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Die Kirche von Südindien

Ein Briefwechsel zwischen dem Erzbischof von Utrecht und dem Erzbischof von Canterbury

Vorbemerkung: Der Vortrag von Canon Eric Kemp über die «Kirche von Südindien» an der anglikanisch-alkatholischen Theologenkonferenz vom September 1957 in Rheinfelden (siehe IKZ 1958, S. 56 ff.) hat manch neue Erkenntnis gebracht. Dennoch blieben Fragen offen, auch nach der dem Vortrag folgenden Aussprache. Diese Fragen und auch einige Gespräche mit Anglikanern aus verschiedenen Ländern bewegten mich, ein Memorandum über diese Angelegenheit auszuarbeiten und dieses den Erzbischöfen von Canterbury und York sowie dem Präsident-Bischof der Bischoflichen Kirche der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika vorzulegen. Dieses Memorandum, das strikt persönlich gemeint war und auch nicht auf Beantwortung drängte, ist dennoch beantwortet worden. Die Antwortschreiben der zwei Letztgenannten waren persönlich und eignen sich weniger für eine Veröffentlichung. Da die Antwort des Erzbischofs von Canterbury sachlich sehr wichtig und für den anglikanischen Standpunkt sehr aufschlussreich ist, soll er auch einem weiteren Leserkreis zugänglich gemacht werden. Die drei Kirchenhäupter verliehen mir die Freiheit, mein Memorandum in dieser Zeitschrift zu publizieren, ebenso gab der Erzbischof von Canterbury gerne seine Zustimmung zur Veröffentlichung seiner Antwort. Wir sind den Hochw. Herren für diese Erlaubnis besonders dankbar.

A. Rinkel

Aartsbisschop
van
Utrecht

Utrecht, October 1957

MEMORANDUM

addressed to

The Most Rev. The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury
The Most Rev. The Lord Archbishop of York
The Most Rev. The Presiding Bishop of the
Prot. Episc. Church of USA
personally

The Most Rev. the Lord Archbishop
of Canterbury

Your Grace,

This letter will be explicitly personal, addressed to You personally, written by me personally. So I do not address myself to your Church, and I do not speak in the name of my Dutch Church, nor in

the name of our International Bishops' Conference, even not in the name of the three Dutch bishops. You are not obliged to pass the contents of this letter on to other authorities; on my side the Old-catholic Church is not bound to what I want to say here. The only thing preceding this letter was the assurance of one of You, that a "memorandum" like this would not be considered as "unwelcome".

There is a case which rouses anxiety in your Church as well as in mine, which confuses the minds and which here and there even leads to utterances I do not think justified, and which make me apprehensive. I mean in the first place the question of the Church of South-India, and secondly the negotiations which in England and the USA are taking place between the Anglican Church and Churches of definitely Protestant Reformed origin.

I want to restrict myself to the first question only, as the second has had hitherto a different character, and is for the present more in the area of oecumenical rapprochement, a long way, with, in my opinion, little practical prospect and result.

The first question is at present of more practical importance, because it is a movement of a denomination outside the Anglican Communion, to become a full member of her in the long run. At this process the Anglican Church is "only" looker-on, and she awaits the result, for which she originally has fixed a period of 30 years. Many, however, are of opinion, that the "growth" is so fast in the direction desired, that they think its admission into the Anglican Communion could take place much sooner, need not even be put off.

It is this point of view and its resulting efforts which alarm many in your Church as well as in mine.

As to my own Church, here and there voices are heard, which would like to see the Intercommunion with the Anglican Communion broken off. It is not the voices of the Bishops, but rather those of younger people who do not know the history and have not seen the fact of the Intercommunion since 1931 growing and become reality, but who have received it as an heirloom.—I personally refer them to the basis of the Intercommunion, which is anchored in the Declaration of the Bishops of the Union of Utrecht of September 1889, and in the Lambeth Quadrilateral on the Anglican side, on the ground of which our Churches have recognized each other's sound and full Catholicity, and which they do still. Next to that I always point out to them the fact, that our Oldcatholic Church has not made an Intercommunion with a party in a Church, with the exclusion or the

ignoring of other parties, but with “the Church”, and a Church must never be judged according to the aims of a certain party, however great and influential it may be, but according to her confession, her ministry and her sacramental faith and life as “church”.

