



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO HIS GRACE GEORGE CAREY, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
AND PRESIDENT OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION**

Friday, 21 June 2002

*Your Grace,
Dear Friends,*

It gives me great joy to welcome you in the "grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Philemon* 1: 3). I am most grateful that you have chosen to pay a farewell visit here, prior to your forthcoming retirement. Your visit is, as it were, a living sign of the close relations which have continued to develop down the years between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church.

In looking back over the past eleven years, during which you have been the Archbishop of Canterbury, my mind focuses especially on the Common Declaration which we signed in 1996.

While acknowledging obstacles which keep us from full communion, we determined "to consult further about how the relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church is to progress". In recent months we have begun to see the fruits of this spirit of perseverance through the formation of the new International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission, to accompany the continuing work of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission.

I gladly repeat what I wrote in my Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, that "truly the Lord has taken us by the hand and is guiding us" (No. 25). With the hope that is born of the Spirit, let us trust that the initiatives and instruments of reconciliation we have fostered and encouraged will be guided always by the same Holy Spirit, who is ever capable of bringing forth blessing upon blessing.

When we reflect on the dangers and challenges facing the world at present, we cannot but feel the urgent need to work side by side in promoting peace and justice. I know that Your Grace has been very active in trying to sustain dialogue in the Holy Land, bringing together Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders to seek a lasting solution. May this and all your initiatives for peace with justice find support and bring hope amidst struggle and pain.

Your Grace, I pray that the next phase of your life will offer you new ways to share your gifts on the journey of reconciliation that we have undertaken. Know that you and Mrs. Carey, with the whole Anglican Communion, remain in my prayers. May the Lord abundantly bless you.