



NEWS

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DATE: June 29, 1989

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORIENTAL ORTHODOX/CATHOLIC DIALOGUE IN U.S. IMPACTS ON OTHER NATIONS

NEW YORK--The 15th meeting of the Oriental Orthodox/Roman Catholic Consultation (USA), co-sponsored by the four member-church hierarchs (Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian, and Syrian) and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops took place June 11-12 at the Center for the Armenian Diocese here.

The meeting was co-chaired by Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, representing the NCCB Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Committee, and Chor-Episcopos John P. Meno of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch.

Other hierarchs participating were Archbishop Athanasius Y. Samuel of the Syrian Church, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and Archbishop Yesehaq of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the Western Hemisphere. Nine theologians also participated.

According to custom, the Consultation members participated in prayer celebrations in their various traditions. The Latin Catholic and the Armenian traditions were used this time.

The members of the Consultation first reviewed the work of the past 10 years' meetings and then identified the issues felt to be most pressing: "To what degree do we recognize one another's churches as true churches?" and "What are the implications our answers might have for encouraging pastoral cooperation in such areas as family life, marriage, and formation in the faith?"

Father Thaddeus Horgan, S.A., Associate Director of the NCCB Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Secretariat, said the

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Oriental Orthodox/Roman Catholic dialogue "is distinctive among all the others carried out here, except for those with the Eastern Orthodox, because the Oriental Orthodox Churches, like the Catholic Church, exist in other parts of the world. U.S. Protestant Churches are all national, with only some having links to other national churches elsewhere." He explained that "what is accomplished with the Oriental Orthodox will have immediate effect elsewhere."

He also said that "the topic chosen by the participants shows a resolve to move positively toward concrete steps to unity."

The next meeting in the Consultation is scheduled for February, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

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