Of course that does not alter the fact, that we have and must have our view about the Church of South-India, and about the ways followed there. Therefore, I take the liberty to quote the passage in question from the address I gave at the Conference of Anglican and Oldcatholic theologians at Rheinfelden last September. The title of this paper was “Eucharist and Ministry”, a title which had to cover a number of questions, about which the Anglican side wished to learn the Oldcatholic view.

The passage in question runs:

“In this light stands also our view as to the attempts from Anglican side to promote unity or intercommunion among certain Churches along the way of catholizing penetration, as by adopting episcopacy. Of course, we think primarily of South-India, but also of the negotiations which have been conducted between the several Churches of Great Britain for the last few years, and about which an important report has been submitted to these Churches.

Though the two cases are not identical, they present a same way and method, that of gradual infiltration. As to South-India we may say that the infiltration will evidently happen in a catholizing direction. As to the negotiations with the British Churches, we have the impression that more a mutual infiltration, an exchange of spiritual values is aimed at, whereby our second impression is this, that from Anglican side little or no effect is expected of adopting presbyterian ideas, so that it is without danger, whereas every effect is expected of a penetration of catholic-anglican thought into the presbyterian Churches.

I believe it is sufficient for our theme, if we restrict ourselves to the work of the “United Church of South-India”. And then we would like to divide our opinion into a point of view *on principle* and one of *practise*, and may I emphatically say, that the expression of these points of view is personal and should be considered as personal.

On principle the way followed in South-India is insufficient. To attain a sound catholic Ministry in the long run, the non-catholic ministry is for the time being also valued as sufficient and with equal rights, but nevertheless with the intention in the

background to discontinue it as no longer allowable after course of years. This is not a method of "Heilsgeschehen", of the "via salutis" and of the conviction of faith, but of ecclesiastical organisation and ecclesiastical-political management. Moreover, the questions after the tenor, the essential value, i.e. the grace-giving function of the Ministry and the dogmatic content of the Sacrament remain deliberately unanswered and unsettled, and indeed the whole content of faith, the "doctrine", remains undefined and does not explicitly aim at unity. Therefore, we can perfectly understand, that many Anglicans are alarmed at this way of reunion, just as we would never take this way for our responsibility. If God wills, this way can lead to a satisfactory end,—it can just as well be a failure. For us the doubtful side of this way lies in the fact, that the whole accent is laid on the significance of "adopting episcopacy in the system", while the inner meaning of episcopacy remains "undiscussed", and the development of the method is left to time or to chance or to the practise of experience. There is in this method something mechanical, I would almost say: magical.

Next to it there is also a *practical* point of view.

I have just said: this way *may*, if God wills, lead to a satisfactory end. I mean this seriously, and that on the following grounds.

In our opinion a limit on dogmatic level has been reached in the oecumenical work, and we can state a deadlock of the different points of view, which is manifest in the contrast: catholic and protestant. If the oecumenical endeavour is from God, there must be a way-out and it may be looked for and aimed at: With all the defects and dangers which in our opinion are attached to the way chosen in South-India, it may not be deemed impossible, that God wants to use this human-weak, perhaps even human-turbid attempt to show "a" way-out, even if this way-out is not "the" way-out. A growth towards catholic truth *may* manifest itself here, which some day can develop into full catholicity, the more so as the experience of a few years has already taught, that this possibility is not a chimera. Looked upon like this we await, trusting in the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, the development of the future. But the danger remains, that people are to soon satisfied with the result, and that they take an organic, outward unity for a unity in principiis. We respect and understand the "com-

prehensiveness" of the Anglican Church within her own walls, but a "comprehensiveness" outside her *can* still always bear the character of an insignificant tolerant federation of opinions, which in deepest principle remain divergent and contradictory. Such a result would in the long run be destined to disintegrate into the old divisions. And with this the point in practise returns to that in principle and theological thought has to remain on its guard."

At the same Conference Canon Kemp of Oxford gave an extremely lucid exposition of the present state of the South-India question. As member of the well-known Joint-commission in this question he was undoubtedly the most competent man, and, in view of his ecclesiastical "status", also the most unprejudiced authority to give such an exposition. Nevertheless his exposition did not remove the objections and thoughts expressed by me,—especially this, that for indefinite time any sort of Ministry, whether or not ordained in the catholic line, is considered valid, and that there is a permanent liberty in the conception of the catholic-apostolic character of episcopacy—, and the Conference wished that these were put down for further study.

