

Lutheran—Roman Catholic Commission on Unity

Kamień Śląski, Poland

18 – 25 July 2017

Communiqué

The Lutheran—Roman Catholic Commission on Unity met from 18 to 25 July 2017 in Kamień Śląski, Poland. The dialogue, conducted under the auspices of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU), focuses on the topic “Baptism and Growth in Communion.” This year’s meeting was hosted by the LWF, with the generous assistance of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland (ECACP) and the Centre of Culture and Science of the Theological Faculty of the University of Opole.

During the meeting, at a special occasion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Lutheran-Catholic Commission on Unity, the members of the commission together with the local Catholic and Lutheran church leaders, celebrated the Common Prayer, prepared for the Reformation anniversary on the basis of their recent study document *From Conflict to Communion*. On this occasion they were addressed by Archbishop Alfons Nossol, Bishop em. of Opole, a former member and Catholic Co-Chair of the commission, as well as Bishop Jerzy Samiec of the ECACP. They also heard greetings from General Secretary Martin Junge of the LWF.

During the meeting, the commission visited St. Annaberg, a place of pilgrimage, and attended there an ecumenical service at the youth gathering Masz Talent led by Bishop Andrzej Czaja of the Catholic Diocese of Opole. On Sunday 23 July, the commission attended a service at the Lutheran church of Katowice together with representatives of the local Lutheran and Catholic community, after which they enjoyed a lunch hosted by Bishop Marian Niemiec of Katowice.

In the present study process on the topic, baptism and growth in communion, the commission is in light of Catholic and Lutheran traditions, building on earlier ecumenical dialogues on baptism. In doing so, it is focusing on reflecting on the question of what kind of ecclesial communion arises from our shared understanding on baptism.

Despite the fact that the study report is already well developed and the hope is that the study report will be finalized after the meeting in Kamień Śląski, a decision needed to be taken to extend the study process until 2018. For that purpose, the commission agreed to meet in July 2018.

Co-chairs of the commission are, on the Lutheran side, Bishop emeritus Eero Huovinen of Helsinki, Finland, and, on the Catholic side, Bishop William Kenney, C.P., Birmingham, United Kingdom.

Lutheran participants at this meeting were Rev. Dr Wanda Deifelt (Brazil/USA), Dr Sandra Gintere (Latvia), Prof. Dr Dirk G. Lange (USA), Prof. Dr Friederike Nüssel (Germany), Rev. Prof. Dr Theodor Dieter (France) as consultant, and Rev. Dr Kaisamari Hintikka (Switzerland) as co-secretary. Apologies were received from Rev. Prof. Dr Hiroshi Augustine Suzuki (Japan).

Catholic participants were, Rev. Prof. Dr Michel Fédou, S.J. (France), Rev. Prof. Dr Josef Freitag (Germany), Rev. Prof. Dr Angelo Maffei (Italy), Prof. Dr Thomas Söding (Germany), Dr Christian D. Washburn (USA), Prof. Dr Susan K. Wood, SCL (USA), Prof. Dr Eva-Maria Faber (Switzerland) and as consultant, and Msgr. Dr Matthias Türk (Vatican) as co-secretary. Apologies were received from Prof. Dr Wolfgang Thönissen (Germany).

Kamien Slaski, July 2017