



Neil Turner/Lambeth Palace

The Archbishop of Canterbury took part in a historic ecumenical prayer vigil, presided over by Pope Francis, in St Peter's Square on Saturday 30 September. Along with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople, church leaders from different denominations were invited to join the Pope in prayer, entrusting the work of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod to the Holy Spirit.

Before the vigil, the crowd shared in Taizé-style music, prayer and hymns. The Archbishop lead the Lord's Prayer, and at the end of the vigil joined with all the Christian leaders present to collectively pray and bless the crowd.





The vigil was attended by thousands of people from across Christian denominations, including many young people.



voice in prayer.

Vatican Media

On the same morning that 21 new Catholic Cardinals from all over the world received their red birettas in St Peter’s Square in Rome, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, had a long, private meeting with the Pope.

The audience with the Pope was held at the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican, just before the Consistory for the Creation of the New Cardinals.



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During their meeting the Pope and Archbishop shared memories of their historic joint visit to South Sudan in February. They felt their ecumenical ‘Pilgrimage of Peace’ – which also included the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Revd Dr Iain Greenfields – had brought hope to the people there, the majority of whom desperately want peace.

The Archbishop and the Pope also discussed migration, and how it affects the poor more than any other group in the world, as well as those living in places where the impact of climate change is a reality or a distinct risk. Pope Francis spoke about the West being “consumed by indifference”.

Pope Francis also asked about Women on the Frontline, the mission led by Archbishop Welby’s wife Caroline Welby, which equips women to be peacebuilders and reconcilers in places of conflict around the Anglican Communion.

And finally, they spoke about the power of the Holy Spirit to bring harmony, although they agreed it doesn’t always bring “tidiness”.

Archbishop Justin Welby said: “It’s always a privilege to meet with my dear brother, Pope Francis. We shared our hopes for South Sudan, and discussed the impact of migration and climate change on the world’s poorest. May our churches be united in bringing Christ’s good news to a world in need.”





Whilst in Rome the Archbishop of Canterbury also officially opened a special exhibition at the John Moorman Memorial Library at the Anglican Centre in Rome. The exhibition includes a specially made piece of pottery by Rebecca Cottrell, a professional potter and wife of the Archbishop of York.

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