

**Summary of ARC-USA presentation to the Louisiana Interchurch Conference Fall Board of Directors
Meeting,
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The Experience of the Dialogue:

The oldest bilateral dialogue of The Episcopal Church, since 1965. The beginning of the Roman Catholic Church's involvement in the modern ecumenical movement. Quickly developed high expectations, progress made, followed by "ecumenical winter". ARCIC, "The Final Report" (1981).

Ecumenical dialogue partners use to be able to assume substantial ethical agreement coupled with disagreement on matters of morals. Now a period where there has been progress on substantial doctrinal agreement, but matters of ethical disagreement are beginning to have prominence.

ARC-USA began a cycle of dialogue in 2008 focused on ecclesiology and moral disagreement. This has begun to be a subject of discussion internationally and in other bilateral dialogues. There has been transition in the group among both TEC and RCC members.

There have been "internal dialogues" among both partner's members. There have been shared perspectives across denominational lines. There has also been a process of learning what the other actually believe. Document produced: "Ecclesiology and Moral Discernment: Seeking a Unified Moral witness" (2014).

Heart of the Argument:

We share a common commitment to full visible unity. We share a common tradition of moral formation with four "necessary characteristics": 1) Jesus Christ, the beginning and end of the moral life; 2) the role of prayer and worship in shaping the Christian life; 3) the recognition of human limitation, both sinfulness and finitude; 4) the place of the teaching charism of the church in moral formation.

We differ in how we structure and exercise authority in all forms of teaching. Our teachings differ in "content, specificity, and detail". When it comes to moral teachings, it is not as if we agreed in broad principles but differed in application. Rather, we each have a different ecclesiology, leading to differences in how we teach, and to a resultant difference in discernment.

The RCC is more centralized, with a magisterium that speaks authoritatively about a variety of issues. TEC is part of the Anglican Communion, less centralized, with authoritative teaching that is rooted in the particular churches that make up the Communion, and is more reticent and diffused in its ways of teaching. It has no supreme magisterium across the Communion.

Both churches are also committed to continuing reform of our teaching. We also recognize that the ecumenical project requires the call to conversion.

Case Studies

On Migration/Immigration. Both churches end up in the same place, but with distinctive ways of teaching illustrated. RCC: A joint "Pastoral Letter" from USA and Mexican bishops. TEC: a "Theological Resource" from the bishops, evidencing concern for USA national life and respect for disagreements about immigration among citizens.

On Same Sex relations. Churches end up in different places. RCC: an authoritative statement rooted in the church's sources of truth. TCC: diversity of practice, with distinctive emphasis on a legislative process and less attention to coherence in favor of pastoral response. Both churches united in pastoral response to gay and lesbian members of the church.