

**Archbishop Bathersby Joint Chairman of new Anglican-Catholic working group
established by the Anglican-Communion and the Catholic Church**

Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, Archbishop John Bathersby, will jointly Chair the newly established Anglican-Roman Catholic Working Group with Anglican Bishop of Highveld, South Africa, Bishop David Beetge. The Working Group has been set-up as a direct result of a special international meeting of Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops held in Mississauga, Canada, in May 2000.

"I am certainly honoured by the appointment but I must admit I am also very conscious of the challenges this Working Group will be facing," said Archbishop Bathersby.

"Ecumenism is an issue which is very close to my heart," said Archbishop Bathersby. "What gives me great hope about this new group was the marvellous spirit evident at the meeting of Anglican and Catholic Bishops held in Mississauga last year, a spirit which makes me optimistic about what this working group may achieve in the future."

Last year's meeting, chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, and Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, spent a week in prayer, worship and discussion, and surveying relationships in different parts of the world. In a concluding Statement, Communion in Mission, the bishops spoke of their belief that Anglicans and Catholics share a degree of common faith "such that greater cooperation and mission is possible than is currently the case." They called for a new commission to be put in place to help bring this about, suggesting that the preparation of a joint declaration of agreement be its top priority.

"Through last year's meeting we realised how much Catholics and Anglicans actually shared in common and this is an excellent foundation to build on," said Archbishop Bathersby.

"I am also extremely confident of the competence and good will of its Episcopal membership as well as its team of specialists assembled to tackle the task ahead," said His Grace. "I am delighted by the presence in the Working Group of Archbishop Peter Carnley, the Anglican Primate of Australia, and also Father Peter Cross, a world recognised Catholic Ecumenist from Melbourne."

The Membership of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Working Group is as follows:

Anglicans

Catholics

Bishop David Beetge, Anglican Bishop of Highveld, South Africa, Co-Chairman; Archbishop Peter Carnley of Perth, Primate of the Anglican Church in Australia;

Bishop Edwin Gulick of Kentucky, USA;

Archbishop Peter Kwong, Primate of Hong Kong;

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali of Rochester, England;

Dr Mary Tanner from England;

Canon David Hamid from the Anglican Communion Office, London, Co-Secretary.
Archbishop John Bathersby, Archbishop of Brisbane, Australia, Co-Chairman;
Archbishop Alexander Brunett of Seattle, USA;

Bishop Anthony Farquhar from Down and Connor Diocese, Ireland;

Bishop Crispian Hollis of Portsmouth, England;

Bishop Lucius Ugorji from Umuahia, Nigeria

Fr Peter Cross, Melbourne, Australia;

Monsignor Timothy Galligan, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Co-Secretary. The Working Group is expected to hold its first meeting later in the year.

-For an interview with Archbishop Bathersby please phone 07) 3224 3364.

Further Information may be obtained from: Canon David Hamid Anglican Communion
Office, London Tel: +44 20 7620 1110

Or

Mgr Timothy Galligan Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity Tel: +3906 6988
4552