



CNI



The Archbishop of Canterbury has invited all 37 Primates to Canterbury to reflect and pray together concerning the future of the Anglican Communion.

The gathering, to be held next week, will be an opportunity for Primates to discuss key issues face to face. These will include a review of the structures of the Anglican Communion and deciding together their approach to the next Lambeth Conference.

The agenda will be set by common agreement, with all Primates encouraged to send in contributions. It is likely to include the issues of religiously-motivated violence, the protection of children and vulnerable adults, the environment and human sexuality

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Canterbury cathedral

Roman Catholics make precious loan to Canterbury for Primates' meeting

The Roman Catholic Church has loaned the head of the pastoral staff associated with Pope Gregory – who sent Augustine on his historic mission to England in the 6th century – to Canterbury where Anglican Primates will gather next week.

The carved ivory head of the crosier will be placed in the Crypt at Canterbury Cathedral, where the Primates will be meeting privately to



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effect and pray about the future of the Anglican Communion.

Pope Gregory sent Augustine on a mission to England in 597, a date which the English recognise in relation to the formal foundation of the church in England.

The ancient crosier head is venerated by the monks of San Gregorio al Celio in Rome as that of St Gregory, who was an abbot at the monastery prior to becoming Pope.

This loan is not only symbolic historically, but also spiritually. It is accompanied by the promise of the prayerful support from many in the Roman Catholic Church during this important week in the life of the Anglican Communion.

The Community of St Gregorio al Celio especially have long demonstrated a deep commitment to Anglican-Catholic relations in particular, praying for the cause of Christian unity.

The Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, the Very Revd Dr Robert Willis said: “We are very pleased to receive the crosier as a symbol of ecumenical encouragement at this time of the meeting of Anglican Primates and as a link with St Gregory whose vision of the conversion of England

caused Augustine to found the community at Canterbury.”

Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture said: “Allow me at this point to congratulate you on the highly symbolic value of the loan of this relic, dear to the Church of England, which venerates Pope St Gregory the Great, the promoter of the evangelising mission to the Anglo-Saxon people and is therefore a mark of the bond that spiritually unites the Catholic and Anglican Churches.”

What I hope for at the Primates Meeting, Bishop David Chillingworth

The Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church writing in his blog ‘Thinking Aloud’ states - I have been reflecting on what the Primates Meeting next week means for me. It’s the second one which I have attended. It will clearly not be an easy meeting – but it is important that all Primates will be present. This is my thinking at present:

‘I am personally deeply committed to the Anglican Communion. Members of the Scottish
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Episcopal Church see the Communion as interwoven with the history of their church and as an important part of their creative and outward-facing engagement with the world church.

The Anglican Communion is a noble attempt to build and sustain a global church community without centralised authority or a single teaching magisterium. Such a community needs to be highly relational and collegial. It must embody humility. It must exercise a very high level of relational self-discipline if it is successfully to

cohere. And of course our aspiration must be that it will do much more than cohere – that it will in that deliberate flexibility of organisational structure better express a visible unity in Christ, however great its contextual diversity.

I have been privileged to travel within the Communion in recent years. What is remarkable about that experience is to discover the extraordinary levels of commonality in the life of Provinces – commonality of worship, of commitment to justice and the needs of the poor, of culture, of belonging and of the balance between authority which is democratically-rooted and authority which comes through spiritual and ecclesiastical office. On many levels, the Anglican Communion is very much alive. Companionship Relationships between dioceses across the world strengthen our knowledge of one another and build unity in Christ. We are a world missional church. Our Anglican Networks enable us to address the greatest issues of our times. We attempt to live the gospel of reconciliation.

Yet our relationships and our unity are constantly stressed by the issues around human sexuality. Some see this primarily as an inter-provincial challenge. But these difficulties are experienced within our provinces as much as between our

provinces. We in Scotland continue to explore what it means to be faithful to scripture and to live in a rapidly-changing society where attitudes to human sexuality have undergone a revolution in a generation or less. If we reach the point where we are unable to recognise one another as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, we are in great difficulty.

