And the Articles are excluding from that transaction any thought of human merit and focusing entirely on the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ as the basis on which we are justified.

And then in Article 19, we are told that the nature of the Church is that it's a fellowship of the faithful, congregation of faithful men, is the way it's expressed in the English version of the Articles, fellowship of the faithful, as distinct from a ministerial structure, more about that in just a moment.

[28 : 56] Catholics do believe in the Church in quite a different way from that in which Protestants generally and Anglicans in particular believe in the Church.

And that difference needs to be highlighted, so as I say, I'll come back to it. Articles 20 and 21 dismiss the idea of the Church being the final authority in anything.

Scripture is the final authority in everything, say those articles. Article 22 dismisses the Roman doctrine of purgatory and one or two other things with it.

Article 24 affirms that worship should be in the vernacular, which is something that the Second Vatican Council caught up with in the 1960s, and that's universal now in the Church of Rome.

You worship in the language of the people rather than in Latin. And then in Article 25, a lot of things are said for purging the Catholic doctrine of the sacraments.

[30 : 15] There are two sacraments instituted by Christ, not seven. And the sacramental elements are not to be worshipped, not to be adored, not, in the case of the Eucharistic elements, not to be reserved, but to be used, to be used by faith, which is something that Catholic formulations about the sacraments up to the 16th century have never said.

But our 39 articles, in company with other Protestant confessions, say it very strongly. The sacraments are means of grace just because they are means to faith and occasions for faith.

And it's as faith lays hold of what the sacraments picture, baptism, you see, picturing new birth in Christ and the Lord's Supper, picturing new life through Christ and his cross, it's as faith lays hold of those realities that the sacraments bless the soul.

And then, in Article 28, Holy Communion is dealt with in detail. Anglicans don't believe in transubstantiations, says the article, any more than they believe in the reservation and adoration of the consecrated bread and wine.

Article 32 rejects the principle of clerical celibacy. And Article 37 rejects the idea that the Bishop of Rome has any political jurisdiction in England, which, of course, is a principle which, when Anglicanism was exported around the world, was part of the package that was taken.

[32 : 29] Anglican, the Anglican pattern of church togetherness is self-governing provinces which are related loosely, and yet the hope is that they'll be related firmly and that the Archbishop of Canterbury will be acknowledged as the leader of the Anglican Communion and so the nearest thing to a Pope that we've got.

But then, the Pope has jurisdiction at every level in the Roman Catholic Communion and the Archbishop of Canterbury only has jurisdiction in his own Diocese of Canterbury, not anywhere else.

He is, in other words, a moral leader rather than a legal executive leader. So far, the Articles.

Now, let me try and put some of that into a better shape. I said that there are fundamental differences concerning the nature of the Church.

And, yes, there are. Those differences break surface. As soon as Roman Catholics are asked to expound the four qualities which the creeds affirm concerning the Church, I believe in one holy, apostolic, sorry, Catholic and apostolic Church, says the Nicene Creed.

[34 : 14] Well, Roman Catholics define the Church in terms of communion with the Pope and when they say they believe in one Church, they are affirming that they believe that everyone should be in the organization that is in communion with the Pope.

the Church is holy, says the Creed. That means, Roman Catholics have always said, that in the Church there is a constant flow of saints, that is, persons of unusual holiness, who become models, you could almost say icons, for imitation and admiration on the part of all the rest of us.

Whereas, Protestants will say, as the one Church is the fellowship of all who believe in Christ, so the holiness of that one Church is a matter of every member being consecrated to Christ, to live to Christ as a disciple, as a believer, as one who has received mercy and as one who recognizes his or her place in the body of Christ and seeks to sustain the body of Christ by fellowship and service throughout the body as opportunity arises.

When Roman Catholics are asked to explain what it means to say that the Church is Catholic, well, again, they go back to the purpose of God being that all of us should be in communion with the Bishop of Rome and that communion is the definition of Catholicity.

Anglicans would say, as all Protestants do, know the Catholicity of the Church is first and foremost a matter of its being universal in the geographical sense, that is, it's one Church for the world, and secondly, it's a matter of the Church holding the fullness of the faith, the Catholic faith, as it's regularly called.

[36 : 45] So there is that double claim for Protestants, for Anglicans, in the word Catholic. And then, says the Creed, we believe in one apostolic Church.

Protestants, including Anglicans, say, well, what that means is that we hold to the terms of the apostolic mission which is shaped by Christ's commission, go and make disciples of all the nations, and we hold to the apostolic faith as we seek to fulfil the apostolic mission.

