



**Ecumenical Handbook for the  
Roman Catholic Dioceses  
of Kentucky  
Revised December, 2003**

**1042 Burlington Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601-8487  
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Dear People of God in the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

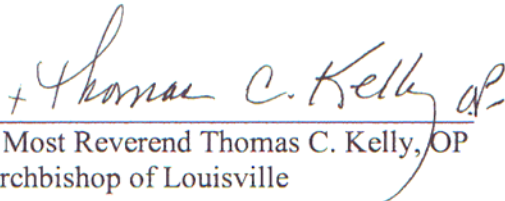
The Roman Catholic bishops in Kentucky are pleased to publish this revised *Ecumenical Handbook*. In doing so, we renew our strong endorsement of the goals of the ecumenical movement and our commitment to fostering ecumenism in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

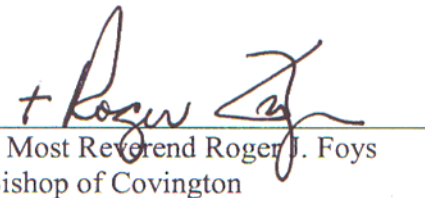
In a pastoral exhortation written in 1988, we stated, “Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Second Vatican Council irrevocably committed the Roman Catholic Church to seek Christian unity, an aspiration shared by many Christians. We wish to affirm publicly our fidelity to the teaching of the Council and thereby express a common pastoral commitment to encourage ecumenism.” (“That All Christians Be One,” *The Record*, January 21, 1988). These words continue to express the sentiments of our minds and hearts.

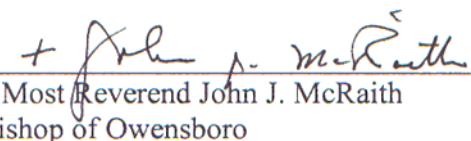
Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has frequently and emphatically stressed the importance of promoting unity among Christians stating, “We must not forget that the ecumenical task remains a primary duty of our Church.” (*L’Osservatore Romano*, Nov. 20, 1992) On another occasion, he stated that the Church “asks the Spirit for the grace to strengthen her own unity and to make it grow toward full communion with other Christians. ... In this journey we are undertaking with other Christians ... prayer must occupy the first place.” (*Ut Unum Sint*, n.102)

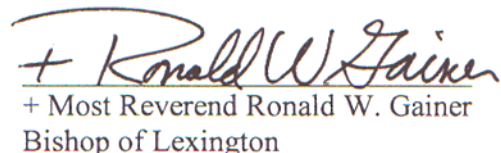
We join together in prayer with all persons of goodwill in this endeavor that one day we may all be one in Christ (cf. John 17: 21). It is our sincerest hope that this *Ecumenical Handbook* will not only provide useful guidance and information, but also to motivate Christians in Kentucky to work for the unity that Christ wants for His Church.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

  
+ Most Reverend Thomas C. Kelly, OP  
Archbishop of Louisville

  
+ Most Reverend Roger J. Foys  
Bishop of Covington

  
+ Most Reverend John J. McRaith  
Bishop of Owensboro

  
+ Most Reverend Ronald W. Gainer  
Bishop of Lexington

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
I. Ecumenical Directories and Guidelines.....	4
II. History of the Ecumenical Movement.....	5
III. The Unity We Seek.....	7
IV. Definitions.....	8
V. Religion in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.....	10
VI. Diocesan Offices of Ecumenism.....	12
VII. Ecumenical Formation.....	13
VIII. Principles, Norms and Directives Regarding Sacraments, Prayer Services, Worship.....	14
Baptism.....	15
Confirmation.....	16
Eucharist.....	16
Reconciliation (Penance) and Anointing of the Sick.....	19
Marriage.....	19
Other Forms of Sharing.....	21
IX. Other Ecumenical Organizations in Kentucky.....	22
X. Practical Suggestions for Ecumenical Involvement.....	23
XI. Ecumenical Etiquette.....	24
Index.....	26

