# The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

VALE et SALVE: Changes at the Council

### **Farewell to Cardinal Kasper**



One of the first letters of congratulation and welcome I received after the announcement that I was to succeed John Flack as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See and Director of the Anglican Centre was from Walter Cardinal Kasper. He wrote of the high regard in which he held the Centre and its importance in the Anglican – Roman Catholic dialogue. He was a man for whom I already had a high regard: it has been underscored in these past 2 ½ years of my work here.

Cardinal Kasper was ordained priest in 1957. He studied for his doctorate in Dogmatic Theology and was a faculty mem-

ber at Tubingen from 1958-61. Having taught at the Westphalian University of Munster 1964-70) in 1970 he became Dean of the Faculty in Tubingen.

He was named and consecrated Bishop of Rottenburg-Stuttgart in 1989. In 1999 he was appointed Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Named as President of the Council by Pope John Paul II in 2001 he was made Cardinal in the same year.

Walter Kasper has been a champion of the cause of Christian Unity and a loyal friend of the Anglican Centre and its successive Directors. I know that I speak for the Archbishop of Canterbury in wishing him every blessing as he moves to a new phase of ministry: he has the assurance of the prayers of many friends.

#### **Welcome to Archbichop Koch**

Elected Bishop of Basel in 1995 Archbishop Kurt Koch was ordained a bishop in 1997 by Pope John Paul II. His appointment as President of the Pontifical Council for the Pro-



motion of Christian Unity was announced in July this year, when he was promoted to 'Archbishop'. He said: "The Holy Father told me in February, in a personal audience, of his desire that I would begin to lead this council. It is a great joy for me because ecumenism has always been in my heart."

I was pleased to meet Archbishop Koch over breakfast at Lambeth Palace during the Papal visit to Britain. Please pray for him in his new and crucial work.

**David Richardson** 

# Promotion, dialogue and collaboration

### The Council celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Pope John XXIII wanted one of the Second Vatican Council's chief concerns to be the involvement of the Catholic Church in the ecumenical movement. He established a "Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity" in 1960 as one of the preparatory commissions for the Council, with Cardinal Augustin Bea as its first President.

The initial main function of the Secretariat was to invite the other Churches and World Communions to send observers to the Second Vatican Council. Additionally it prepared and presented to the Council the documents on ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio*, on non-Christian religions *Nostra aetate*, on religious liberty *Dignitatis humanae* and, together with the doctrinal commission, the dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*.

after the Council Pope Paul VI confirmed the Secretariat as a permanent dicastery of the Holy See. Cardinal Bea continued as President, succeeded in 1969 by Cardinal Johannes Willebrands. Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy become President in 1989, and the Secretariat was renamed the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU).

The Council promotes an authentic ecumenical spirit ac-

cording to the decree *Unitatis redintegratio*; within the Catholic Church. It published *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* in 1993.

The Council aims to develop dialogue and collaboration with the other Churches and World Communions. It has a cordial relationship with the World Council of Churches (WCC), and since 1968 membership of the WCC's "Faith and Order" Commission. The PCPCU also nominates Catholic observers at various ecumenical gatherings and in its turn invites observers or delegates of other Churches or ecclesial Communities to major Catholic Church events.

The PCPCU's current work with the Anglican Communion includes participation in the on-going "Informal Talks", following through the *Harvesting the Fruits* material (Centro, Easter 2010) and preparing for ARCIC III. Bishop Brian Farrell is the Council's Secretary; Mgr Mark Langham has responsibility for Anglican and Methodist dialogues.

The Anniversary will be marked on November 17th. Cardinal Walter Kasper, Archbishop Rowan Williams and Metropolitan John Zizioulas will speak of the significance for the ecumenical movement of the Secretariat and its successor Council.