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BAPTIST MINISTER, CATHOLIC BISHOP DISCUSS UNITY (330)

BENSON, N.C. (NC) — A Baptist minister and a Roman Catholic bishop both expressed a desire for unity in addresses to priests of the Raleigh, N.C., diocese, but neither shied away from the factors which divide the two communions.

The Rev. J. William Angell, professor of religion at Wake Forest University, and Bishop Bernard Law of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Mo., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenism, were participating in continuing education program for Raleigh priests Sept. 27-28.

"I yearn for the fact that we will accept each other fully, because we are one in Spirit," Mr. Angell said. But he added, "You Roman Catholics did yourself a serious injustice when you admitted we (Protestants) were Christians. You say God has accepted me. Then you are saying that everything is unimportant. If you don't accept me fully, you're saying that you're superior to God. Either you've got to accept me as a Christian wholly or refuse to acknowledge me as a Christian and go your bigoted way."

"We are beginning to internalize much more deeply the desire for Christian unity which began 10 years ago," said Bishop Law, who is a member of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. "We probably are experiencing the pain of division much more than our forefathers. I think this pain can be redemptive.

"We have to work through the differences — and there are differences," the bishop added. "The difference regarding the relationship between the Scripture and the Church is the key."

"I have nothing against you," the bishop told Mr. Angell, "but I accept sadly the fact that we are not in agreement as to what the Lord intends for the Church."

The speakers agreed that internal, personal renewal or conversion is necessary for Christian unity. Mr. Angell listed four needed elements — prayer, study, fellowship, and cultivating the leadership and teaching of the Holy Spirit. Said Bishop Law: "The way to unity is holiness. I don't think there is any other way."

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ORTHODOX, CATHOLIC REPRESENTATIVES HOLD 12TH THEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION (450)

WASHINGTON (NC) — American Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic bishops and theologians discussed proposed statements on the theology of ecumenical councils, the sacrament of marriage, and the agenda for a Great Synod of Eastern Orthodoxy at a recent meeting in Washington.

No final statements were issued from the meeting, which was hosted by Cardinal William Baum of Washington, chairman of the Catholic delegation. Archbishop Iakovos, Greek Orthodox archbishop of North and South America, is chairman of the Orthodox delegation. It was the 12th such meeting since the consultation's beginnings in 1965.

According to Father John Hotchkin, director of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and a participant in the consultation, the talks began with discussion of "the authority and place of councils." Since both the Orthodox and Catholic churches accept the early Church councils, Father Hotchkin said, dialogue centered on the differences of opinion about later councils.

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That topic led to a look at a proposed agenda for the projected Great Synod of Eastern Orthodoxy, a meeting which would be roughly similar to a Vatican Council in the Roman Catholic Church. Orthodox leaders are committed to holding the synod, but no date or location has been set.

The topic of marriage, which is to be a major agenda item at the consultation's next meeting in January, has been a continuing concern of the group, Father Hotchkin said. Among the questions to be resolved, he said, are: how people in mixed marriages can best be guided on questions about what Church their children join; differences in the Orthodox and Catholic view of the priest's role in the sacrament of marriage; and how to resolve the different grounds for granting annulments in the two churches.

Statements on marriage, the synod and councils in general, based on discussion and presentations, will be circulated among consultation participants when discussion is completed, Father Hotchkin said. Previous consultation statements have dealt with the Eucharist (1969), mixed marriages (1970), the Church (1974), respect for life (1974), the pastoral office (1976), and the theological principle of "economy," or God's plan for the world, which is especially important in Orthodox theological thought (1976). In addition, an essay on the history of the U.S. consultation is being prepared.

The Washington meeting, held Sept. 28-29, included a Vespers service at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Cardinal Baum presided at the service, and Archbishop Iakovos and Bishop Papken Varjabedian of the Armenian Apostolate Church attended.

The January meeting, to be hosted in New York by the Orthodox delegation, will also include discussion of the significance of the lifting of the mutual excommunications by Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic leaders. The anathemas, imposed in 1054, were lifted by Pope Paul VI and the late Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I in December, 1965.

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MARONITE MONK SHARBEL MAKHLOUF CANONIZED AT ST. PETER'S (770)

By John Maher

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Arabic chants in St. Peter's Basilica marked the canonization Oct. 9 of Sharbel Makhlof, the 19th-century Lebanese Maronite monk and hermit, whose life of "intransigent austerity" Pope Paul VI praised for its "incessant quest for God alone."

The Pope celebrated the canonization Mass surrounded on the high altar by Maronite leaders, including Patriarch Antoine Pierre Khoraiiche of Antioch, and Bishop Francis M. Zayek of the U.S. diocese of St. Maron in Brooklyn, N.Y.

In his French-language homily, Pope Paul sketched the life of St. Sharbel, who died in 1898 at the age of 70 after living for 23 years in a hermitage.

"What then does such a life represent?" the Pope asked. "The assiduous practice, pushed to the extreme, of the three vows of religion, lived in monastic silence and deprivation: first of all, the strictest poverty in regard to shelter, clothing, the unique and frugal daily meal, hard manual labor in the harsh mountain climate; a

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