

THE SOCIETY FOR ECUMENICAL STUDIES

May they all be one . . . *but how?*

17 May 2003, St Albans Cathedral, Hertfordshire, England

Afternoon Discussion between Guest Panellists and Keynote Speakers

Guest Panellists

- **Bishop Joe Aldred**, Church of God of Prophecy, Ecumenical Consultant for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
- **Mrs Elaine Appelbee**, Director of the Bradford Health Action Zone, former Bishop of Bradford's Officer for Church in Society
- **Dr Tina Beattie**, Lecturer in Christian Studies at Digby Stuart College, University of Surrey Roehampton

Eastern Churches Observer

- **His Grace Bishop Angaelos**, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church

Keynote Speakers

- **His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury**, the Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams
- **His Eminence Walter, Cardinal Kasper**, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
- **The Revd Elizabeth Welch**, Moderator of the United Reformed Church 2001-2002

Chair

- **Dr Martin Conway**, President of the Society for Ecumenical Studies

Panellists' Commentaries on the Keynote Speeches

EA I used to work for the Church of England for fifteen years, but for the last three years I haven't been anywhere near a church structure apart from my own parish, so I'll comment in the light of that. There are three things I'll pick out particularly from this morning that really resonated in terms of the work that some of us are engaged in, in a city and district like Bradford. One of the first things that struck me was how the ecumenical conversations and activities mirror a great deal two of the parallel universes I work in, when secular partnerships try to address these seemingly intractable problems. Secondly, interfaith dialogue (which, you won't be surprised, is very key in a place like Bradford) and I'd set alongside that dealing with diversity.

When I was thinking about those, I was thinking that maybe there's some learning we can do between these different kinds of conversations that are happening, because there are connections between them that might be helpful. I think I heard today some of the conditions for success, if we are going to get success and movement, that I would be able to bring from those arenas and that I heard echoed here today.

I was very struck when the Archbishop spoke about when something works, how attractive it is, or when something is of God and the Spirit, of course, is there working. I'd been to an event in Bradford run by the Muslim Council of Great Britain, where we were trying to understand Islamic theology about regeneration and it was really exciting. I felt like I'd been in the best kind of faith forum during that day, even though I was there with a secular hat on, but of course we did a bit of Christian theology as well. I came out of that meeting really excited, really buoyed up, only it was September 11th; I walked back into my office, switched on the computer and there was something very different being played out on the screen.

The Cardinal mentioned that sometimes it feels that ecumenical discussions are held in a very high place, or a very academic place, and I did wonder when I started to think about coming here today – what would happen if some of the ecumenical discussions came into the public space, or at least those higher discussions started to take place at a more local level? I know that local conversations go on, but do they handle some of that higher stuff? Would it change the questions that we are asking, would it change the tenor of the debate if we were doing that in public? One of the things we've learnt in Bradford is that when you do theology in the public space it can have a very powerful effect. There is sometimes a feeling that you cannot do very high theology with the rest of us, because we won't understand it. I was at General Synod one day, having a debate on the Creed - like you do in General Synod - and we had a lot of debate about the word 'ek'. I went down to get a cup of tea after this and there was a lady there serving tea and coffee to the General Synod members and she said,

'Wasn't that good? Wasn't that good? I got really upset when everybody wanted a cup of tea!' She could hear it coming through the loudspeakers. She wasn't even a church member, but she had found this debate, the story of where the Creed had come from, that theological debate, really fascinating, as had a sixteen year old sitting up in the gallery. So let's maybe explore where we have the conversations and open it all up much more widely.

The last thing that really rang with me is Elizabeth's talk of holy space. Holy space is powerful space and it isn't just a space for Christians. It is a space that churches can create, and I think of East Germany and South Africa where those spaces became very powerful. While ecumenism and unity is immensely important to us, if we put that into the holy space alongside those big questions about how we want to live together, there are actually lots of people who would want to join us in that space and would appreciate the fact that the space had been found.

JA It is interesting, listening to what was said here this morning and the quite high level of debate that we have been privileged to hear. I couldn't help sitting there pondering, 'who isn't in the room today?' – the many black Christians that there are in the country, both in mainline churches and in black-led churches, for whom this engagement, for the most part, just doesn't seem to get real enough to attract their attention. We were into questions about class, about power, about ethnicity and the degree to which those three things and other factors influence not just the quality, but the kind of debate that we have. That is one issue that I would love to put on the agenda. How might the discussion change if we include other people? People for whom police stop and search is an issue, people for whom navigating their way through the Anglican church system, or the Roman Catholic church system, is an issue, people who see lots of black people sitting in the pews but not many standing at the altar. If we ever get to that kind of discussion, what does that mean for talk about church unity? It seems to me that there is a lot of unity to be engaged with within churches let alone across churches.

TB I think all three of us are addressing fairly similar concerns. I particularly want to pick up on one of the things Bishop Joe has said. One of the things I found interesting this morning, assuming that there was some level of independence in the three speakers preparing to share their thoughts today, was that they all emphasised the importance of prayer and spirituality, prayer and contemplation, prayer and holy spaces and prayer and ecumenical spirituality. As a theologian, I think it has been said by several of us (and I would like to reiterate) that the language of theology and doctrine is on the whole dry and boring, and spirituality and prayer lead us into the places of the poetry and music of our faith, and also the silence of our faith.

