



# NEWS FILE

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CATHOLIC, LUTHERAN LEADERS  
CITE ACCORDS, URGE STUDY

WASHINGTON--A group of Lutheran church officials and Catholic bishops meeting in Washington this week paid tribute to the scholarly achievements of theologians who participated during the past decade in Lutheran-Catholic consultations.

They urged church leaders and other church members of both traditions to study and react to the findings of the theologians.

"We are convinced that such study must ultimately contribute to the deepening of faith and Christian assurance," they said.

Theological discussions between Roman Catholics and Lutherans have been in progress under the sponsorship of the USA National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs since 1965. During that time members of the consultations have announced "broad areas of agreement" on such matters as the Nicene Creed,

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Baptism, the Eucharist, the Ministry of word and sacrament, and papal primacy. Their findings have been published in five volumes under the title Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue.

Leaders of the two traditions met here April 2 and 3 to consider reports from the theologians, assess the progress that has been made, and recommend future actions. They issued a statement at the end of the meeting.

"We are unanimous in our desire to express our appreciation of the accomplishments of the theologians--living and dead--who have dedicated their talents generously to this task which they have undertaken at the request of their respective church officials," the statement said. "We applaud their work and urge them to continue their exploration of unresolved differences. This endeavor clearly serves the cause of the church unity willed by Christ Himself."

"At the conclusion of this first historic meeting of Catholic bishops and Lutheran Church leaders we express our appreciation for the benefits we have derived from our common prayer and study," the statement continued. "We commit ourselves to the task of sharing this opportunity for growth in faith and understanding with bishops, presidents, priests, pastors and laity of our communities."

The Catholic participants in the meeting were Archbishop William W. Baum of Washington, chairman

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of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Auxiliary Bishop T. Austin Murphy of Baltimore, Archbishop John R. Quinn of Oklahoma City, Bishop Joseph G. Vath of Birmingham, and Archbishop John F. Whealon of Hartford.

Lutheran participants who signed the statement were Reverend Dr. Gaylord Falde, President, South Pacific District-American Lutheran Church; Reverend Dr. Robert J. Marshall, President, Lutheran Church in America; Reverend Dr. Paul Orso, President, Maryland Synod-LCA; Reverend Dr. David W. Preus, President, American Lutheran Church; and Reverend Dr. Paul C. Empie, Acting General Secretary, USA National Committee-Lutheran World Federation.

Taking part in the April 2-3 meeting as consultants were Professor Warren Quanbeck, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., Professor George Lindbeck, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Professor Carl J. Peter of the Catholic University of America, Professor Avery Dulles, S.J., of Catholic University, Dr. Virgil Westlund, Office of International Exchange and Studies, USA National Committee, LWF, and Father John F. Hotchkin, director of the secretariat of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

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