The Roman Catholics say, no, when we say that the Church is apostolic, we are talking about its inner structure, which we conceive in a way different, so we recognise, from the way that Protestants, Anglicans included, think about it.

here, the precise difference is as follows. Roman Catholic Church believes that the Apostles received their authority to minister the sacraments from Christ himself.

Why do I say the sacraments, and pause there, as if the word is significant? Well, because one of the factors of the Roman Catholic idea is that we are saved finally through the grace of the sacraments to which faith in the teaching of Scripture and the beliefs of the Church admits us.

[38 : 48] Because we believe, we are admitted to baptism of the Lord's Supper and the grace of baptism and the Lord's Supper, along with the grace of whichever of the other five sacraments we receive, that grace is what sees us through.

We are saved by the sacraments. Now, say the Catholics, the Apostles received authority to minister word and sacraments, saving sacraments from Christ and they passed on that authority to those whom they appointed as their deputies, representatives, the people in the category that we nowadays call bishops.

And so, it has been ever since the Apostolic Age, the commission to minister the saving sacraments is passed on in ordination and those who have not been ordained in the Apostolic succession don't have it.

So, non-episcopal ministers don't have it. Episcopal ministers, genuine episcopal ministers do, say the Catholics, that means that the Eastern Orthodox churches, though they've been out of communion with the Roman Catholic Church ever since the 11th century, they have the Apostolic Commission because they have an episcopate which, beyond any doubt or debate, goes back to the Apostles.

But Anglicans, though they parade their bishops, have not maintained the authentic episcopal succession, this isn't entirely a matter, I may say, of who ordains the bishops, it's also been, well, papally determined, back as long ago as, I think it was 1893, been determined that there's a defect of intention in Anglican orders.

[41 : 08] Anglican bishops and presbyters are not ordained in order to offer the mass sacrifice. And that is a defect of intention, from the Roman standpoint, on the part of all our clergy.

So, if Protestant clergy move into the Roman Catholic communion, of course they have to be reordained. from the Catholic standpoint, they have to be ordained for the first time, because their Protestant ordination didn't count.

That is very basic to the Roman Catholic view of the Church and its ministry. Do get clear, my friends. The bottom line in all of this, as you can see, is that, from the Roman standpoint, the Church is essentially a ministerial structure, that is a set-up with clergy, bishops and presbyters.

And the summons to the world is join the Church, and the Church will introduce you to Christ. Do you get that?

It's a point that is rather fudge, in modern ecumenical discussion. Nobody likes saying it, because, of course, the judgmental implications are rather strong.

[42 : 44] But that's actually the way that things are. Catholics believe that the Church is essentially a ministerial structure to which laity attach themselves, believers, and evangelicals, Anglicans among them, believe that the Church is a fellowship of believers.

So, whereas Catholics believe it's the apostolic succession that makes the Church to be the Church, evangelicals believe it is faith in Christ, no more, no less, that makes the Church to be the Church.

They were clear on all this in the 16th century, but, as I said, we're not so clear on it today. That's the way it is. And then there's another aspect of disagreement, where, again, the cleavage goes very deep.

Catholics believe something which began to be explicitly affirmed in the Middle Ages, something that was implicit, really, in a lot of the things that the patristic theologians, the fathers of the first half-dozen centuries, said, but it was never made into a doctrine in those days, through the Holy Spirit in the Church, Christ bestows on the Church the gift of infallibility, which means that anything that the Church says affirms doctrinally through its official channels, that is to say, first of all, councils of bishops, and since 1870, when this was explicitly defined, through the Bishop of Rome, speaking *ex cathedra*, to use the

Latin phrase, speaking that is in his character, as the doctrinal teacher of all Christendom, whatever, as I say, is affirmed doctrinally, from councils or from the Pope, is guaranteed by Christ, not to need correction.

[45 : 06] officially. It will never be a complete statement of anything, so it may be supplemented by later statements, but it is a true statement, as far as it goes, of whatever it affirms.

So, infallible, as a quality of the Church, means incorrigible, when it comes to the Church putting its house in order.

Oh, yes, the Roman Catholics have always said, we grant you that a great deal of our inner life is disorderly, and we try to reform that, but then when it's doctrine that you're talking about, it's a different story.

What you have in the Church's official doctrine is infallible teaching from the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and that is non-negotiable.

so the Church is non-reformable, because you're not able to say the Church committed itself to this, that, and the other, and the Church was wrong.