Thinking about the silence of faith, I found myself thinking about the traditions in Christian mysticism, the 'apophatic' which is the coming into the presence of the mystery of God in that contemplative silence, where we are led beyond what words can possibly say about what it means to seek that union with God. But also the 'cataphatic' tradition which is almost the chatter of mysticism – because we can say nothing about God, we want to say everything about God.

That leads me to consider the place of women in the church and in gatherings like this. There is a cataphatic tradition among the women of the church today, I believe. We are chattering on the margins, in our theology, in our lives of faith, in the groups that form together for us to explore our visions (not only in the utopian fantastic sense) and our dreams, but also our real hopes. Perhaps as women, sometimes we see those hopes, not in terms of facing the final hopelessness, in human terms, of the cross (although that's very real for all human beings), but of the crisis that is birth and not death. We have a long tradition in the Christian faith of the church struggling to give birth to her children, the church as a mother. I'm very aware that as a few of us women are allowed to trickle through from the margins, a bit closer to the centre, our chatter becomes sensible, rationalised, we put on our suits and we come and sit at the table, and we are fairly safe to have along. Something would change if we didn't have to play this game. I don't know what, and it's a fearful proposition, but we're talking today about transformations in the faith that we love, that go beyond just putting tea bags in cafetières. Would it be new wine into old wineskins, perhaps?

If women were to be allowed to come into the central places of the church as women, not in some kind of ideological battle between the sexes, but in recognition of the fact that we need to show the attractiveness of the love between God and Christ in all that we are as church! At the moment we turn an overwhelmingly male face towards the world again, not in the pews, but at the altars and in the institutions and in the structures. And therefore we show one half of what it means for the human family and for the human person to be made in the image of God. I'm not saying anything about the unattractiveness of the male face; some of them I find deeply attractive. But I think we will be much more attractive when the image of God in the human being, male and female, is incorporated at all levels of our church life as a genuine quest for the joy and the attractiveness of the faith we share.

Responses from Keynote Speakers

RW The three observations we've just heard are all of them, in their different way, asking the question 'who isn't here' when we're talking theology to one another. I put it like that because of the great influence on me personally of the late Donald Nichol, a Roman Catholic lay

theologian, who wrote very movingly indeed about this question of 'who isn't around'. Part of the task of unity, coming from those observations and I think from everything that was said this morning, is learning how to put that question and to acknowledge, if what I was saying earlier is anything like right, that if we are always saying less than there is to say, part of the answer is that there are fewer people around than there ought to be in the saying of it. So, in a sense, I feel we've been challenged to take the whole discussion onto another level, to a level where we have to tackle, first, the very basic question about what it is to be human. What's being said by our three speakers now is that in a variety of ways, 'mainstream Christianity' has not really been terribly interested in the humanity of some people. Whether these are people of other faith traditions, whether they are people of different ethnicity or whether they're women, the mainstream has not wanted them to be there. So what is a human being and how do we learn to be human together with these huge absences? We might have an institutionally very smoothly organised and united church that as a matter of fact didn't engage with human unity at all.

The first thing that has come out for us is about human unity, the definition of humanity. The second, perhaps, is something which prompts me to pick up a favourite word of mine which is conversation and conversational modes of doing theology. It's not just that conversations may go anywhere, though frequently conversations do, but that real conversation assumes that the other person is worth listening to and therefore that their absence matters. Having had it put to us, that there are several different kinds of absence around in some of our talk about unity theologically, perhaps we should recognise that that absence matters and ask how we relate to that. This is an off the cuff response to some very serious questions that have been put.

EW I'm also interested in this question about who isn't here. We were discussing over lunch how many people here are under forty. Would anyone like to volunteer by putting their hand up? Thank you, that's more than I was pessimistically thinking. I think that in our churches there is another area of absence and that is younger people. There is the question about how we enter into dialogue with the younger people who are perhaps thinking and talking in the public life in different ways from those of us who are used to a more familiar ecumenical agenda. How do we engage in a way that gets the interest of and communicates with younger people; and how do we listen to younger people? I think this question about how we communicate the ecumenical vision is a significant one. I was struck by the point about the ecumenical discussions needing to be in a more public space. How do we enable these discussions (or conversations is perhaps the better word) to happen in our congregations and in the places where we meet so that they aren't just separated and become more esoteric and use language that isn't communicating to people? I was also struck by this question, when we think who isn't in the room today, about the significance there is between the way we are church and the concerns

of the world and the need not to separate those two. I think we need to address that in each place.

I grew up in South Africa and the roots for my commitment to unity were in the anti-apartheid struggle – seeing those evil, oppressive divisions that were in that society and seeing where the church stood on both sides of those divisions. Even as a child I was fired up to see that the separation between black and white that was institutionalised in law in that country was wrong. It was out of that human concern that I grew into a concern for the unity of the church. So for me the important thing is to hold together what can seem like the more academic discussions about aspects of our past and our divisions and our theology together with that engagement with the grass roots and the issues that are of genuine concern before our world today.

