

Communiqué



The Anglican-Oriental Orthodox International Commission has held its second meeting 3-7 October 2013 at St Columba's House, Woking, England. Our Churches rejoice at the resumption of this important dialogue after ten years.

We greatly appreciate the hospitality offered by the Anglican Communion, the Church of England, and the Diocese of Guildford.

During the course of its meeting the Commission shared in daily prayer from the various traditions represented, and considered and discussed the following papers:

- The Procession of the Holy Spirit (Coptic Orthodox presentation)
- The *Filioque* in the Anglican Tradition
- The *Filioque* and Anglican Action
- The *Filioque* and the Armenian Orthodox Tradition
- The Draft Agreed Statement on Christology (2002) and its reception

The context in which we have met has been one of continuing concern for the countries in the Middle East in particular, as well as Kenya, Pakistan and Nigeria. Participants felt that Rev 1.9 spoke powerfully to us. 'I, John, your brother, who share with you in Jesus, persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.'

On Saturday 5 October we worshipped in the Coptic Orthodox Church of St Augustine, Gomshall, Surrey. Through this act of worship the members of the Commission, together with local church members, prayed and expressed solidarity with the peoples at the heart of suffering.

At the service, Bishop Angaelos said, 'We gather to remember our brethren in Egypt, Syria, and throughout the Middle East, where many continue to suffer persecution for their Faith. Some suffer even to the extent of losing their lives, yet their faithful witness in the Middle East is a blessing to the whole Church, and to the whole world.'

Bishop Geoffrey Rowell added, 'We have reflected on our common faith in Christ, and how we speak of Him, and live in Him, by the life-giving work of God's Holy Spirit. We have done that in the deep awareness of the suffering of fellow Christians in Syria, in Egypt, and in many other places. The God whom we worship and adore is the One who comes down to the lowest part of our need.'

On Sunday 6 October members of the Commission were welcomed to the Eucharist at The Chapel Royal, Hampton Court, for its Feast of Dedication, and were joined by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby. In greeting them Archbishop Justin said, 'We meet with an urgency and importance to meeting, which is together to seek God's powerful hand to deliver the people of Christ, who seek only to serve him and serve their people.' We express our thanks for his presence with us and his encouragement for the work of this dialogue. We are also deeply grateful to his predecessor Dr Rowan Williams for his significant work in reviving this dialogue.

The Commission shares the joy of the Coptic Orthodox Church at the enthronement of its new Pope and Patriarch, His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, and of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church at the enthronement of its new Patriarch, His Holiness Abune Matthias I.

The third meeting of the Commission is planned to take place in Cairo, Egypt, in October 2014, hosted by the Coptic Orthodox Church, addressing the themes of ecclesiology, primacy and collegiality, and pastoral co-operation.

At the conclusion of the dialogue the Commission thanked God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for the unity that they experienced and shared.

Members of the Commission

Anglican

The Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell (Co-Chair)	The Church of England
The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson	The Church of Ireland
The Revd Canon Harold Nahabedian	The Anglican Church of Canada
The Rt Revd Duleep de Chickera	The Church of Ceylon
The Revd Canon Dr William Taylor	The Church of England
The Very Revd Dr Samy Shehata	The Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East
The Rt Revd Jonathan Goodall	The Church of England
The Rt Revd Clive Handford	The Church of England (Unable to attend the meeting)
The Revd Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan (Co-Secretary)	Anglican Communion Office
Mr Neil Vigers (Administrator)	Anglican Communion Office

Oriental Orthodox

Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria

His Eminence Metropolitan Bishoy (Co-Chair)	Egypt (Unable to attend the meeting)
His Grace Bishop Angaelos (Acting Co-Secretary)	England

Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church - Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia

His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian	USA
The Very Revd Archimandrite Shahe Ananyan	Armenia

Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church - Holy See of Cilicia, Antelias - Lebanon

His Eminence Archbishop Nareg Alemezian (Acting Co-Chair)	Lebanon
His Grace Bishop Shahe Panossian	Kuwait

Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

His Grace Archbishop Abba Gabriel	Ethiopia
His Grace Archbishop Abba Yacob	South Africa

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

The Revd Fr Dr KM George	India (Unable to attend the meeting)
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Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch

His Eminence Archbishop Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim	USA
His Eminence Archbishop Mor Gregorios Joseph	India (Unable to attend the meeting)