



Together in Christ

Lutherans and Catholics Commemorating the Reformation

November, 2016

Dear friends,

Grace to you and peace.

Thank you for your interest in using the materials prepared by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. The process of developing these resources has been an occasion of dialogue and of a deepening of relations between our two communions in Canada. Over the course of two years, a joint CCCC-ELCIC working group has been diligently planning on how to encourage our faithful to prayerfully reflect on the past 500 years; to offer thanksgiving to God for the progress made in our efforts toward reconciliation; and to pray for pardon and peace wherever our words or actions have fallen short of what Christ demands of us as Christians. Together, we are seeking to be people of reconciliation striving toward Christian unity.

In this package, you will find two main resources. First, a homily resource for use in planning for Sunday, January 29, 2017, the concluding Sunday of the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the launch date for the Together in Christ parish study.

Second, a five-part parish study which may be used in individual segments or as a five-session series by local Lutheran, Catholic, joint or ecumenical study groups. The study covers the 500-year arc of history from the 16th Century Reformation until now. The resource is designed to bring Catholic and Lutheran parishes together to facilitate conversation, study and prayer. The resource touches on some of the events and theological questions surrounding the Reformation and the advancements in reconciliation which have occurred over the past 50 years. Bishops and ecumenical officers are encouraged to facilitate the transmission of these resources to the appropriate parishes in their diocese or synod.

Together in Christ—Print Resources

Together in Christ—Homily Resources

This material will serve to assist priests and pastors to speak on Together in Christ and our joint work in the context of the Sunday liturgies

Together in Christ – Parish Study Resources

1. ***Together in Christ: Leader's Guide***

Contains everything required to lead each of the five sessions in this study including the material contained in the Participant's Guide together with additional leadership helps and a mechanism for evaluation.

2. ***Together in Christ: Participant's Guide***

Contains everything required by each participant to fully engage the video material, Bible study, prayers and group reflection in each of the five study sessions.

3. *Together in Christ: Video Script*

Contains the full text of each of the five video clips used in this study.

4. *Together in Christ: Promotional Poster*

As is underscored in the Leader's Guide, it is important that the facility hosting this study have access to a computer with which to download the video clips, as well as good audio visual equipment to reproduce them. This is an essential requirement for each session. We are encouraging the use of this Parish Study sometime in 2017 in a season appropriate for your community.

In addition to the above resources, we have assembled several web links which we have identified as useful resources for diocesan, synodical and local leaders and key staff members in preparing for the 2017 Commemoration. These may be found directly after this letter.

On the occasion of Pope Francis' apostolic journey to commemorate the Reformation in Lund, Sweden (October 31—November 1, 2016), Pope Francis and Bishop Munib Younan, President of the Lutheran World Federation, signed a powerful joint statement which read in part:

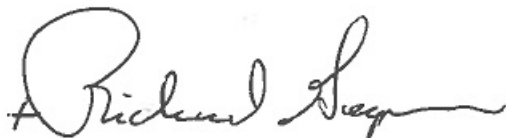
While we are profoundly thankful for the spiritual and theological gifts received through the Reformation, we also confess and lament before Christ that Lutherans and Catholics have wounded the visible unity of the Church. Theological differences were accompanied by prejudice and conflicts, and religion was instrumentalized for political ends. Our common faith in Jesus Christ and our baptism demand of us a daily conversion, by which we cast off the historical disagreements and conflicts that impede the ministry of reconciliation. While the past cannot be changed, what is remembered and how it is remembered can be transformed. We pray for the healing of our wounds and of the memories that cloud our view of one another. We emphatically reject all hatred and violence, past and present, especially that expressed in the name of religion. Today, we hear God's command to set aside all conflict. We recognize that we are freed by grace to move towards the communion to which God continually calls us.

It is in this spirit of dialogue, reconciliation and trust that Lutherans and Catholics in Canada are preparing to commemorate the Reformation. We remember so as to move forward. And we move forward through the loving embrace of God's love which never tires in the mission of reconciliation.

On behalf of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, together with the working-group which developed these resources, we thank you for your participation in this important work of dialogue and reconciliation which will help sow the vital seeds of unity within our Christian communities across Canada.



Bishop Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



Archbishop Richard Gagnon
Archbishop of Winnipeg
Member, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Together in Christ—Electronic Resources

Common Prayer: From Conflict to Communion | Lutheran–Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017

This liturgical resource was developed jointly by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) for the commemoration of the Reformation in 2017. This material was first used at the Common Prayer service in Lund, Sweden (October 31, 2016) led by Pope Francis and by President Munib Younan and General Secretary Martin Junge of the Lutheran World Federation. Available in several languages including English and French.

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/joint-common-prayer-lutheran-catholic-common-commemoration-reformation-2017>

From Conflict to Communion | Lutheran–Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017 (2013)

Based on the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999), this resource was developed jointly by the LWF and PCPCU. Available in several languages including English and French.

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-conflict-communion-basis-lutheran-catholic-commemoration-reformation-2017>

Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification by the Lutheran World Federation and Catholic Church (1999)

The result of decades of Lutheran–Roman Catholic dialogue, this primary document represents an ecumenical event of historical significance. Included in the volume are the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* and the *Official Common Statement* with its *Annex*.

ENGLISH:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html

FRENCH:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_fr.html

Joint Statement on the occasion of the Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration of the Reformation (Lund, Sweden, 31 October 2016)

ENGLISH:

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/10/31/pope_and_president_of_lwf_sign_joint_statement/1269150

FRENCH:

http://fr.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/10/31/signature_de_la_d%C3%A9claration_conjointe_entre_catholiques_et_luth%C3%A9riens/1269148