U.S. Catholic Lutheran Dialogue—Round XII
Report on Session Three, April 2013

The third meeting of Round XII of the U.S. Lutheran—Roman Catholic Dialogue on “Ministries of Teaching: Sources, Shapes, and Essential Contents” took place April 11-14 at St. Paul’s College in Washington, DC.

The meeting began with a Service of Thanksgiving in remembrance of Dr. Margaret O’Gara, a longtime Roman Catholic member of the Dialogue, who died in August of 2012.

Catholic co-chair, Most Rev. Lee A. Piché, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul Minneapolis and Lutheran co-chair Rev. Dr. Lowell G. Almen presided at the sessions. Dr. Almen offered a personal reflection on the experience of fortuitously being in Rome for the election of Pope Francis.

The scholarly presentations led to serious and insightful discussions by the dialogue participants. Numerous formal and informal discussions characterized the four days of the meeting. Of the Catholic participants, Dr. Susan Wood, SCL, chair of the Department of Theology at Marquette University, gave a paper on the “Implications of the Concept of a Hierarchy of Truths;” Dr. Edward Hahnenberg of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at John Carroll University discussed, “How is the sensus fidelium identified and determined by Catholics; and Rev. Dr. Jared Wicks, SJ of the Pontifical College Josephinum spoke on the “Catholic Response on ‘Law’ and ‘Gospel’ in Historical, Theological, and Spiritual Themes.” Of the Lutheran participants, Dr. Kathryn Johnson of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary gave a paper on the “Implications for Round 12 of the common statement of Round 6 and the paper by Cardinal Avery Dulles;” Dr. Marcus J. Miller, former president of the Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary, spoke on “Lutheran Perspective on the question, ‘What are the conditions for authentic and authoritative teaching?’” and Dr. Timothy J. Wengert of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia discussed the “Role of the theological faculties and oversight by bishops/superintendents in subsequent centuries.”

The other Lutheran participants included Rev. Dr. Ashley Hall of Creighton University; Rev. Dr. Sarah Henrich, Professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN; Rev. Dr. Jonathan W. Linman of the Metropolitan New York Synod; and Dr. Ian A. McFarland, Associate Dean of the Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

Catholic participants included Dr. James J. Buckley of the Department of Theology at Loyola University Maryland; Dr. Michael Root of the Catholic University of America; and Dr. Christian D. Washburn of the Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity.

Rev. Dr. Donald J. McCoid, director of Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. And Father John Crossin, OSFS, director of the Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the USCCB, were also in attendance. The Rev. Paul A. Schreck continued his work as secretary to the Dialogue.

The next meeting is scheduled for 20-23 February 2014 at St. Paul’s College.