

## Ecumenism

*National Association of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, USA*

*“so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me.” John 17:21-23*

*The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is open to all Christians of various denominations and of different commitments within the church. #29 Characteristics of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*

*The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers its services to the diocese and therefore works in communion with the bishop. #30 Characteristics of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*

*Ecumenism is not just a branch of catechesis; rather, the spirit of ecumenism does permeate the whole of catechesis. (p. 123 Religious Potential of the Child, 6-12 years)*

“Ecumenism is, first of all, an act of faith that opens completely new horizons before us. It is an act of faith similar to Abraham, who departed by the light of the stars toward the land that the Lord pointed out to him. But how to reach this land? Like Abraham we have a light that illumines us from above, namely our absolute trust in the God of history, who guides us to our goal. To this light we ought to entrust ourselves, and then ecumenism will become for us a profound education in faith.” Sofia Cavalletti

Ecumenism, from the Greek word “oikoumene,” meaning “the whole inhabited world,” is the promotion of cooperation and unity among Christians. The Ecumenical movement today has been brought about by the conviction that a divided Christianity is a scandal to the world. The term was introduced in 1919 by Nathan Söderblom ( 1866-1931) Swedish Lutheran archbishop , he received the Nobel Prize in 1930 , which was the first recognition of a religious leader.

## General Ecumenical Resources

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TOGETHER (CCT)

<http://christianchurchestogether.org/>

Christian Churches Together (CCT) in the USA was developed as a forum in which Christian Churches could form new relationships with other Churches. Founded in September 2001 and officially announced in April 2002, CCT-USA brings together a diverse group of Christian Churches in order that "all who believe will be one with God and one another, so that the world may believe in Him as Lord and Savior." CCT meets annually to pray and worship together, to build relationships of trust, and to discern challenges that need to be addressed in society in order to strengthen the collective Christian witness to the world.

## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ( WCC )

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/>

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is a community of churches on the way to visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ. It seeks to advance towards this unity, as Jesus prayed for his followers, "so that the world may believe." (John 17:21)

## BISHOPS COMMITTEE FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS (BCEIA).

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/index.cfm>

At the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church committed herself irrevocably to following the path of the ecumenical venture...." [Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter Ut Unum Sint, #3]. The BCEIA and the Secretariat support this vital commitment. In a dozen formal dialogues and in a host of less formal conversations, the BCEIA and the SEIA seek to fulfill this commitment. The commitment is intrinsic to Catholic identity. The work and hope of the committee is to come to a deeper understanding with the members of other religious groups and together build a strong civil community.

## BECOMING ONE. . .

<http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/article/becoming-one>

## ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS SENSITIVITY IN PREACHING

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4FbI6aeXz4>

## ON THE PATH TOWARD CHRISTIAN UNITY

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/on-the-path-toward-christian-unity.cfm>

A 14-part video series that explores the multi-faceted world of ecumenism and its relevance in the world.

## **Ecumenical Documents**

### PATRIARCHAL AND SYNODICAL ENCYCLICAL OF 1920

[http://orthodox-voice.blogspot.com/2011/04/patriarchal-and-synodical-encyclical-of\\_26.html](http://orthodox-voice.blogspot.com/2011/04/patriarchal-and-synodical-encyclical-of_26.html)

The encyclical of the Eastern Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Germanos of Constantinople "To the Churches of Christ Everywhere" suggested a "fellowship of churches" similar to the League of Nations.

### BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY (FAITH AND ORDER PAPER NO. 111, THE "LIMA TEXT")

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/faith-and-order/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/baptism-eucharist-and-ministry-faith-and-order-paper-no-111-the-lima-text>

This famous text, adopted by Faith and Order at its plenary commission meeting in Lima, Peru in 1982, explores the growing agreement - and remaining differences - in fundamental areas of the churches' faith and life. The most widely-distributed and studied ecumenical document, BEM has been a basis for many "mutual recognition" agreements among churches and remains a reference today.

#### UNITATIS REDINTEGRATIO

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19641121\\_unitatis-redintegratio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html)

The Second Vatican Council solemnly promulgated this Decree on Ecumenism,. The Document states in its Introduction that "Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only", and that division contradicts the will of the Lord, "scandalizes the world and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel.... The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council" (n. 1).

#### APOSTOLIC ENCYCLICAL "UT UNUM SINT" OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25051995\\_ut-unum-sint.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint.html)

Ecumenism is the "way of the Church" (*Ut Unum Sint*, n. 7). It is neither an addition nor some sort of appendix, but an integral, organic part of the life and pastoral activity of the Church (*cf. Ut Unum Sint*, n. 20). In this eschatological perspective, the ecumenical movement is closely connected to the missionary movement.

#### APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION "EVANGELII GAUDIUM" OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/francesco/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium\\_en.html#IV. Social\\_dialogue\\_as\\_a\\_contribution\\_to\\_peace](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.html#IV. Social_dialogue_as_a_contribution_to_peace)

Ecumenism can be seen as a contribution to the unity of the human family, pilgrims journeying alongside one another which means that we must have sincere trust in our fellow pilgrims, putting aside all suspicion or mistrust, and turn our gaze to what we are all seeking: the radiant peace of God's face.

#### DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC CONSULTATION (ARC)

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/anglican/index.cfm>

The Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation USA began meeting in 1965 to address the theological issues that divided the churches. It currently meets twice a year under the leadership of Episcopalian co-chairman Bishop John Bauerschmidt and Catholic co-chairman Bishop Ronald Herzog. Over the past forty-six years the consultation has issued statements on issues ranging from the Eucharist, to the ordination of women, church authority, and Christian ethics in ecumenical dialogue.

DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE NORTH AMERICAN ORTHODOX-CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION

[http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP\\_JUMP\\_106416](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP_JUMP_106416)

North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation meets twice a year and is co-chaired by Archbishop Tobin of Indianapolis and Metropolitan Methodios of Boston.

DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF ORTHODOX AND CATHOLIC BISHOPS

[http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP\\_JUMP\\_112270](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP_JUMP_112270)

Joint Committee of Orthodox and Catholic Bishops was first convened in 1981 and included seven bishops from each church.

DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE METHODIST-ROMAN CATHOLIC CONSULTATION

[http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP\\_JUMP\\_106447](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP_JUMP_106447)

The United Methodist-Catholic Dialogue was established in 1966. Over the years it has discussed a wide range of issues from education and ordained ministry to the Eucharist. The recently-concluded seventh round of the dialogue, which was co-chaired by United Methodist Bishop Timothy Whitaker and Catholic Bishop William Skylstad, examined concern for the environment in a Eucharistic perspective. An eighth round is currently in preparation.

DOCUMENTS PRODUCED BY THE LUTHERAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC CONSULTATION

[http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP\\_JUMP\\_106445](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/ecumenical-documents-and-news-releases.cfm#CP_JUMP_106445)

The Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue in the United States first met in 1965. In 2010, the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue completed a common statement entitled "The Hope of Eternal Life" which explored in depth the common belief of Catholics and Lutherans in Jesus Christ's promise of eternal life. The dialogue currently meets twice a year with Bishop Lee Piché and Rev. Lowell Almen serving as co-chairs.