[46 : 17] Well, nothing can change there once infallibility has been defined in that way. So, that's where we are still, and that's what seems to me, where we should be until the Lord comes back.

this is the very fundamental, very central point of cleavage between all evangelicals and all Roman Catholics, between all evangelical systems and the Roman Catholic system.

people. As for the substance of the Gospel, well, it is the case, not everybody knows it, but it is the case that in recent years, Roman theologians have come very close to saying our creeds, that is the primarily, the conciliar decisions of the Council of Trent, the Counter-Reformation Council that met between 1545 and 1563, the decisions of the Council of Trent allow us to affirm almost, if not quite all, of what evangelicals affirm about justification by faith only, through Christ only.

You've got to remember, say Roman Catholics, that Trent did actually muddy the waters a bit by speaking of justification in the sense in which Augustine spoke of it.

That is, as the whole process that begins with the forgiveness of sins and ends with our perfecting in gloom. Everything that happens between the one and the other is part of the work of justification.

[48 : 22] That's the language that the Council of Trent talks. And Protestants have always said, as you would expect, that is not using the word, the verb justify, and the noun justification, the way that the Bible uses them.

And that is true. But make that adjustment, as we did in ECT, as in producing our statement on justification by faith, make that adjustment, define justification biblically, as the decision of God, whereby sins are forgiven and we are received into his favour, righteous in Christ, though still sinners are no sinners, make that adjustment, change that definition, and we Catholics can affirm all that you want to say about the decisiveness of Christ's ministry for justification, and the irrelevance of merit, or any fault of merit, merit from any form or source whatever, as part of the justifying transaction.

Well, all right, Catholics can and do say that, and we can be very glad that they do. On the doctrine of the sacraments, there is still a good deal between us, because Rome is committed to the notion of transubstantiation, that is, the change of the bread and wine and the Lord's Supper into the body and blood of Christ.

Rome has defined that conciliar definition, so Rome can't change that. All Rome can do, all that Roman Catholics can do, is to try and explain this in a way that matches the evangelical consensus, as it's been ever since the middle of the 16th century, namely, that, as the article says, the body and blood of Christ are received and consumed in a spiritual manner, that is to say, the spiritual benefits which the death of Christ secured, and of which the bread and the wine in the Eucharistic ritual remind us, those benefits come to us as by faith we stretch out empty hands, as it were, and receive them.

And the fact that the sacrament is given to each communicant individually, is God's guarantee that, yes, these blessings are there for you personally.

[51 : 41] Well, on this, there's a lot of discussion, and it gets new, we, it's like the army continually marking time, nobody is standing at ease, everybody is marking time, but, you know, stamping on the spot, nothing moves.

And the Catholic theologians believe that they're easing the situation by developing a thought which has become a big thing in Catholic theology this last hundred years, that the fundamental sacrament is the church itself, the outward and visible sign of the grace of God.

Well, all right, that's what they say. I note it, and I move on. on the pastoral front, which I expect is the first dimension of the Anglican Roman Catholic problem that any of us would think about, on the pastoral front, I dare to say, there are problems which are in process of being diminished as problems, I won't say finally adjusted, but things today are a lot better than they were a hundred years ago.

Council of Trent maximised the position of the clergy as spiritual leaders of all the laity, and so diminished the significance of the laity, saying in effect that their business is to accept what the priest says, to follow his lead, and to be good sheep in his flock.

We evangelicals have a much stronger doctrine of the calling and ministry of the laity than that, and here at St. John's we hear a good deal about it, and so I don't need to dwell on it.

[53 : 59] But in the 20th century, in the second half of the 20th century in particular, after the Second Vatican Council had taken note of the fact that this was an imbalance, the laity have been, shall I say, coming up in ministry terms in the Roman Catholic communion, and the position of the clergy as guardian of their consciences, has been modified, has been cut back, you might say, so that the laity are given freedom to think and let think in a way that a hundred years ago simply wasn't the case.

And you don't need me to tell you, there has been a great deal of interest in this last half century on the inner reality of communion with God, which we call spirituality, and in fact, we've all discovered that in Roman Catholicism there's a very respectable heritage of teaching about communion with God in and through Christ.

Yes, there is. And Protestants have been glad to avail themselves of it. Catholics, for their part, have opened their doors and their windows to the emphases, the every member ministry emphasis, the Holy Spirit leadership emphasis in the charismatic movement, Catholic, well, sorry, the charismatic element in Catholic devotion is a big thing these days.

