

**REPORT OF THE
EPISCOPAL COMMISSION FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY /
RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS / INTERFAITH DIALOGUE
2007-2008**

1. The Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity / Religious Relations with the Jews / Interfaith Dialogue met three times in 2007-2008 (27 November, 13 March and 2 June), in addition to lunch with the ecumenical observers attending the 2007 Plenary.
2. In response to the request that the work of the various dialogue groups receive greater recognition, the Commission established Internet links with the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism, where the reports and agreed statements of the various dialogues are now posted.
3. The CCCB became an official participant in the Polish National Catholic – Roman Catholic Dialogue in the United States with Bishop Matthew Ustrzycki joining the dialogue.
4. The Roman Catholic / Evangelical Fellowship of Canada Working Group has been established with Bishop Jean-Louis Plouffe prepared to lead the Catholic delegation. The mandate of this group is to explore and make recommendations on the areas of dialogue, to suggest topics/questions, joint initiatives and projects, and to make recommendations on the parameters of a proposed formal dialogue.
5. The Commission, in response to the direction of previous Plenary meetings, is continuing to make overtures to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada to re-establish dialogue that broke off in the years following the publication of the Joint Declaration on *Justification by Faith through Grace* in 1999. No formal relationship has as yet been re-established.
6. Projects being worked on or which have been completed are the following:
 - a) The Commission continues to review the various ecumenical dialogues and interfaith conversations in which the CCCB is currently involved,¹ and fosters the regular and ongoing exchange of information.
 - b) The Commission has continued the process of updating appointments of CCCB representatives on ecumenical dialogues and interfaith conversations.
 - c) In follow-up to the recommendations that came forward from the Catholic members of the dialogues at the June 2007 Forum, the Commission moved and approved the motion: “That it be included in the mandate and budget of this Commission to meet with all Catholic dialogue members at least once every three years.”

¹ For an outline of these ecumenical dialogues and interfaith conversations, see Appendix A.

The Commission also agreed to review the work and the issues of each dialogue in a more intensive way, focusing on one dialogue at each of its meetings. The first was the Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation, the work of which is also on the agenda for this Plenary.

- d) A list of diocesan ecumenical officers is being compiled. Once the list is completed, this resource will be used to invite input, questions and suggestions from the dioceses. This database will also provide a source of potential candidates for the dialogues.
- e) The Commission continues to review CCCB collaboration with the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and its Governing Board and various commissions and committees.
- f) To give better direction to the Catholic representatives, the Commission has developed mandates that clearly indicate the expectations and procedures for CCCB appointees to each of the ecumenical and interfaith dialogues.
- g) On the recommendation of the members of the Anglican / Roman Catholic Bishops' dialogue, and also at the encouragement of Walter Cardinal Kasper, it has invited the members of the CCCB to reflect and act on the text *Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 Years of Anglican – Roman Catholic Dialogue*.
- h) The Commission, together with the Commissions for Theology and Canon Law / Inter-Rite, this year continued to reflect on the question of the validity of Baptism as administered by other ecclesial communities where the use of the Trinitarian formula may be in doubt, and on the pastoral implications of this for the Catholic Church. A list of Churches and communities with valid and invalid baptisms has been compiled.
- i) Of significant importance is the reflection and exploration on the idea of establishing a specifically religious dialogue between Catholics and Jews. The CCCB currently is engaged in the Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation, together with other Christian groups who are members of the Canadian Council of Churches. While this dialogue fulfills an important aspect of relations with the Jews, the religious dimension might be augmented by a bilateral theological dialogue.
- j) The Commission is preparing to take its turn in hosting the North American Orthodox Catholic Theological Consultation in Montreal, 23-25 October 2008.

Members of the Commission

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