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Ieri, 27 febbraio, nella Cattedrale di Canterbury, ha avuto luogo la solenne intronizzazione del nuovo Arcivescovo di Canterbury, S.G. Rowan Douglas Williams, Primate di Tutta l'Inghilterra e Presidente della Comunione Anglicana.

Alla cerimonia, iniziata alle ore 15, ha assistito, in rappresentanza della Santa Sede, Sua Eminenza il Cardinale Walter Kasper, Presidente del Pontificio Consiglio per la Promozione dell'Unità dei Cristiani, accompagnato dal Rev. Donald Bolen, Ufficiale dello stesso Dicastero, incaricato delle relazioni con la Comunione Anglicana. Nella Cattedrale di Canterbury erano anche presenti l'Arcivescovo di Westminster, il Cardinale Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, ed i co-presidenti cattolici delle due strutture ufficiali di dialogo con la Comunione Anglicana: l'*Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission [ARCIC]* e la *International Anglican - Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission [IARCCUM]*. Alla cena ufficiale, che ha seguito la cerimonia di intronizzazione, presso il *Nikaean Club* di Canterbury, il Cardinale Kasper ha rivolto un cordiale saluto all'Arcivescovo.

Oggi, 28 febbraio, S.G. Rowan Douglas Williams incontrerà il Cardinale Kasper, che gli rimetterà un Messaggio augurale del Santo Padre ed una croce pettorale, a lui offerta in dono per la significativa circostanza.

Pubblichiamo qui di seguito il testo del Messaggio di Sua Santità:

● **MESSAGGIO DEL SANTO PADRE** TO HIS GRACE
THE MOST REVEREND AND RIGHT HONOURABLE
ROWAN WILLIAMS

I greet you in the name of the "one God and Father of us all", and of his Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ (cf. *Eph* 4:5-6), and with sentiments of joy and cordial esteem I offer my prayerful best wishes on the occasion of your enthronement as Archbishop of Canterbury.

The liturgy of your enthronement will be an occasion for you and for the Anglican Communion to celebrate the glory of God, contemplating Saint John's vision of a multitude crying out, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God" (*Rev* 19: 1). You will ponder the mystery of God, who calls and sends forth those who, like Isaiah, do not consider themselves prepared (*Is* 6:5-8).

You begin your ministry as Archbishop of Canterbury at a painful and tense moment in history, a moment nonetheless marked by hope and promise. Marred by long-standing and seemingly relentless conflicts, the world stands on the brink of yet another war. The dignity of the human person is being threatened and undermined in various ways. Whole populations, especially the most vulnerable, are living amidst fear and danger. At times the ardent and legitimate human longing for freedom and security manifests itself through the wrong means, means which themselves are violent and destructive. It is precisely amidst these tensions and difficulties of our world that we are called to serve.

We can sincerely rejoice in the fact that, in recent decades, our predecessors have developed an increasingly close relationship, even bonds of affection, through constructive dialogue and close communication. They set the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion on a path that they hoped would lead to full communion. Despite disagreements and obstacles, we are still on that path, and irrevocably committed to it. Over the past decade, the various opportunities to meet Dr George Carey have been particularly helpful and encouraging, signs of progress on our ecumenical journey. The work of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, and the more recently formed International Commission for Unity and Mission, continue to move us forward.

We are both aware that overcoming divisions is no easy task, and that full communion will come as a gift of the Holy Spirit. That same Spirit prods and guides us even now to continue to seek a resolution to remaining areas of doctrinal disagreement, and to engage more profoundly in common witness and mission.

With renewed sentiments of fraternal regard, I invoke upon you the blessings of Almighty God as you take up your lofty responsibilities. Amidst whatever trials and tribulations you may encounter, may you ever know the glory of the Father, the steady guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the merciful face of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the Vatican, 13 February 2003

IOANNES PAULUS II

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