Catholicism, and here's another pastoral milestone, Catholics actually use Alpha, did you know that?

Lots of Catholics use Alpha, lots of Catholic bishops commend Alpha. What do they commend it as? Well, it's the beginning of a renewed catechesis, wait a minute, you say, what's that?

[56 : 16] Catechesis, dear friends, is the classic procedure, which should really shape all the ministry that goes on in our churches, the classic procedure whereby we teach the basics of the faith by which Christians are to live, and with that we teach Christians how to live by those basics.

Catholics, put those two aspects of the matter, those two barrels, if you like, of the double-barreled reality of catechesis, put them together, and you've got Christian ministry.

At least Christian ministry, as it ought to be. It isn't always so, alas, that raises other questions. Christians, but the Catholics are a bit ahead of us, in fact, ahead of us, not simply us Anglicans, but us Protestants generally.

John Paul II, a brilliant Pope, affirmed amongst other things that the Church, he meant, of course, the Catholic Church, requires a new catechesis.

So the present Pope who is now Benedict XVI, who was Cardinal Ratzinger in those days, he was charged to produce a new catechetical compendium called the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

[57 : 52] Here is my copy of it. It has nearly 800 pages. There's a lot of stuff in print, and it weighs about three pounds.

And that goes on my bookshelf with the documents of Vatican II. Yes, now this looks like a smaller and more manageable book, doesn't it?

But the print is tiny. And you find that it has 724 pages. Vatican II did actually produce a number of quite brilliant statements on a number of quite basic themes.

If time allowed, which it doesn't, I'd just like to turn the table of contents and read out the titles of the various constitutions that Vatican II produced.

But I've got to stop now, I can't go on with that. What I'm trying to do in saying these things is to give substance to the reality of the fact that pastorally there's plenty of scope for evangelicals and Catholics to grow together, shall I say devotionally, shall I say in terms of lay ministry, shall I say in terms of praying and sharing.

[59 : 26] And it just depends on where you live, but there are many, many places in the world of Catholic and evangelical overlap where at grassroots lots of, shall I say, fertilizing fellowship is taking place.

Catholics are learning from Protestants, Protestants, evangelicals are learning from Catholics. You say, what are they learning from Catholics?

They're learning the sense of churchliness, friends. Just say it that way. I won't elaborate. I hope that in light of what I've said already, that one word makes clear to you what's going on in these, more or less informal lay movements of pastoral cooperation of one sort or another.

That's the material that I had to present to you. Time has gone. I've had my full 60 minutes and I mustn't take any more. You can see what I'm saying at doctrinal level.

Things are but where they were. At pastoral level, there's fruitful movement and God is blessing evangelical Catholic fellowship.

[60 : 52] Where are we all going? God knows. But I don't. And having said that, I pipe down.

We've got ten minutes to go. thoughts, comments, from anybody on any of these things.

It seems ironic that though in the Catholic Church the Church is considered the authority, yet that authority has allowed them to hold on to the basic tenets of the faith, where for instance our Anglican Church in Canada has not been able to.

Do you understand my comment? Oh yes, that's fair. That's fair comment. Anglicanism, like other Protestant denominational groupings, allowed in the camel of liberal thought, that is accommodating the historic faith to the contemporary culture.

We began to allow that camel into the tent in the middle of the 19th century and, well, you know how it is, the nose of the camel comes in first and before you know the tent is full of camel.

[62 : 24] And there's no space for those who really didn't welcome the camel's arrival in the first. Yes, you're perfectly right.

That's what's happened. And all of the older Protestant and evangelical church groupings are suffering from that. But, well, let's talk about something else.

the saints struck down to it. Oh, sorry. Sorry.

Yes. Have Catholics given up the idea of Mary as a co-dejecture? Yes. Oh, good. Because ten years ago, twenty years ago, there was a group of theologians who wanted Mary as co-redemptrix to be defined as a Roman Catholic doctrine.

And the matter was taken right up to the Vatican bureaucracy. And the Pope and the bureaucrats said, no. And because it was a major public gesture, you know, like, perhaps this is an invidious thing to say, but like the public gesture of the women who want to be admitted to the Olympic Games as ski jumpers.

[63 : 57] They're taking that to the highest courts, and when you take things to the highest court, well, of course, if no is the answer, the no sounds out very loud.