WK This has brought me to the question, whether we do not need ecumenism *within* our own churches, because in our own churches we are not fully reconciled. There are misalignments and schisms also in our own churches. How can we be ready and able to be witnesses, instruments and signs of peace and reconciliation in the world, or with other churches, if we are not reconciled in our own church? Communion with other churches is a goal of ecumenism but the communion within our churches is also important and therefore ecumenism does not only exist as an 'extra' (of the church), but also as 'intra'. I think the absence is not only here in the ecumenical dialogue, the absence is also in our churches themselves. Reconciliation is therefore something necessary with ourselves and with our own communities. The question is often asked: are we really ready, are we really able, prepared for this ecumenical dialogue and the consequences of inter-faith dialogue? There is no question that there will not be peace in our world if there is no peace among the religions, among the confessions and therefore, this ecumenical and this inter-faith dialogue has consequences also for peace within our world.

Questions from the Floor

1. *Given the slowness of Ecumenical progress, directed from the top down, is it appropriate for some Christians to break the rules?*

RW There is a bit of a paradox in the question. For an Archbishop to say 'by all means break rules.....' is another kind of law. The fact is that in the history of the church, quite frequently, change and advance come because people do break rules and people cross boundaries. Sometimes rule breaking is foolish and highly problematic, sometimes it is saintly and creative and quite often it is both; we don't really know. That some Christians are called to a vocation that is risky seems for me absolutely without doubt and where and how those risks are exercised is impossible to generalise.

Examples – the beginnings of the monastic movement involved breaking moulds and expectations; this is not what one does. When St. Teresa started teaching and founding communities she was doing something which was, most emphatically, not what was expected; she was a woman of Jewish blood teaching prayer and talking about the Bible in ways which got people burnt in 16th century Spain. She was quite lucky not to share their fate at times. More recently there are those who humbly and prayerfully, and with a sense of what they are doing, step across boundaries of one kind or another, whether as a prophetic gesture about unity or other kinds of prophetic gesture. You could talk about Dietrich Bonhoeffer as someone horrendously aware of taking a step of risk in a situation where there seem to be no clear maps. So the best response I can make is: 'it happens and thank God for it'. And precisely because of the nature of it, to say 'by all means break the rules' is to somehow make things safe again, because Archbishops are there to make things safe. One of the apocryphal sayings ascribed to Our Lord was when Jesus saw a man working on the Sabbath and said to him 'if you know what you are doing, blessed are you'.

WK I have two comments. First of all the problem is not only the slowness from top down, there is also a slowness from bottom up. I would be happy if all that is possible from the top would also be realised from the bottom. I would be happy if in my church everybody was as far as the Pope is already in the ecumenical question. There are two poles to the tensions – the progressive and the one that moves slowly. You cannot make a rule of breaking rules. The ones who really broke the rules are the saints, who broke the rule of our common sinful behaviour. To break this rule would be the most progress in ecumenism.

EW The United Reformed Church, in a sense, comes from a tradition of rule breaking. You could argue that it was out of our dissenting origins that our church came to life; in a sense it was breaking the rules of other traditions in this country at the time. I suppose that rule breaking in the Christian tradition is not about bloody-mindedness, which it can sometimes seem like, I confess, in my own tradition. It isn't about an individual who is self-willed, it is about a discernment, the guiding of the Holy Spirit and seeking the mind of Christ and looking to see it in the context of a community, or whether it's just a lone voice. So for me the dissenting tradition has criteria and is not just a rule breaker on its own, but sees itself within the greater tradition of the church. My husband reminds me that at the Reformation the Roman Catholic Church left its true path and the rest of us went on in the right direction – my husband has ideas all of his own. I'm aware that the Reformation itself could be seen as rule breaking by those who were the reformers and yet there was that swing in the Counter-Reformation. It wasn't just that there were people who were leaving the Catholic Church at that time and setting up other churches, there was also that movement of the Spirit too within the Catholic Church. When we look at

the church we see the movement of the Spirit in a variety of ways. I'm struck that today sometimes in the URC there are people who will say that we're a good church for flexibility. We're the flexible friend when it comes to the church. However, I still want to hold that sense of flexibility with its hints of rule breaking within the greater sense of the leading of the Holy Spirit and the seeking of the mind of Christ and doing this within the community of God's people and not on just a rugged individualistic track.

2. Is it necessary to continue to aspire to structural unity or is not recognised diversity sufficient and appropriate?

JA I think the question assumes a correct position. I personally take the view that one of the reasons we have not been able to achieve unity is because we are chasing something that is quite mythical. If we started from the position of an assumed oneness in Christ then we have to work out, because we are one, how we ought to behave. Then we are far more likely to get somewhere. Within the Pentecostal tradition, certainly the black Pentecostals, the whole business of ecumenism is not big – the number of us here to engage with it today shows that it just isn't a big issue. Although that group of churches is amongst the most diverse and some would say fragmented, yet there is an understanding that the Spirit has called us to one calling. The quest isn't to become one - that is assumed to be the case. You are a child of God, you are a child of God, we are all children of God. What the quest is, is how we demonstrate that, how we live that out. So I tend to agree with the way the question is pointing. To go for organisational unity, I would want to put my hand down in terms of voting for one world church, one world leader – I can't think of anything more boring!

WK I would be happy with recognised, reconciled diversity, which for me is the goal of ecumenism. But the problem is that at this moment we are non-reconciled, there is not recognised diversity, there are contradictions among us and this we have to overcome at some point in order to come to this reconciled diversity. Now, there are contradictions between us we have to overcome; we are not already in this reconciled diversity.