In the mean time it will be evident to You, that I want to keep an open eye for ways which in the future might prove to be God's ways, mindful of Gamaliël's words in Acts. 5 : 34 ssq. We on our side, however, fear that the Anglicans could make a premature decision, before the situation is actually ripe for a harvest satisfactory to every body, and that when making such a decision, they would not think of the position and the judgment of the Churches, e.g. the Oldcatholic, with whom they are in intercommunion, and of the judgment of the Churches, e.g. the Orthodox, with whom a rapprochement or intercommunion is strived after, but which would then be endangered.

By many utterances during the last few years I know of the alarm in some circles in England and the USA, caused by the fear, that the Anglican Church ist becoming not only an amalgam of opinions without any limits, but also especially that through a hasty decision she would lose her original character of catholicity and apostolicity. Not only it is feared, that the Anglican Church would close the entrance door to the ancient Orthodox Churches for good, and would probably compel the Oldcatholic Churches to break of the intercommunion, but the greatest fear of all is, that one as member of the Anglican Church would lose the certainty of belonging

to Catholic Christianity, based on the ancient Catholic faith, borne by the true apostolic Ministry and assured of the validity of sacramental life. The thought has been expressed, that already now the Old-catholic Church would threaten to break off the Intercommunion. I want to assure emphatically, that none of our bishops has now any such desire, as I said above. I am also told, that "many" are ready to seek refuge in the Church of Rome, or else expect a disastrous fight and a splitting of the Anglican Church. My answer has been, that a flight out of one's own Church to that of Rome is always a mistake in principle, for he that fears that his Church is losing her catholicity, has a duty of fighting for its preservation, and to shirk that duty is unfaithfulness and worse.

I am convinced that most of what I say here, You know perfectly well too. For a moment I have considered if You would not look upon it as an undesirable interference on my part, that again I draw your attention to all this. But You will believe me, that this alarm, into which I get involved, is a matter of great concern to me too, apart from the fact, that the question South-India—I do hope for a good result—concerns our Oldcatholic Churches too, anyway may concern in the future. On my part I am deeply convinced that the distress of so many about this question is in the first place a cause of sorrow and care to You, and that your wisdom seeks undoubtedly the best way for a solution.

The aim of this Memorandum will be, first of all to assure You that I follow the development of this important matter with the greatest interest, and that I share in your anxiety. On the ground of this, and also on the ground of all that was confided to me by mouth and letter, I venture, in all modesty, but urged by love of your Church which essentially is not different from mine, representing the *Una sancta catholica et apostolica ecclesia*, to suggest to You to consider in all seriousness, if You can co-operate in no premature decision in the South-India question being taken, but that as much as possible not only the completion of the development will be waited for, but also the consolidation of it.

At the time I thought it a very wise decision, that a period of 30 years was fixed, before complete union and equalization could be thought of and effected. In my opinion it was then better realized than at later consideration, driven by optimism, that true catholic-ecclesiastical growth cannot be a matter of sudden change or rapid evolution, but a gradual ripening under the guidance of God's Holy

Spirit. Undoubtedly You know better than I do, what deep results a development in South-India can have, if it is effected in a truly catholic direction. But You will also be convinced that such a development can only prove its maturity in a series of years *after* the growth has been effected.

If, such are my thoughts, the Anglican Church should have the self control to take a decision after a longer time,—and I think of the period of 30 years—, it would, when this certainty would be made public, be a great relief to those who are now filled with anxiety and feel stricken in a conflict of conscience. It would take away a good deal of unrest and restore much faltering confidence. It would also preserve the development in South-India from precipitation, would make it “sincerer” and purer, based more thoroughly and more durable.

It is not my meaning that there will be an answer to these words from your side; I only address them to You in a brotherly way, convinced of your goodwill, your benevolent heart and your wise tact, just as I make bold to be convinced of your benevolent, understanding judgment of my outspokenness.

May God give You, as highest leaders of His Church, the wisdom of His Spirit, and may He, also through your prudence, preserve “unity and peace” in your Church, the two gifts of God which from the beginning the Church has always prayed for and fought for.

One with You in my intercession, I send You my brotherly greetings.

Sincerely Yours

sig. *Andreas Rinkel*
Erzbischof von Utrecht

Lambeth Palace, 15th February, 1958

My dear Archbishop,

In October last you sent me a most interesting letter about the relation of the Church of England to the Church of South-India. You said that you did not expect an answer; but I knew it would be impossible for me to refrain from making some reply on such an important matter. I had to wait till now for an opportunity of putting something on paper which might help to make the position clear, or at least clearer. A full exposition of this complex matter would far exceed the limits of a letter.

