



# NEWSFILE

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FROM: John Willig

O - 202-659-6700

H - 301-459-5358

## LUTHERAN/CATHOLIC ACCORD ON PAPAL PRIMACY EXALTED

--cited by Catholic participants as  
'landmark report,' 'new foundation'

WASHINGTON--Two Catholic leaders in the ecumenical movement have hailed the significance of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic "Common Statement" on papal primacy made public March 4. The "Common Statement" by the 25 theologians of the Lutheran-Catholic Consultation was cited as a "landmark report" on the sensitive issue of papal primacy.

Bishop T. Austin Murphy, an auxiliary to the Archbishop of Baltimore, and the Catholic co-chairman of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Consultation, expressed gratitude to all who had worked on this particular statement for the past three years.

Bishop Murphy noted "the promising results we have been able to reach thus far." Since the beginning of the national Lutheran-Catholic dialogues in 1965, broad areas of agreement have been uncovered on the Nicene Creed, the Christological center of Faith, Baptism, the Eucharist, and the Ministry of word and sacrament.

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Rev. John F. Hotchkin, director of the Secretariat of the Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs, called the Common Statement on papal primacy a "new foundation" for future dialogue between Catholics and others on the ministry of the pope in the church.

Following are the complete texts of both statements.

Statement by Bishop T. Austin Murphy, Consultation co-chairman:

As one of the co-chairmen of the Lutheran-Catholic consultation I want to express gratitude to all the scholars who have joined with us in this dialogue during the past three years and have contributed so much of their time and ability to the research which has made progress possible on this very sensitive and deeply important question. As Catholics we are especially appreciative of the help of Lutheran Scholars as well as that of the Episcopal and United Church of Christ experts who joined in the work done by our panel of New Testament experts.

It is our hope that the work of this consultation may be of value to other ecumenical consultations nationally and internationally who work as we do toward the increased unity of the Christian family.

While encouraged by the promising results we have been able to reach thus far, the Lutheran-Catholic Consultation will not slacken its own efforts to continue to contribute to Christian unity.

Statement by Rev. John F. Hotchkin, director of bishops' ecumenical secretariat:

The Lutheran-Catholic Consultation was the first Catholic-Protestant dialogue initiated at a national level, and now is the first ecumenical group to issue

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a statement on the ministry of the Pope in the Church.

This is a landmark report in the ecumenical movement. The scholarly research which underlies this statement puts a new foundation under future dialogue between Catholics and others on the papacy.

What is most striking is the marked change of attitude the statement conveys. Far from holding back, the Lutheran participants reveal a real Christian concern for the emergence of a renewed papacy, and Catholics show an equal concern that in the future the papacy may come to be a source of support or service to the Lutheran Churches without infringing on their heritage and proper self-direction.

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