EA One of the things we are dealing with in Bradford is this business of diversity. It ought to be an enriching and celebratory thing, so why isn't it? I think it's the point at which diversity is so great and so disconnected that we are merely aliens to one another; and all that does is create fear. I think the churches have moved along that path. So one of the things is, how much common ground do we have to find so that then we can be confident that I recognise you, you recognise me, and now we can safely have the bits that are diverse and move into what Archbishop Rowan said about celebration and giving and

receiving from each other. There is something about creating the spaces for that common ground to be found at all different sorts of levels. As Bishop Joe said, there are two conditions which help, of which one is that we pay attention to everybody, that people get paid attention to whoever they are, and that we take away competition. So there is something there about power, and that's learning from neighbourhoods in Bradford as they try to work some of that out.

RW Very briefly, what we have been reminded of is that the diversity we would hope for is diversity without a sense of threat, and because of the kind of beings we are, we tend to approach diversity normally as threatening – and there's the challenge. Not so much diversity or unity, but what are the structures of communication that enable diversity to be lived with, without a sense of threat? It isn't structure versus no structure, any more than it is unity versus diversity. What kind of structures serve us if we wish to have that diversity in which we are all learning gratefully from one another on our journey? George MacLeod used to say that his ideal for the Iona Community was that one Sunday you could have a Quaker meeting, the next Sunday you could have a Primitive Reformed Eucharist, the next Sunday you could have a Byzantine Liturgy and the next Sunday you could have another Quaker meeting, and that would all be all right, because somehow the structure of the community would hold it. I have a lot of gut sympathy for that.

3. In what ways has the ordination of women in the Church of England affected the prospect for unity with the Roman Catholic Church, and how can this question be moved forward?

TB I think it is necessary to address this question at two levels. Institutionally, in terms of hierarchical relationships, it has, obviously, put a certain brake on the prospect. But at the grass roots level that I come into contact with, it has been a very rich and fruitful thing for Catholic and non-Catholic women alike in the conversations we can have and the ways in which we can share the frustrations and the hopes of our faith together. Let me say that I don't think this is about a rush to go into ordaining women. I think the mistake is, if I'm really honest – no I don't want to call it a mistake - I think that the ordination of women in the Anglican Church was a brave and prophetic step, that however lacks a coherent theology to explain why it happened. In the Catholic tradition there is a possibility, in this time of struggle, of developing a creative theology, if only we were allowed the freedom to do so. I am in no rush to ordain women in the Catholic tradition tomorrow. I find it very difficult as a theologian to be told that because I write about it I will never get a job in a Catholic university. So for me the answer is, at grass roots level, the ordination of women has been a very good thing in ecumenical terms. For women working together in ecumenical relations it is not an issue. It can be a very moving experience for me as a Catholic woman to go to a liturgy led by an

Anglican woman priest, in an Anglican church – that's also about where we break the rules and why. But I wish that in the Catholic tradition we could at least pray together and talk about it and think about it theologically. That's my great sadness.

WK I agree with what was said about the institutional level. It has affected our relationship. It makes dialogue on this point much more difficult. Whether the decision of the Anglican Church was a prophetic one or not I do not know, but I must honestly confess, at this moment I do not see a solution for this problem. I am not so prophetic. Perhaps a solution can be found, but at this moment it is very difficult. At this moment also such a decision in *our* church would create a schism. I think for us, the Catholic church, it would be a contradictory decision. In order to have more communion with another church we would make a schism in our own church. The only people who would be happy with this would be Lefèbvre and his liberal priests. This would not be helpful and would also enlarge our schism with the Orthodox churches and therefore I must openly say I do not see a solution at this moment. But I can only speak for this moment, and can only pray that at some time we are able to find such a solution.

RW When we were discussing the ordination of women to the priesthood in the church in Wales some years ago, I decided on two things we might usefully do. One of them was a regular sharing of silent prayer between people on both sides of the debate. The chapel at Bishop's House was open each week for certain hours for prayer. The second was to have a seminar for the clergy on the theology of ordained ministry so that as and when a decision was made, we might at least have a sense of recognition that we weren't talking about two quite different kinds of ministry. If I may be a little mischievous, Tina - one of the attempts to provide a coherent theology on the ordination of women on that occasion was drawn from the ARCIC Statements on Ministry. We looked very hard at the ecumenical documents that the Anglican Church was actually committed to, to ask what the relationship was between those and the proposed ordination of women to the priesthood, so that we weren't simply making it up as we went along. I think that's quite important. But it does seem to me that, although like the Cardinal, I don't see a short answer to this question, one thing we can do is to work at making sure we can recognise each others' arguments, that we know what common ground we are working on. As you said this morning, your Eminence, the Agreed Statements on Ministry and the Eucharist produced by ARCIC take us a very long way, and I would be very, very sad if anything done by either of our communions, or any other communion, took us back from that level of common ground. If we have that we can still have the conversation.

TB I do not want to get into a wrangle at all, but I do just want to clarify a point. I was very careful not to say I think that the Catholic Church should ordain women. But how can we have these conversations, when within one communion only one voice is allowed to speak? If

within a communion we cannot explore these differences and respect them I don't see how, together in faith, we can go beyond the threat of a schism to a deeper understanding. The question of pressuring for ordination now would be terrible, but how do we go forward when we can't talk or pray together about something.