I hope that we as Primates will grow together in our meeting next week. I believe that we need more engagement with one another and not less. We must strive for a deeper relating in which we can explore together the future to which God calls us. We need also to find words in which we can discuss some painful realities which underlie the sharpness of our differences about human sexuality questions. I refer in particular to very different ways in which authority and leadership are exercised in different parts of the Communion. More painfully for all of us, I believe that we need to address the legacy of colonialism which, even if not explicit, is still a major factor in determining the way in which we relate to one another.

At our meeting in Dublin in 2011, we committed ourselves to 'walking together'. As we approach this Primates Meeting, we pray for Archbishop Justin and all who will support us as we meet

together. I pray not so much for immediate answers which will solve our problems. Rather I pray for a deepening of our life together as disciples – and for respect and relationship within which we can together seek the future to which God calls us.’

Bishop Chillingworth’s blog is at -
<http://www.bishopdavid.net/2016/01/what-i-hope-for-at-the-primates-meeting/>

C of E fears talks on gay rights could end global Anglican communion

Harriet Sherwood, Religion correspondent The Guardian -The Church of England is braced for a de facto split in the worldwide Anglican communion next week over the issues of gay rights and same-sex marriage. Church leaders from six African countries are expected to walk out of a pivotal summit called by the [archbishop of Canterbury](#).

Bitter divisions among [Anglicans](#) on the issue of sexuality are expected to intensify at the week-long meeting of the 38 leaders of national churches at Canterbury cathedral. Archbishops from conservative churches in Uganda, Kenya,

Nigeria, South Sudan, Rwanda and Congo are likely to walk out of the summit within a day or two of its opening on Monday.

“There’s going to be a lot of drama,” said a senior C of E source. “It’s 90% likely that the six will walk out. If we get past Tuesday, we’ll be doing well.”

The meeting of Anglican primates was called by Justin Welby in a last-ditch effort to move the global church – which claims 85 million followers – beyond the issue of homosexuality in order to focus on other pressing matters such as religious violence and [climate change](#). Welby is proposing that, in the face of intractable differences, the communion reshapes itself as a loose confederation of churches rather than adherents to a common doctrine.

But the six African churches are insisting on sanctions against the US Episcopal Church, which tipped the [simmering conflict over gay rights](#) into open hostility when it consecrated [gay priest Gene Robinson](#) as bishop of New Hampshire in 2003.

This week, Archbishop Stanley Ntagali – leader of the Anglican church in Uganda, which has backed the criminalisation of homosexuality in the east African country – [warned that he would walk out of the primates’ meeting](#) if “discipline and godly order is not restored”.

Archbishop Eliud Wabukala of Kenya said the [“truth \[of the Gospel\] continues to be called into question in the Anglican communion”](#) and warned against “the global ambitions of a secular culture”.

Peter Jensen, general secretary of Gafcon, a group of conservative Anglican churches formed to “guard and proclaim the unchanging Gospel”, said in [a new year message](#): “Truth matters even more than institutional unity.”

The first potential trigger for a walkout will be when the order of the agenda is decided at the start of the summit. Conservative primates are insisting that the issue of sexuality is discussed first; in the unlikely event that they do not prevail, they may leave in protest. The C of E considers this a “soft walkout”.

More significant would be a “hard walkout” on the issue of disciplining the US Episcopal

Church. This could lead to a formal rather than de facto schism, with conservative churches around the world realigning under the authority of Gafcon. If the six leaders wish to formally detach their provinces from the Anglican communion, each needs to embark on a lengthy process authorised by their churches.

More at -

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/08/church-of-england-fears-talks-on-gay-rights-could-end-global-anglican-communion>

Archbishop invites Jean Vanier to speak at Primates' gathering

Archbishop Justin Welby has invited the founder of the L'Arche movement, Jean Vanier, to visit Canterbury next week during the gathering of Anglican Primates. Vanier, 86, is a Roman Catholic philosopher and social innovator who founded the L'Arche Communities - where people with and without learning disabilities share life together, living and working in community - in 1964.