May I say first how sincerely I appreciate the frankness with which you have set out your hesitations. It is indeed one of the happiest fruits of the close relations between our two Churches that we can share our thoughts with one another in full sincerity and in brotherly confidence. I hope that you will always feel ready to write openly on all matters affecting our fellowship in Christ; and in that spirit of frank and friendly fellowship I shall now seek to reply.

I take up first a sentence in the middle of your first page, in which you say of the Church of South-India that "it is a movement of a denomination outside the Anglican Communion, to become a full member of her in the long run". The Church of South-India was indeed formed outside the Anglican Communion: but it can *never* become a member of the Anglican Communion. The four former dioceses of the Anglican Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon knew that when they went into the Church of South-India, they *left* the Anglican Communion and could never return to it. The Anglican Communion is a company of Churches, all of which have grown from the loins of the Church of England; all of them have the same kinship and are in full communion with the See of Canterbury and with one another by virtue of their common historical origin. This Anglican Communion can only grow by its own expansion. Thus it is an organic unit within the Catholic Church of Christ.

The Oldcatholic Churches are in the same way an organic unit of their own, one kindred. They could never become part of the Anglican Communion because they grew up outside it. But equally with us they are within the wider limits of the Catholic Church, and because of that equality there can be this happy relationship between us of full and unrestricted intercommunion.

The Church of South-India is a different kind of Church altogether. It came into existence by a corporate act which united together in one church several previously separated churches, of which a group of four dioceses came out of the Anglican Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon and the rest from non-episcopal churches. This unifying was a brave pioneer attempt, undertaken in full reliance upon the Holy Spirit, to rise above the diversities and divisions of the past and to allow Christ to create in this united church a true section of His Holy Catholic Church. The motive power was both theological (looking to God) and evangelistic (looking to the witness to be borne to the Faith in that heathen land), in the spirit of Our Lord's prayer for unity "that the world may believe".

The question at once arises: is this new church in a recognizable sense a part with us of the Catholic Church? You know that it accepts with us the Scriptures, the Creeds and the Dominical Sacraments as of the *esse* of the Church. It accepted fully that a Ministry authorized by the Church was also of the *esse*; and from the start it made its future ministry episcopal. Our Anglican Bishops consecrated the new Bishop and the Church has an Ordinal certainly Catholic and highly praised by our liturgiologists. There is really only one point on which doctrinal difficulty arises.

The non-episcopal ministers involved were taken into the new Church as they were, on the strength of their former Christian ministry and were allowed to rank as full ministers of the new Church without episcopal ordination. This is, of course, a complete anomaly. There are some precedents for it in our own past history in this country, but they did not receive official recognition nor were they on any large scale. It is to be noted that all new ordinands in this church are episcopally ordained. The number of non-episcopally ordained ministers is, therefore, rapidly decreasing and will in time die out, except for such ministers from the original parent churches as may come into the church, who would not necessarily have been episcopally ordained. There are very few of them; and the Church is to decide after 30 years whether *any* non-episcopally ordained minister is *ever* to be allowed to officiate in the church.

Meanwhile this grave anomaly continues. There is this mitigation, that under a strict pledge no congregation will be required against its will and the consciences of its people to receive a non-episcopally ordained minister. But still the anomaly remains. It is maintained, however, even by some of our more critical theologians

that if the Anglican or Catholic element is firmly established and growing in security and if the anomaly is one that is waning, then the anomaly may be safely accepted. For such reasons the Church of South-India is regarded by us, in spite of this anomaly, as a church fundamentally Catholic in structure, in episcopal order, in doctrine, and in its forms of Consecration, Ordination and administration of the Sacraments.

The Church of England had of necessity to define its attitude towards the Church of South-India. After a first partial and restricted recognition in 1950, and in the light of further experience of the Church, a more permanent, though not yet final, arrangement was made in 1955. Our present relations are, as you know, a good deal less than terms of full intercommunion. We have recognized the episcopally consecrated and ordained Bishops, Priests and Deacons of this Church as true Bishops, Priests and Deacons in the Church of God, partly because they derive their episcopal succession from Anglican sources and partly because ten years' experience of the Church convinces us that its Catholic inheritance is steadily established and extending itself, and that its non-episcopal element is being seen more and more clearly as an anomaly, tolerated indeed but not integrated into the growing Catholic life of the Church. We are thus judging the situation both by the standards of Catholic tradition and by the pragmatic standard, endorsed by Our Lord Himself, of testing a tree by the fruits that it bears.