EW In the URC we ordained our first woman in 1917 and I've been ordained for 27 years myself. Of course we can do that in the Congregational tradition because of a greater congregational independence – we did not need the whole Congregational Church to accept that women were to be ordained because I suspect that in 1917 if we'd asked all the Congregational churches about the ordination of women, it wouldn't have happened. It was in any case very slow. The first forty years after that we had very few women ordained, it was a trickle. It wasn't until about the Sixties that it grew. So I want to say that, although we have a long tradition of ordaining women, it's also been a very slow thing to work on in terms of its acceptance. So I'm aware that it's not an easy issue to talk about. I think that the question about taking consideration of the repercussions of our actions by other traditions needs to be balanced by the sense of us acting with our own integrity in our own tradition. The question of how we balance those two is, I think, quite an interesting one in each of our churches. So, for myself, I need to respect those traditions which have different views. All I can act on is within my own tradition, rather than commenting on different traditions and what they should and shouldn't do. However, I would conclude by saying that I do notice that in some parts of the Anglican Communion there are women bishops!

4. In the promotion of unity, what weight would the other speakers give to the importance to some form of universal primacy, and what form would they think it should take?

EA I have to say, it's not one of the things that concerns us massively in Bradford, at my level of the church. I think that's quite interesting. There are times when there are questions asked, and those questions belong to certain people and come from certain people. A quick story: We once had a questionnaire in the diocese which all the lay people filled in, where one question asked 'of what churchmanship is your church?' The vicars were incredibly surprised by the non-response from the laity about this because, of course, your church is the one you go to, that's your parish church, and you haven't got a clue about where it sits in the grander scale of things, except in a few cases. So forgive me, if I do a *Mastermind* 'pass' – I don't have a view or feel confident to come up with a solution for this one.

JA I am not sure I understand the question fully myself, but I think that if what the question is pointing to, is some supreme head over the world Church. I then tap into the question of security and insecurity,

those who feel threatened and those who don't. That is not a road I would be comfortable going down.

I belong to a relatively small denomination which is international, has a presence in about 110 countries around the world and has its headquarters in the States. It is interesting that we have had maybe four or five international bishops over that church since it's been going. It has always seemed like something that was a long way away from where I and others like me lived our Christian lives. We got closer as transportation has become easier and we are able to go to General Assemblies in the States. Recently, it became clear that there was a possibility that a black person might have become the international bishop. It was amazing how fleet of foot those close to the seat of power became, in ensuring that that did not become a real possibility. And so I sit here as someone who has to live with that kind of dilemma within my own church. If you take that on a world scale I think that those of us who are from minorities, either because we are small, or because we are poor, less powerful, any time you start to talk about that kind of supremacy, we feel very distant from it and therefore do not feel that we can support it. So I am very much for a diverse Christian Church that has natural forms of diversity, all the ones that God will give to us, which will have different heads and different tails and where we learn from each other. I don't welcome the day when there is this huge single head, apart from Christ. He is the one Head I'm happy to have sitting at the top of the world Church.

TB I find this a very difficult question to answer because I find I am in sympathy with what has been said so far. I am a convert from Presbyterianism to Roman Catholicism. I think there are questions about what we mean by universal primacy, what we mean by authority and how it is exercised. Many of them are very similar questions to all the questions we've been asking today about unity and diversity, but particularly in the world we are living in - I'm saying this pragmatically more than doctrinally - I think that the present papacy has been a very good thing for us all over the last thirty years. I think that it's been one of the few voices that can risk speaking truth to power, without having its eye on the next election, the multi-nationals or anything else. The recent war in Iraq is the most obvious example where that has been a great strength to the church. So paradoxically, there are many reasons why I want to stay with some idea that it is possible for us to have some symbol of unity within the church. I don't begin to say how I think that might shape up in the future with having the kind of harmony and diversity that we also want.

EW I've been grateful to the Roman Catholic Church for the consultation that has been going on, on the Petrine ministry. That in itself has been a helpful thing for other traditions of the church - that openness to have the consultation on the Petrine ministry. I'm not sure whether all of us would be as open to consulting about those things that are dear to us with other churches and to receiving what's been

said. So, I'm grateful for that. I am aware of the dilemma we can get into of parochialism and thinking that my community, my part of the church, is really all that's necessary, at least in a practical sort of way, and the kind of connectedness to the larger church becomes a secondary issue. I think it is very important that we do have that sense of connectedness to all the saints and to all God's peoples across the nations. The question is how do we embody that connectedness. There is a big discussion for us to have about all that, e.g. what the criteria would be for the shape of that embodiment, so that it is open enough to embrace our diversity as well as being strong enough to give a sign of our unity to our world. I can't say I have the answers to those questions. I think the dilemma for the WCC, to which I am very much committed, is that as an international body, it only consists of *some* of the world's churches. There are a number of evangelical and charismatic churches who are not part of the WCC, and the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the WCC. Although it strives to be a universal and international body, I think it illustrates some of the difficulties we have when we seek to embody our unity across diversity internationally, in that not everybody is part of it and also there is an ongoing issue about how it can speak with one voice. As I say, I'm wholly in favour of it and I think it ought to be expanded rather than reduced but it does wrestle with some serious issues about authority and accountability and the way in which we symbolise our mutual belonging to the world.

