

DATE: September 17, 2010

FROM: Don Clemmer

O: 202-541-3206

M: 260-580-1137

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION MEETS, PLANS
STATEMENT ON APPROACHES TO MORAL ISSUES**

WASHINGTON—The Anglican-Roman Catholic Theological Consultation in the United States held its sixty-eighth meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, on September 9 and 10. Bishop Ronald P. Herzog of Alexandria, the Catholic co-chairman of the Consultation, hosted the session, which took place at the St. Joseph Catholic Center in Alexandria. Episcopal Bishop John Bauerschmidt of the Diocese of Tennessee (Nashville) also co-chaired the meeting, replacing Bishop Thomas Breidenthal of Southern Ohio, who announced his resignation at the last meeting due to other responsibilities.

This session was largely devoted to the examination of a draft outline of a potential agreed statement on the topic of the current round of dialogue, "Ecclesiology and Moral Discernment: Common Ground and Divergences." This topic explores the fact that while the two churches share the same convictions on a wide range of ethical questions, there are serious differences regarding certain issues in personal morality, especially those pertaining to human sexuality. In earlier meetings of the Commission, members discussed Catholic and Anglican positions on contraception, debt relief, immigration, same-sex unions and health care.

Decisions were made regarding the production of a draft of the first section of the document and further studies that remain to be undertaken.

During the course of the meeting the members were able to visit St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Alexandria, and were presented with materials commemorating the centenary of the founding of the Diocese of Alexandria (1910-2010). The sixty-ninth meeting was set for February 28 and March 1, 2011, at a place to be determined.

In addition to the co-chair, Catholic members of the dialogue are Msgr. David A. Bohr, Rector of St. Peter's Cathedral in Scranton, Pennsylvania; Father Charles Caccavale, Professor of Moral Theology at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception; Dr. Therese Lysaught, Associate Professor in the Department of Theology at Marquette University; Theresa Notare, Ph.D., of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Secretariat for Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth; Jesuit Father Thomas P. Rausch, Ph.D., Department of Theological Studies of Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles; and Paulist Father Ronald G. Roberson, Ph.D., Associate Director of the USCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and staff to the dialogue.

Representatives of The Episcopal Church, in addition to Bishop Bauerschmidt, include the Rev. Matthew S. C. Olver, Church of the Incarnation in Dallas, Texas; Mary Reath, governor of the Anglican Center in Rome and author of "Rome and Canterbury: The Elusive Search for Unity" (2007); Dr. Timothy Sedgwick, Professor of Christian Ethics at Virginia Theological Seminary; the Rev. Canon. J. Robert Wright, Ph.D, Professor of Church History at the General Theological Seminary in New York, New York; and the Rev. Thomas Ferguson, Ph.D., Ecumenical Officer of The Episcopal Church and staff to the dialogue.

A complete list of the agreed statements released by the consultation as well as links to earlier press releases can be found on the USCCB website at:

<http://www.usccb.org/seia/anglican.shtml>

Keywords: Anglican, Episcopalian, Catholic, bishops, dialogue, ecclesiology, moral discernment, Scripture, magisterium, immigration, health care, debt relief, same-sex unions

#####

10-161

SEC,DD,CNS,RNS,Crux