No! See? And that's the story now. Modern Roman, most recent Roman Catholic thinking about Mary, stresses rather the thought that she is the emblem and model for the Church and for every Christian in it.

A woman who said yes to God and so became, not indeed co-redeemer with Jesus, but the human means of Jesus coming to earth to be our redeemer.

But you need not fear that the co-redemptrix idea will raise its head in our lifetime. I don't think it can do in view of what's happened to it.

Yes? Jim, how do you answer, right, what we have to say sympathetically, and I'd like to hear your answer to it, because I'm sure I'd be in agreement with your answer. When I talk to Jesus, he invites me to speak with his family as well, including his mother.

[65 : 16] How do we say no only to Jesus? Well, my answer would be, look, a family is there, and we will join you in praising God for them.

But that's something quite distinct from praying to them, as if, Lord Jesus, they were on a par with you. They aren't.

It's a situation parallel to the centuries-old discussion about prayer for the departed. You don't pray for them, you give praise for them.

Praise for the dead, rather than prayer for the dead, which is, you know, what a prayer book does in our communion service. And in the case of the saints, any saints you like to mention, give praise for them, yes, and then praise the Saviour who brought them into the glory which is theirs now.

But it's the Saviour who did it, and it's to him alone that we look for salvation, that we pray for grace, and him alone that we thank for the fact that these holy folk are in the glory now, praising the Saviour as we shall be doing one day ourselves when we join them.

[66 : 53] Try that on for size. Yeah, Phil. I've just been reading the ECT document on Mary, and I'm most impressed with it as a model of Christian discourse between people of deep convictions, opposing views, who state their views so frankly and honestly and so to say sensitively and politely and positively and in the spirit of prayer.

And it just seemed to me a remarkable document. showing the full logic that each side can muster in presenting their views. Well, thank you for the, what shall I call it, the tick in the margin.

We had to do a good deal of work in order to get to the form and substance of that statement. cogent. But yes, we got there.

And I'm glad that you feel it's cogent and right-minded in terms of how you approach historic points of history. I think it is a good statement.

thing. How does Anglicanism relate as an Orthodox Church with the Eastern Orthodox and with the Church of Rome?

[68 : 31] Anglicans have a history of reaching out in both directions. At the beginning of the 20th century, the initiative was in Anglican hands and Anglicans did the reaching out.

The two exercises were not connected with each other. And neither of them, as a matter of fact, at that time, got anywhere, as we would say.

But the starting point was that the Anglican Church acknowledges a measure of brotherhood or community with Episcopal churches that it doesn't have with non-Episcopal churches.

Evangelicals couldn't really enthuse about that way of seeing it, but that's how the Anglican majority saw it in the first half of the 20th century.

And so conversations took place. They probably warmed up the relationship, but in executive, administrative terms, they didn't make any difference to anything.

[69 : 49] The Anglican conversations, the Anglican sponsored conversations with Roman Catholics were held at Malines in France in the 1920s, got nowhere, except to generate goodwill.

and the conversations with the Eastern Orthodox, now they have gone on for the best part of a hundred years.

They're very desultory conversations because, how can I say it, the Eastern Orthodox Church doesn't feel the pain and impropriety of the division of church bodies in the way that we children of the Reformation do.

Both sides of the divide. Rome wants to be reunited with the people that it lost and the churches that it lost in the Reformation. And reformational churches have an uneasy conscience about continuing out of full communion with other Christian bodies.

The Orthodox perspective rather is, well, here we are, this is where God has set us, this is where God has brought us, we have suffered a great deal over the centuries, but we are a church that stands firm, that maintains the faith, that goes on through thick and thin.

[71 : 32] We are not a missionary church. That's the fundamental, I think, short coming of the Eastern Orthodox mindset. No, we are not a missionary church.

We are an icon, we are a model, we are a beacon. If people come to us, well, we shall gladly welcome them, but our business is simply to let our light shine where we are and go on being faithful to God until the Lord comes back.

And both the Catholic church and the evangelical churches are missionary oriented and have been, actually, since the 16th and 17th centuries.

Well, as you see, Olaf is standing up. That makes it possible, I think, for me to sit down there. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. I do apologize for standing up.

[72 : 41] We've listened to an extraordinary perspective. I think no one else in Canada, at least, could have given us this kind of a perspective. And we're grateful to Eugene, as always.

And I regret that we're going to have to move, apparently, within a few minutes. But please stay as long as you don't get thrown out. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, sir. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[74 : 03] Thank you.