RW It is an issue in which I find myself rather agnostic because of (as has already been pointed out) the difficulty of the terms used. I have very little theological sympathy with the idea that, as Joe said, we need a Head other than Christ, which is not the Roman Catholic position, but I'm suspicious also of the Petrine ministry being conceived primarily as that of chief magistrate or chief executive. Through the history of the church the Petrine ministry has taken a number of different forms and what that is going to be in the future is clearly not evident to us at the moment. For me, the most important text in the Bible on this is in St. Luke at the Last Supper, when Jesus says to Peter 'when you are converted, strengthen your brethren'. Now if there is a ministry, a charism embodied in those words, I think it is to provide a focus for the churches' constant conversion to Christ, a constant focal call to conversion. But also that ministry of strengthening is not only reinforcing faith, but orchestrating, animating and moderating the exchange between communities. I can see a theological case for that kind of service. How that relates to the Petrine ministry as now exercised, how it evolves, I don't know - which is where my agnosticism comes in.

WK I think there is an important linguistic change. Up to now, we have spoken of the papal ministry; now we speak about the Petrine ministry. It is a significant linguistic change because it means papal ministry is a thing which has developed throughout history and which has also become loaded with many connotations. When we speak about Petrine

ministry, we speak about a ministry which is under the norm of what is witnessed in the Holy Scriptures. We need to ask how we exercise this ministry. There was in the past an enormous development; now we can ask how it can develop in the future, but under the norm of the Holy Scripture. What this development can be in the future, nobody can know but I think that it must emphasise collegiality. The Petrine ministry is defined in the First Vatican Council as having two tasks. One task is that it should be a ministry of unity within the church. The second task is to guarantee the tasks of the bishops and to strengthen their position. These are two tasks. The second one should be emphasised more – how could the Petrine ministry be exercised today ?

There must be a renewal of this ministry. The Pope invited the other churches to suggest how to renew his ministry in the situation that we are living in, this globalised world. As the world becomes more or less one big village, there are also conflicts within it. It's helpful to have an agreed point of reference, to give the universal church a voice which can speak. There must be steps covered; the last document we had with the Anglican Communion in arcic, the one called *The Gift of Authority*, indicates some steps which could be possible already today. There was not a lot made of this.

For centuries no Anglican bishop came to visit the Pope. Since the first visit of Archbishop Ramsey to Rome, immediately after the Council, it has become more or less normal, not only for the Archbishop of Canterbury but also for other Anglican bishops and Lutheran bishops to come to Rome. To some degree Rome has become a point of reference. But that is a recognition of Vatican I. There is still a long way to go but I think it is worth reflecting on how to give the universal church this voice, how to have this symbolic point of reference.

5. The crucial step would be the reconciliation of ministries between our churches, not least between Anglicans and Roman Catholics where there is the barrier of the Bull of 1896. How and when might such reconciliation happen and by what process?

EA I suppose it depends what you mean by the role of ministry, or ministries, as to how fruitful the conversation and how complicated the steps are. I've been working on council estates with a small group of clergy and the different traditions are trying to work out the ministry of the church in that area and what has become clear is that it does need unpacking. The way we use the skills of people within our churches is not good on the whole. So I guess the question is the big one about ordained ministry, but it might be that we have to come at this more creatively by exploring the whole issue of what we mean by ministry. That's really taking up Tina's point earlier about women in the church and the place of people who are exercising ministry in the church - but it's simply not seen and recognised. So whilst on the ordained ministry

side I can see enormous difficulties in the way that has already been discussed by the panel, widening it might be more creative and useful.

JA It depends where you base the discussion. If you base it between the Anglican Church and the Roman Catholic Church, it becomes possibly a more manageable discussion to have, even if you cannot come to an agreement on it. If you widen that out to the great variety of the churches there are in the world, I'm not quite sure how you manage that debate at all. I have nothing to say about what may happen between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Church, although I will watch it with interest. If we could quickly get to the place of mutual recognition of each other, then what we would recognise is that we have come along different histories, different tracks, and we have arrived at slightly different places in terms of how we view who we are, what we are trying to do in the world and how we organise ourselves to do what we are doing. I think at that point what I would be campaigning for is not alignment, where we must have the same categories of ministries, but rather the recognition of what each other is doing and a determination to work along with each other. That's what we do in life, not every company is structured in the same way; therefore I don't see why we necessarily have to get hung up on churches being structured in exactly the same way, calling everybody by the same title and so on. I don't think that's what we need. What we need is the recognition that we are all about the same business, but we have slightly different views about how we approach what we do, maybe because our particular calling is different. I think there is room within Christianity to agree to disagree about certain things and maybe we will never agree on everything. So trying to go down that road I'm not quite sure is very fruitful. No, I think we need to engage, to be appreciative of each other, embrace the great diversity that God has given to us in the church and learn what it means to be in the other person's shoes as best we can, and work with it.