But we recognize the anomaly; and so far as our relations with the Church of South-India go, we provide that no non-episcopally ordained ministers of that Church shall have any more recognition in the Church of England than is given by Convocation regulations to ministers and members of other non-episcopal ministries, and such recognition is strictly limited so as not to offend against any Catholic principle.

I hope, therefore, you will reconsider your sentence in which you say that in the Church of South-India a "non-Catholic ministry is for the time being also valued as sufficient and with equal rights" and that this is not a procedure of "the conviction of faith, but of ecclesiastical organization and ecclesiastical-political management". So it may appear from the outside, but:

a) Within the Church of South-India this anomaly is under sentence of death. There is protection of conscience, as I have mentioned above. The Ordinal is entirely Catholic. There is no *real* or

lasting recognition of non-episcopal ministries as sufficient or as possessing equal rights. And this anomaly is not accepted as a mere matter of administration; it is allowed in great Christian charity to meet the spiritual needs and scruples of faithful Christian men who, in following this call (with all the sacrifices involved) to a truer and more united conception of the Church and of Catholic faith, could not be asked to deny the reality of their past experience. You say truly that there is a risk involved. Is it not a truth that Our Lord nowhere promises us security and certainty but only ventures of faith? If a venture is to be made, it should be made in full faith; and that the Church of South-India has certainly displayed—though only the future can say whether that faith will be justified.

b) The Church of England has in no wise sacrificed its Catholic principles to some “ecclesiastical-political” management. It has given its recognition only to that part of this venture of faith which is certainly Catholic. It believes that that Catholic element is already very large and will establish itself more firmly and in the end eliminate the anomaly. But if things turn out otherwise, if this Church grows less firm in its Catholic heritage, if it unduly perpetuates this anomaly or invents others, we have full freedom to readjust by further restriction or by abolition those present restricted terms of intercommunion which we have adopted. You urge us not to make any “premature decision” in this matter. We had to make *some* kind of decision whether we liked it or not, since the Anglican Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon had decided on its own responsibility to approve of four of its dioceses going into the new Church: indeed they formed fifty per cent of the membership of the new Church. We had to decide whether to continue in some form or other our relations with these our Anglican brethren who had joined the new church or whether to cut off all Church relations with them. I am convinced (and so now are the great majority of those among us who were at one time hesitant) that the decisions taken were the right ones. But as you will see, they are not “final” in the sense that they cannot be changed. We go forward in faith: but if need arose, we could at once modify or reverse our relations with the Church of South-India.

I hope that what I have said so far will have allayed some of your fears about the Church of South-India. But I wish now, if I may, to say something which will serve to reinforce your confidence in the Church of England and in the Anglican Communion which it very faithfully represents. You express the fear that the Anglican

Communion might “lose her original character of catholicity and apostolocity”, a character “based on the ancient Catholic faith, borne by the true Apostolic Ministry, and assured of the validity of sacramental life”. The truth is that (as successive Lambeth Conferences show) the Anglican Communion has not compromised and will not in any way compromise its essential Catholicity. We stand firmly by our ancient faith and require in any relations with other churches due recognition by them of the terms of the Lambeth Quadrilateral: the Scriptures, the Catholic Creeds, the Dominical Sacraments and the threefold Ministry. We have never deviated from those essentials, by virtue of which we both adhere to the Bonn agreement between our two Churches.

But there remain areas of freedom, as is recognized in the third clause of the Bonn Agreement. There are many elements of the Christian Faith which are mysterious in the proper sense of that word. To try to define them too closely is to bind them within the categories of our own humanly conditioned and inadequate apprehensions. It is therefore often the way most faithful to the truth to avoid attaching to some belief or ecclesiastical institution a particular theory of it. This does not at all mean that there is no theology of it. Christendom has never allowed itself to insist on any one particular theory of such a basic doctrine as that of the Atonement: nor is there any official and final definition of the nature of the Inspiration of Scripture, or of the precise significance of the Sacraments or of the Apostolic Episcopate. In the Anglican Communion (and within the terms of the Bonn Agreement) there is on each doctrine a legitimate freedom of interpretation; but it must not err by a “too little” which empties it of its Catholic significance, nor by a “too much” which overloads, obscures or falsifies its Catholic significance. Within these limits there is a free play of doctrine and practice, theory and experience, by which the true significance of the Catholic Faith is being ever refreshed, illuminated and enriched.

