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Alle 11.30 di questa mattina, il Santo Padre Benedetto XVI riceve in Udienza Sua Grazia il Dr. Rowan Williams, Arcivescovo di Canterbury, Primate della Comunione Anglicana, e il suo Seguito e rivolge loro il discorso che riportiamo di seguito:

• DISCORSO DEL SANTO PADRE

Your Grace,
Dear friends,

Grace and peace to you in the Lord Jesus Christ! Your visit here today brings to mind the important custom established by our predecessors in recent decades. It also reminds us of the much longer history of relations between the See of Rome and the See of Canterbury which began when Pope Gregory the Great sent Saint Augustine to the land of the Anglo-Saxons over 1400 years ago. I am happy today to welcome you and the distinguished delegation accompanying you. This is not our first meeting. Indeed, I was grateful for your presence, and that of other representatives of the Anglican Communion, at the funeral of Pope John Paul II, and again at the inauguration of my pontificate a year and a half ago.

Your visit to the Holy See coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the visit of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey, to Pope Paul VI. It was a visit filled with great promise, as the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church took steps towards initiating a dialogue about the questions to be addressed in the search for full visible unity.

There is much in our relations over the past forty years for which we must give thanks. The work of the theological dialogue commission has been a source of encouragement as matters of doctrine which have separated us in the past have been addressed. The friendship and good relations which exist in many places between Anglicans and Catholics have helped to create a new context in which our shared witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been nourished and advanced. The visits of Archbishops of Canterbury to the Holy See have served to strengthen those relations and have played an important role in addressing the obstacles which keep us apart. This tradition helped give rise to a constructive meeting of Anglican and Catholic bishops in Mississauga, Canada, in May 2000, when it was agreed to form a joint commission of bishops to discern appropriate ways to express in ecclesial life the progress which has already been made. For all of this, we give thanks to God.

In the present context, however, and especially in the secularized Western world, there are many negative influences and pressures which affect Christians and Christian communities. Over the last three years you have spoken openly about the strains and difficulties besetting the Anglican Communion and consequently about the uncertainty of the future of the Communion itself. Recent developments, especially concerning the ordained ministry and certain moral teachings, have affected not only internal relations within the Anglican Communion but also relations between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church. We believe that these matters, which are presently under discussion within the Anglican Communion, are of vital importance to the preaching of the Gospel in its integrity, and that your current discussions will shape the future of our relations. It is to be hoped that the work of the theological dialogue, which had registered no small degree of agreement on these and other important theological matters, will continue be taken seriously in your discernment. In these deliberations we accompany you with heartfelt prayer. It is our fervent hope that the Anglican Communion will remain grounded in the Gospels and the Apostolic Tradition which form our common patrimony and are the basis of our common aspiration to work for full visible unity.

The world needs our witness and the strength which comes from an undivided proclamation of the Gospel. The immense sufferings of the human family and the forms of injustice that adversely affect the lives of so many people constitute an urgent call for our shared witness and service. Precisely for this reason, and even amidst present difficulties, it is important that we continue our theological dialogue. I hope that your visit will assist in finding constructive ways forward in the current circumstances.

May the Lord continue to bless you and your family, and may he strengthen you in your ministry to the Anglican Communion!

[01678-02.02] [Original text: English]

COMMON DECLARATION
of
Pope Benedict XVI and the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan WilliamsForty years ago, our predecessors, Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey, met together in this city sanctified by the ministry and the blood of the Apostles Peter and Paul. They began a new journey of reconciliation based on the Gospels and the ancient common traditions. Centuries of estrangement between Anglicans and Catholics were replaced by a new desire for partnership and co-operation, as the real but incomplete communion we share was rediscovered and affirmed. Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Ramsey undertook at that time to establish a dialogue in which matters which had been divisive in the past might be addressed from a fresh perspective with truth and love.Since that meeting, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion have entered into a process of fruitful

dialogue, which has been marked by the discovery of significant elements of shared faith and a desire to give expression, through joint prayer, witness and service, to that which we hold in common. Over thirty-five years, the Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) has produced a number of important documents which seek to articulate the faith we share. In the ten years since the most recent Common Declaration was signed by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the second phase of ARCIC has completed its mandate, with the publication of the documents *The Gift of Authority* (1999) and *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* (2005). We are grateful to the theologians who have prayed and worked together in the preparation of these texts, which await further study and reflection.True ecumenism goes beyond theological dialogue; it touches our spiritual lives and our common witness. As our dialogue has developed, many Catholics and Anglicans have found in each other a love for Christ which invites us into practical co-operation and service. This fellowship in the service of Christ, experienced by many of our communities around the world, adds a further impetus to our relationship. The International Anglican - Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) has been engaged in an exploration of the appropriate ways in which our shared mission to proclaim new life in Christ to the world can be advanced and nurtured. Their report, which sets out both a summary of the central conclusions of ARCIC and makes proposals for growing together in mission and witness, has recently been completed and submitted for review to the Anglican Communion Office and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and we express our gratitude for their work.In this fraternal visit, we celebrate the good which has come from these four decades of dialogue. We are grateful to God for the gifts of grace which have accompanied them. At the same time, our long journey together makes it necessary to acknowledge publicly the challenge represented by new developments which, besides being divisive for Anglicans, present serious obstacles to our ecumenical progress. It is a matter of urgency, therefore, that in renewing our commitment to pursue the path towards full visible communion in the truth and love of Christ, we also commit ourselves in our continuing dialogue to address the important issues involved in the emerging ecclesiological and ethical factors making that journey more difficult and arduous.As Christian leaders facing the challenges of the new millennium, we affirm again our public commitment to the revelation of divine life uniquely set forth by God in the divinity and humanity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that it is through Christ and the means of salvation found in him that healing and reconciliation are offered to us and to the world.There are many areas of witness and service in which we can stand together, and which indeed call for closer co-operation between us: the pursuit of peace in the Holy Land and in other parts of the world marred by conflict and the threat of terrorism; promoting respect for life from conception until natural death; protecting the sanctity of marriage and the well-being of children in the context of healthy family life; outreach to the poor, oppressed and the most vulnerable, especially those who are persecuted for their faith; addressing the negative effects of materialism; and care for creation and for our environment. We also commit ourselves to inter-religious dialogue through which we can jointly reach out to our non-Christian brothers and sisters.Mindful of our forty years of dialogue, and of the witness of the holy men and women common to our traditions, including Mary the *Theotókos*, Saints Peter and Paul, Benedict, Gregory the Great, and Augustine of Canterbury, we pledge ourselves to more fervent prayer and a more dedicated endeavour to welcome and live by that truth into which the Spirit of the Lord wishes to lead his disciples (cf. *Jn* 16:13). Confident of the apostolic hope "that he who has begun this good work in you will bring it to completion"(cf. *Phil* 1:6), we believe that if we can together be God's instruments in calling all Christians to a deeper obedience to our Lord, we will also draw closer to each other, finding in his will the fullness of unity and common life to which he invites us.From the Vatican, 23 November 2006[01679-02.01] [Original text: English]

Alle ore 12.15, nella Cappella "*Redemptoris* Mater" del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano, il Santo Padre Benedetto XVI presiede la Celebrazione dell'Ora Media a cui partecipa l'Arcivescovo di Canterbury, Primate della Comunione Anglicana, Sua Grazia il Dr. Rowan Williams, con la Delegazione al Seguito.[01680-01.01][B0596-XX.01]