EW Speaking very practically, we have quite an issue in some parts of the country about not having enough ministers to go around for the people of God in each place. I can see that there is not just a theological dimension to all this, there is a practical issue. If we had greater inter-changeability of ministry, and at the moment I'm speaking about Free-Church/ Anglican inter-changeability, we might be able to help ourselves to be more effective across certain parts of our country. I'm aware that it is possible that the Church of England, through its Canons B43 and B44, has made possible, in a local area and to a limited extent, the inter-changeability of ministries in that place, when there is a formal ecumenical recognition in that area. I think that has been a very helpful movement which has moved us forwards at the grass roots in this practical way. I think that the recognition of ministries in its theological and wider aspects is an enormous question, not a small question, because if we had been able to move fully on this point we would be much closer to being more visible in our unity than we are at present. It is a big hurdle to jump over and I'm not sure, especially

between the Anglican and Catholic Churches, what the next steps are to enable this to be moved forward, so I would be very happy to hear from my Anglican and Catholic brothers on this one.

WK I guess we mean the recognition of ordained ministries, not of all ministers in the church. I think in this regard we made enormous progress already. In the first phase of the ARCIC documents there was the same understanding of the priestly ministry in the Anglican and Catholic Church. It was a big move. The second move was that the Second Vatican Council said formally that the Holy Spirit is at work also in the non-Catholic churches. He is at work, not outside his ministers, but through his ministers in the other churches. Thus the question is not 'full recognition' or 'non-recognition'. It would be a juridical kind of question if it was 'yes' or 'no' – it is not zero or all. There are many things in between and, of course, as Catholics, we recognise that there are many important elements of the church of Christ in all other churches. We recognise also that there are important elements of ministry in the other churches and therefore there is a partial recognition already.

When the Archbishop of Canterbury comes to see the Pope, he is not a layman for the Pope – such a thing would be ridiculous! The Pope gave him a pectoral cross, a simple action which has to say something. It is not only a gift. He could give him money (that would also be helpful to him!), but he gave him a pectoral cross – it means something. It is not a question of full recognition, it is a question of fuller communion. It is not only an isolated question of ministry. If we could have full communion (we already have imperfect communion, we do not have zero or all), we would have full recognition of ministry. In the meantime, I would agree that we can learn from each other. Of course we can learn from the experiences of ministry as exercised in other churches. Our ministry perhaps is too centralised, too top down only. The dimension of collegiality and such things could be developed. It is a mutual process of learning. For me, mutual learning, this exchange of gifts, is the main thing in ecumenism. It is not the conversion of the one church to the other, it is the common movement towards Christ. I think in this way we can come to full union.

RW I think that the Cardinal has got to the core of the matter, by saying that the question of the recognition of ministries cannot be separated from the whole question of the recognition of the life of worshipping communities. The strongest pressure towards recognition of ministries, mutual recognition, comes where people are regularly sharing the experience of worship. Looking back to work in Wales, within the ecumenical projects in some parts of my former diocese in Wales, there was tremendously strong enthusiasm for sustaining and further developing an exchange of ministries, simply because the worshipping community was one, for all practical purposes, in an area of some poverty and deprivation where the traditional confessional distinctions didn't really add up to very much in most people's eyes – the sort of

context that others have spoken of. I suspect that as this goes forward, the pressure will rise, because it means that we can only adequately answer questions about the nature of ordained ministry when we understand better how ordained ministry itself grows from and moves into and serves into the integrity of a Eucharistic church. So it's never just a question of whether or not you give the certificate.

6. (from Bishop Angaelos, of the Coptic Orthodox Church) Little has been said today about the Orthodox Churches and their role in the ecumenical movement. Is there a danger that ecumenism will be seen as a purely Western enterprise?

JA The Coptic and other similar churches have not featured much. I think it is a lot to do with where we're having the debate today that has determined that. There will be ecumenical discussions going on in different places among different people and when I talked earlier about who is not here today that is because there are other people involved in the space in which we work who are not here. It is not to say that everybody from everywhere else needs to be here. I think that the debate needs to take place where people are; and so if you move outside the West, then one would hope that discussions about how Christians demonstrate better their oneness on the ground and in the face of the world may be on-going there too. However, here in the West, where we do have a hugely cosmopolitan church, we need to work harder, as I hinted earlier, at ensuring that the leaders who are leaders by dint of history, by dint of power, by dint of any other heteronomical relationship, don't continue as ever they did. We need to stop and ask who else needs to be involved in this discussion to make this discussion as resourceful, as meaningful and as representative as possible. So the sense of your question is that we need to become more broadly based as we engage in these discussions on ecumenism, and I agree entirely.

The last thing I would say, again as I hinted earlier, is that the language is not always the language that is used everywhere. Among the Pentecostals, black and white, the term ecumenical is not one that is common currency, yet if you look at the work of the Evangelical Alliance, for example, there is a major work of ecumenism going on there, but it is not generally called that. I think we need to watch the language and to ensure that we don't just allow those who have always ruled to continue to rule but that we see the church of God as indeed the place where all of God's people take part in discussing why we divide at the meal that we share.

RW I would very much like to speak on this, because pretty well every useful thought I have ever had on Christian Unity has derived from my studies of Orthodox theologians. I think Orthodoxy has always, in the twentieth century ecumenical context, put the question at another level.