The Church of South-India itself shows an outstanding example of this in the writing of Bishop Lesslie Newbigin of the Church of South-India. A Scottish Presbyterian before the union, he accepted the apostolic episcopate as a necessary element in a united Church, and this not as an administrative necessity but as under divine compulsion. He is now the foremost theologian in the ranks of the Church of South-India and from his experience as a Bishop has found ever deeper meaning in episcopacy and has most ably expounded it in his writings.

The Anglican Communion, therefore, stands unshakeably on its Catholic foundations. It does not enter into relations of formal intercommunion with any other Church until it is assured that in a real practical sense the Catholic principles of the Lambeth Quadrilateral are honoured and observed in the constitution and in the standards of doctrine and worship of that church, and are sufficiently established as to be likely to endure. Where that is the case, we believe it to be our duty to Christ the Head of the Church to give every help and encouragement we can, and to enter into such degrees of intercommunion with them as is possible without overstraining our own ecclesiastical discipline. At the same time we retain our freedom of action and can increase or decrease our degree of intercommunion as developing experience may require.

As you will see, this is not a position of compromise or of comprehensiveness for its own sake; it is a strong position of Catholic principle, applied in a spirit of evangelism and hope. Because it is a strong position and never out of our control, we are able with our eyes open to accept certain anomalies when we are reasonably sure that they will remain anomalies and will in the course of time diminish. We can do this partly because the anomalies are not *within* the Anglican Communion, but outside it; partly because they are anomalies which we believe to be a passing phase, endured as a means to a fully Catholic end.

There is further anomaly which, for completeness, I ought to mention. The Church of South India allows its ministers and members to retain what rights of intercommunion they had before the Union with any of the parent churches, both episcopal and non-episcopal, from which they have sprung. It would seem impossible to promote an extension of Church Unity and at the same time to create new barriers which were not there before. It is certainly an anomaly: but in practice it affects only the very few European ministers of the parent churches who visit India and the very few C.S.I. ministers who visit their own particular parent Church outside South-India. After due reflection, the opinion grows that this too is an anomaly which may be tolerated. Once more, it is something which happens altogether outside the Anglican Communion. Christian charity may allow or require us not to be too busy in detecting flaws in the life of these new Churches, when they are not denials of truth so much as extensions of charity due to the sincere desire not to injure former friendships and fellowships in Christ.

I have written at length about the Church of South-India and the problems which it creates, not only in answer to your misgivings but also because at the next Lambeth Conference similar questions will arise in connection with some fresh reunion schemes brought before us by the Anglican Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. These relate to plans for united churches, one in Ceylon and the other in North India and Pakistan. In some ways these schemes are better, because they aim at a true unification of the Ministries in a Catholic order from the start: in other ways the North India scheme is less convincing, because the Anglican contribution to the church is smaller and the degree of security that the Catholic element will dominate is less. But my letter may help you to follow the Lambeth discussions on these two schemes with greater confidence and more understanding sympathy.

As the Church of England and other Churches of the Anglican Communion steer their course, they are careful always to have in mind our relations with you and our desire to achieve intercommunion with all other Catholic Churches. It would be difficult for us to bring the Oldcatholics or indeed the Orthodox into the various stages of these discussions. We are satisfied that we betray nothing of our Catholic Heritage, and we hope that you will trust us not to do so. It is understandable that you and the Orthodox Churches too may sometimes be anxious about what we are doing, but as we go forward in this great work of Church Unity, we do so with great caution and conscientiousness. It might be very helpful to both of us if from time to time we could arrange for some talks between leaders of the Oldcatholic Churches and of the Church of England on these reunion problems, and indeed on other matters of common concern and current interest. I do greatly appreciate your letter, and I delight to see how wise and eirenic your own judgment is. In such a revolutionary age as this it is no strange thing if the advancing Church has to meet critical problems. All the member churches within the Catholic Church have not the same function. The worldwide spread of the Anglican Communion and its links both with Catholicism and with Protestantism inevitably mean that we are in the thick of the battle of Evangelism. But we keep our sober faith unsullied and try after St. Paul's example to be "all things to all men" in encouragement and charity. If it is a dangerous period, it is exciting too. Only, as you so rightly warn us, we must not lose touch with our proven allies in the Catholic Church. That is why I should so

warmly welcome talks at official level between our churches from time to time. But there is for me a special value and delight in being able to discuss our affairs in this intimate way direct with you.

With all good wishes, my dear brother,

Yours sincerely,

sgd. *Geoffrey Cantuar*

The Most Reverend
The Lord Archbishop of Utrecht.