



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNITY**

Friday 26 April, 1988

Dear Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. I wish to welcome you to Rome and to the Vatican and, through you, I extend my heartfelt greetings to all the members of the Anglican Communion.

In the course of your stay in Rome you have visited many of the sacred and historical monuments with which this city is so richly endowed. You have walked in the steps of the earliest Christian martyrs and reflected on the lesson of their lives and deaths. I pray that you will be strengthened and encouraged in your own lives and service by the days spent in the City of Peter and Paul.

I am pleased you have wished to visit the Successor of Peter. I am well aware of the work that has already been done by Anglicans and Catholics in the search for a shared understanding of the universal service of unity which belongs to the office of the Bishop of Rome. It is my prayer that this work will bear fruit and help pave the way for that fullness of unity which is the will of Christ for his followers.

2. Shortly you will be joining the other bishops of the Anglican Communion for the Lambeth Conference. This meeting takes place at a significant moment both in the development of the ecumenical movement and in the life of the Anglican Communion itself. In your deliberations at Lambeth, you will deal with difficult and delicate issues which touch on the Catholic Church as well as with our Orthodox brothers and sisters. I pray that when you are together you will give full weight to the importance of maintaining and strengthening the bonds of that real though imperfect communion in which Anglicans and Catholics are united. The deepening of this communion are fundamental to the mission that Christ gave to his disciples. Those things that damage Catholic

unity likewise weaken the impact of Christian witness. Our divided world yearns for that vision of true communion and deep reconciliation to which we are called to testify.

Let us be faithful to that witness so that the world may see ever more clearly the character of the unity to which all people are called. May our very striving for unity itself be recognized as a sign of the reconciling work of God.

My dear Brothers: I greet you once more in the Risen Lord. May he bless you and keep you always.

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