It's broken the terms of the western debate and brought it to a different theological level. Because the Eastern Christian tradition has so profound and wide-ranging a notion of the sacramental Eucharistic identity of the church, because it has so strong an idea that to belong in the church is to belong with the entire worshipping company of heaven of which this visible congregation is but a microscopic part, then I feel that that brings all our talk about unity into another sphere. If, let us say, the World Council of Churches had been or were to become a body in which the eastern Christian traditions were not represented, I think that would be catastrophic. Goodness knows how difficult it is at the moment, I am well aware of this; and yet it is one of the things that has stopped the WCC and many other bodies buying into a functional and rather flat idea of unity – a rather pragmatic and almost managerial approach to how the Christian communion should sit together. The Orthodox churches have constantly said, 'but there is a bigger question to be asked, and a deeper reality to be experienced'. Without that we are in a very bad way.

How do western Christians gain an understanding of Orthodox spirituality and worship? To do this western Christians need to have lots of practice at standing up for long periods. I think it was Archbishop Anthony Bloom who said, 'the understanding of Orthodoxy begins in the lower legs'. I think, in all seriousness, we need the willingness to share patiently in Orthodox worship. A number of people from very un-Orthodox backgrounds have said, in various ways, 'I didn't think I was going to make any sense of this, but I got through the pain barrier, so to speak, and realised that this was something extraordinary that was happening'. And the sense of worship happening, never mind my making it happen, but it happening, is what I think you learn as you try and share in this tradition.

EW I think it has been a dilemma in the West, as we said, knowing about the Orthodox Church. I'm aware that for me, my main encounter with the Orthodox Church, apart from the occasional service in England, was through the WCC; and it was an enormously enriching experience, I have to say, and very enlightening to be with Orthodox brothers and sisters in the WCC. I'm aware that in terms of our practical engagements, obviously there are questions because Orthodox churches are more in the minority in many places in this country. I think the idea of going to Orthodox services is a good one and I'm aware that in many unexpected parts of the country, e.g. in rural Herefordshire, there is a Russian Orthodox church. So it might actually be more possible in each place than we might anticipate to engage with an Orthodox community. Also one of the places I've engaged with the Orthodox community is on holiday. Whenever we go on holiday we tend to go wherever the local church is and we've had some very interesting experiences of Greek Orthodox churches while we've been on holiday; including the standing and awareness of the iconostasis, and people's reverencing of the iconostasis, the singing of the service and so on, which have given me that sense of eternity, that

sense of being with all the saints in a very good kind of way. I want to echo what the Archbishop said about the significant contribution about worship that I think Orthodox traditions bring to us, and also about the role and work of the Holy Spirit which I think sometimes we've neglected in western theology. I've been helped by the thinking and the work of Orthodox theology in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church and in creation. Finally, I'll just say that the most influential book that I've read in about the last fifteen years was by John Zizioulas - *Being as Communion* - which really helped to influence my own thinking about the nature of communion and the nature of our human identity and the way we become fully human in Jesus Christ. So I feel I have personally been enriched by the Orthodox tradition and I think it would be helpful if in the West we were able to take more account of Orthodoxy.

WK Well first I want to mention that the eastern churches are not only the Orthodox, there are also the ancient oriental churches such as the Coptic, the Assyrians, the Armenians. I remember very well the Coptic Church during my stay in Egypt, when I was in this monastery in the desert. I was very much impressed. These are educated people whose spiritual life is rooted in the life of the people. My theology and also my spirituality have been very enriched by eastern spirituality, eastern theology. We can learn something about the mystery of God, from this – a dimension a little bit forgotten in our western theology, in our western spirituality, in our western churches. Now ecumenism without the eastern churches would be a catastrophe. These are the old churches, they are spiritually very rich churches.

For me there is a second argument, now that we are discussing the eastern European countries joining the European Union. How can this be done without the Orthodox churches? They form the culture of these peoples very deeply and the EU cannot be only economic affairs. It is a question of culture and also of hearts. Therefore, without rapprochement between east and west, Europe cannot function, Europe cannot respire with both lungs, as the Pope often says. I feel very strongly about this point, and I can say that in the last two years we have made enormous progress with the eastern churches. We started a new dialogue now with all eastern churches together, the Copts, the Assyrians, the Armenians, the Ethiopians and so on. This went very well; it was a very good atmosphere. When I go back to Rome on Tuesday, I will convoke a colloquium of Orthodox theologians of all patriarchates about the Petrine ministry. We have also developed very good relations in the last two years with Serbia, with Bulgaria and Romania. There is something moving and, I would say, it would be a great disaster if the Orthodox churches were to step out of the WCC.

We also have to learn. I think all of us know of Orthodox (Russian and other) icons, and everybody knows what spiritual richness there is in these icons. It is not easy for westerners to come in and understand all these traditions. It needs time, and Orthodox and eastern churches do

not think in terms of time as we westerners do. I think it is worth putting in this endeavour, so that we can learn from it and come together. The Orthodox joined the ecumenical movement before my own church at the beginning of the twentieth century. They belong to the founding members of the ecumenical council of churches and I think we should do all we can to come together, and to understand each other. It is very much a question of the future of Europe.

From the Chair, Dr Martin Conway thanked the six speakers for what they had said, all who had sent in questions, and the team who had sorted these for him, as well as those who had made all the arrangements for the day. He invited all present to take the refreshments now available and be back in good time for the service of Choral Evensong to close the day.