



**The Society for Ecumenical Studies**  
Registered Charity Number 1096515  
A Body in Association with Churches Together in England

17 September 2007

Dear ecumenical partner and friend,

**Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Ecumenical Learning – Conference on Saturday November 3rd**

As you may be aware, in January 2006, a remarkable international colloquium took place at Durham, involving church leaders from the main UK denominations, lay people, academics and pastors, to celebrate and explore the innovative approach to ecumenism quietly but with determination championed by Cardinal Walter Kasper. This approach is to look at all aspects of Church life, culture, ministry and governance and asks – **What can we learn and receive, with integrity, from the other traditions? How will we make what we learn and receive a lived and practical reality?** Now we want to enable those in southern England to be involved in this exploration, on the simple grounds that the unity of Christians, Christ's own prayer, is vital to the Church's purpose and the furtherance of its mission in the world

The proceedings from January 2006 are to be published later this year by OUP as *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*. There will be a further international colloquium in Durham in January 2009. In May there was a conference in Dublin, and this autumn there will be another in Washington. We are hoping to maintain the momentum to this hopeful approach here in the UK and introduce it to people more widely. Certainly there is benefit in moving from the 2006 starting point of 'What can Catholicism learn?', to consider what all traditions can learn and receive – with integrity of course.

So I am writing from the Society, but also on behalf of Dr Paul Murray, the director of the Receptive Ecumenism project at Durham University, to ask if you would be willing to come and be part of a day conference at **St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Cadogan Street, London SW3** on Saturday November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The speakers so far include **Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia**, **Bishop Christopher Hill** of Guildford, **Professor Paul Fiddes** (Principal of Regent's Park College, Oxford), **Dr John McDade SJ** (Principal of Heythrop College), speaking from the Orthodox, Anglican, Baptist and Roman Catholic perspectives. **David Carter** (Wesley College, Bristol, and the UK RC-Methodist committee) will give an overview. There will be ample opportunity for those attending, too, to enter into the dialogue and so we hope that all will be thinking, "What can and does my church learn and receive from the other Church traditions – and what could the other churches, traditions and communities need to learn from mine?"

You may also like to know that in the North East, the various Churches' dioceses, regions and districts have set up a local ecumenical 'action research' project to discover how the approach can be translated into practice and operation, including what ecclesiological structures and methods (without detriment to any Church's integrity or principle, of course) may be needed for common mission and closer unity.

**Dr Paul Murray** is directing this project too and he will share with us its aims and experiences so far.

A leaflet and form accompanies this letter. More are available, together with further details, on our website, [www.ecumenicalstudies.org.uk](http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.uk). Please invite friends and associates. We hope you can come.

With every good wish. Yours sincerely,

The Revd Mark Woodruff, Secretary