

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

Key events before the foundation of the PCPCU

1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference

1919 Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarch 'To the churches of Christ everywhere'

1925 'Life and Work' movement meeting; Stockholm 1927 'Faith and Order' meeting; Lausanne

1948 First meeting of the World Council of Churches in London

1908 Paul Wattson SA establishes the 'Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity'

1921 – 1927 Malines Conversations

1928 Encyclical of Pope Pius XI 'Mortalium Animos'

1935 Abbé Paul Coutourier founds 'Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity'

1949 Letter of Holy Office 'Ecclesia Sancta'

FOUNDATION OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

1960 Pope Paul VI establishes 'Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity' to invite and co-ordinate ecumenical delegations to the Vatican Council.

1964 'Unitatis Redintegratio', created by Secretariat, adopted by the Council

1966 Secretariat is established as a permanent body under Cardinal Bea

1988 Apostolic Constitution 'Pastor Bonus' upgrades Secretariat to 'Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity'

It is the function of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to engage in ecumenical work through timely initiatives and activities, labouring to restore unity among Christians. It sees that the decrees of the Second Vatican Council pertaining to ecumenism are put into practice. It deals with the correct interpretation of the principles of ecumenism and enjoins that they be carried out...

After prior consultation with the Supreme Pontiff, the Council maintains relations with Christians of Churches and ecclesial communities that do not yet have full communion with the Catholic Church, and especially organizes dialogue and meetings to promote unity with them, with the help of theological experts of sound doctrine. As often as may seem opportune, the Council deposes Catholic observers to Christian meetings, and it invites observers from other Churches and ecclesial communities to Catholic meetings.

STRUCTURE OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

President: Cardinal Walter Kasper

Secretary: Bishop Brian Farrell

Under-Secretary Msgr Eleuterio Fortino

Eastern Section Dialogues

Orthodox Church (Greek, Russian, Serbian etc)

Oriental Orthodox Churches (Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, Ethiopian, Malankara)

Assyrian Church of the East

Western Section Dialogues

Lutheran World Federation

World Alliance of Reformed Churches (Calvinist, Presbyterian, Church of Scotland)

Anglican Communion

Methodist World Council

Baptism World Alliance

Disciples of Christ

Pentecostal Groups

Salvation Army

PRESIDENTS OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

1960 – 1968 Cardinal Augustin Bea

1968 – 1989 Cardinal Jan Willebrands

1989 – 2001 Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy

2001 – present Cardinal Walter Kasper

ECUMENICAL DIRECTORY AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF PCPCU

1967 'Directory for the Application of the Second Vatican Council's Decisions on Ecumenism.'

1970 'Ecumenism in Higher Education'

1993 'Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism'

2006 'Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism'

2009 (envisaged) 'The Harvest Project'

KEY WESTERN DIALOGUES

International Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity

Phase I 1967 – 1972 The Gospel and the Church

Phase II 1973 – 1984 Eucharist and Ministry

Phase III 1986 – 1993 Justification (Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification 1999)

Phase IV 1995 – 2006 Apostolicity and the Church

Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC)

ARCIC I 1970 – 1981 Eucharist, Ministry, Authority, Final Report

ARCIC II 1983 – 2005 Salvation, Communion, Morals, Authority, Mary

International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) 2007

International Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council

Denver 1971 Denver Report (The Contemporary World, Spirituality, Eucharist)

Dublin 1976 Dublin Report (Salvation, Moral Questions, Eucharist, Ministry)

Honolulu 1981 Agreed statement on the Holy Spirit

Nairobi 1986 Statement on the Church

Singapore 1991 The Apostolic Tradition

Rio 1996 The Word of Life

Brighton 2001 Speaking the Truth in Love

Seoul 2006 Grace given you in Christ

International Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches

Phase I 1970 – 1977 The Presence of Christ in the Church and World

Phase II 1984 – 1990 Towards a Common Understanding of the Church

Phase III 1998 – 2005 Church as a Community of Common Witness to the Kingdom of God

CARDINAL KASPER REFLECTS ON FORTY YEARS OF DIALOGUES

Achievements:

1. Shared Apostolic Faith
2. A renewed understand of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition
3. The Doctrine of Justification
4. Deepened understanding of the nature of the Church
5. New approaches to Baptism and Eucharist

Remaining Issues:

1. Interpretation of basic Church confessions and statements
2. Relative role of Scripture and Tradition
3. Interpretation of the Doctrine of Justification: need for theological anthropology
4. The understanding of the Church itself
5. Specific questions on the Eucharist

A NEW ECUMENISM? THE FUTURE OF THE DIALOGUES

- Needs personal conviction as well as academic concern
- 'Receptive Ecumenism' – learning as well as teaching
- 'Exchange of Gifts' (UUS 28)
- Need for Reception
- Involvement of those at a higher and lower level (bishops and laity)
- Looking at local expertise
- Clarifying remaining issues