



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
AND THE PRIMATES OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION**

*Sala dei Papi
Thursday, 6 October 2016*

[Multimedia]

*Your Grace,
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

Thank you for your presence. It is a beautiful sign of fraternity to see the Primates of so many Provinces of the Anglican Communion joining you here in Rome. We have solemnly celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the historic meeting between Blessed Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey. That meeting has produced many fruits: we need think only of the opening of the Anglican Centre in Rome, the appointment of the Archbishop's permanent representative to the Holy See, and the start of our theological dialogue, represented by the volume containing five documents from the second phase of ARCIC (1982-2005). In sharing together these fruits, we remember that they come from a tree which has its roots in that meeting of fifty years ago.

Reflecting on our continuing common journey, three words come to mind: prayer, witness, mission.

Prayer: yesterday evening we celebrated Vespers, and this morning you prayed here at the tomb of the Apostle Peter. Let us never grow tired of asking the Lord *together* and *insistently* for the gift of unity.

Witness: these past fifty years of encounter and exchange, as well as reflection and common texts, speak to us of Christians who, for faith and with faith, have listened to one another and shared their time and energy. The conviction has grown that ecumenism is never an

impoverishment, but a richness; the certainty has deepened that what the Spirit has sown in the other yields a common harvest. Let us treasure this inheritance and know that we are called each day to offer to the world, as Jesus asked, the witness of our love and unity (cf. *Jn* 15:12; 17:21).

Mission: there is a time for everything (cf. *Eccles* 3:1) and now is the time in which the Lord challenges us, in a particular way, to go out from ourselves and our own environs, in order to bring his merciful love to a world thirsting for peace. Let us help one another to keep at the centre the demands of the Gospel and to spend ourselves concretely in this mission.

And to ask the grace of growing in prayer, in bearing witness and in going out in mission, may I invite you to pray together the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father...