



"Your Holiness, I would like to begin by expressing gratitude to God for your leadership and example to the whole world, and especially for their effect on the Anglican Communion.

"You have recalled us afresh to the needs of ministering with the poor. You have set a Christ-like example by your travel to places of suffering and difficulty. You have stood alongside migrant peoples. You have initiated work on modern slavery and human trafficking, and much more. You gave essential force to the meeting of nations in Paris on climate change.

"Your letters and encyclicals have spoken far beyond Rome and her church, in a manner which is universal.

"Yet, as we look around the world we continue to see enormous dangers to human dignity, and great suffering. The dangers faced are ones that many acknowledge, but to which few have a response.

"Into this mix of war, migration and climate change, economic deprivation, inequality and corruption, we see added the growth of extremist groups advocating religiously motivated violence, affecting most, probably even all, of the great world faiths. The internet enables their poison to spread around the world with lightning speed, catching the naïve and lost, and leading them into paths of destruction. Secular values disregard the unborn, especially those with disabilities, and discard the aged. Family life is marginalised in the cause of economic necessity.

"Facing all these perils, and a million more, is the body of Christ, the church, against which, as was promised to St Peter, the gates of hell shall not prevail. We have much cause for concern, but none for fear, for we are embraced by Christ, our Good Shepherd. In fact, we are filled with joy and hope, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit who is given to us.

"Yet in our disunity we grieve the Spirit of God, and we damage every aspect of our lives in Christ. Our witness is damaged, for we are not seen as one, and thus the world is less able to see that Jesus comes from the Father. Our fellowship is impaired, for we cannot share in the Eucharist. Our delight in Christ is overshadowed by our grief at divisions within his family.

"Last January, at the final Eucharist of the Anglican Primates we were blessed by the loan of the Crozier of St Gregory, and by the loan the Gospels brought by Augustine to England in 597. Speaking to us was Jean Vanier, who led us in washing each other's feet. All three brought us back to the simplicity of Christ who breaks down divisions, and in cross and resurrection and giving the Holy Spirit, restored human dignity.

"This week we have seen the meeting of the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), established in 2000. Its less than beautiful name hides the beauty of its work, in which, with joy and love it seeks to show the world by our joint action in Mission that we are bound deeply in Christ, who is the hope of the world.

"May we learn from them, and the blessing they are finding and giving. May we tackle together the issues of war and injustice.

"Your Holiness, I ask that, as we have seen in these two days, despite those things that divide, we may be publicly determined to press forward where we may, together with all other Christians, especially those of the Orthodox world and the east. Jesus has gone before us. He calls us to be courageous. Let us walk closer together so the world sees new life and energy in the Church's worship, mission and witness. Above all so the world sees Christ shining ever more brightly."

3 min read

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