## Introduction

1. Promoting Christian unity is now commonly accepted as a fundamental dimension of the work of the Church and of the call of all Catholics to participate in advancing the mission of the Church. Promoting unity among Christians must not be looked upon as optional and the work only of a select few; it is the responsibility and privilege of all: bishops, priests, deacons, religious, lay ministers, and all the faithful, according to the talents and opportunities of each. “... *ecumenism is an organic part of her [the Church’s] life and work, and consequently must pervade all she is and does; it must be like a fruit borne by a healthy and flourishing tree which grows to full stature.*” (*Ut Unum Sint*, n. 20)
2. Divisions among Christians are so complex in their origins, causes, nature, and consequences that no one can be expected to be proficient in ecumenical work without assistance. Promoting adequate ecumenical understanding and participation is the reason for preparing this handbook.
3. Promoting Christian unity in a fruitful way is made easier by knowing something about the history of the ecumenical movement, the nature of the unity we seek and the updated principles outlined for us by the leadership of our Church. Other concerns include the religious context within which we live and work, the resources that are available to us, and the practical norms to be applied as we participate with other Christians in worship and works of mercy, and so forth.
4. Two mistakes are commonly made by persons of goodwill who wish there were greater unity among Christians and among people of religious faith generally. One mistake is to think that the differences among Christians and other faith traditions are really not that great or consequential, that diversity is a part of the very fabric of life, and therefore should not be emphasized. The other mistake is to view the divisions among Christians (not to speak of differences with other religions) as so numerous and so entrenched in history and culture that the very idea of achieving greater unity is out of reach, at least for the ordinary Christian trying to live a good life and get along with others.
5. The first mistake becomes obvious when taking a closer look at what people really believe; the second mistake underestimates both the power of the Spirit working among us and the importance for humankind that religious people be more united and find ways of working together for the benefit of the entire human race.
6. The bishops of Kentucky have a strong commitment to promoting unity among Christians and all people of faith. However, they recognize that it is neither possible nor desirable that this effort be confined to the upper levels of leadership. All Catholics must be involved if this effort is to have a significant impact.
7. The publishing of this *Ecumenical Handbook* is inspired by the hope that it will serve as a useful tool in the hands of pastors, pastoral associates, directors of religious education, teachers, parish councils, and all the faithful as together they work that all may be one, according to the desire and prayer of Christ our Savior (cf. John 17:21).

## I. Ecumenical Directories and Guidelines

8. This handbook does not stand by itself. It is a supplement to Vatican directories and guidelines issued during the past several decades.
9. The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity was established by Pope John XXIII on June 5, 1960. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) issued the *Decree on Ecumenism* on November 21, 1964. This foundational document was but the first of numerous documents of an ecumenical nature including the *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* (October 28, 1965). The Second Vatican Council's *Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches* as well as its *Declaration on Religious Freedom* also have ecumenical significance. The Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs was established by the U S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1964.
10. The first ecumenical directory for the entire Catholic Church, designed to apply the principles of the *Decree on Ecumenism* to the day-to-day life of the Church, was published in two parts in 1967 and 1970. Shortly thereafter, many dioceses throughout the United States published directories or guidelines to apply the principles of ecumenism to their localities. Included among these were *Ecumenism Guidelines*, the Archdiocese of Louisville, approved by Archbishop Thomas J. McDonough on May 17, 1970.
11. There have been many developments in the world of ecumenical relationships since the 1960's both on the national and international levels as well as on the local level. Whereas the principles set forth by the *Decree on Ecumenism* are still valid, the need has arisen for more current information and guidelines. Consequently, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (formerly called the Secretariat) issued a revision entitled *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (DAPNE), which was approved by Pope John Paul II (March, 1993). Pope John Paul II wrote, *As the Third Millennium Draws Near* (1994) and the Holy Father issued his encyclical on the Catholic Church's commitment to ecumenism, *Ut Unum Sint*, (May, 1995). The Vatican released *The Ecumenical Dimension in the Formation of Pastoral Workers* (EDFPW), (March, 1998).

(In this handbook, sources of quotes or other substantive language are cited by the name of the document and the paragraph or page number from which the material is taken, except those from DAPNE, which cites only the paragraph number.)

The ecumenical dimension of Church life is "...one of the tasks of Christians as we make our way to the Year 2000. The approaching of the second millennium demands of everyone an examination of conscience and the promotion of fitting ecumenical initiatives, so that we can celebrate the Great Jubilee, if not completely united, at least much closer to overcoming the divisions of the second millennium." (*As the Third Millennium Draws Near*, n. 34)

12. It follows that this is the appropriate time for updated guidelines and information for the Catholic dioceses in Kentucky, hence this *Ecumenical Handbook*.

13. Understanding the relationship of this *Ecumenical Handbook* to DAPNE is important. There can be no substitute for reading DAPNE, which is a lengthier, more complete, and more detailed work than this handbook. This handbook is envisioned as a supplement, not as a summary or a substitute.

## **II: History of the Ecumenical Movement**

14. As it is known today, the ecumenical movement is a twentieth century development. It is impossible to pinpoint the exact beginning of this movement, but some major events can be identified as contributing to the growth of interest in promoting unity among Christians.
15. The event most commonly referred to as the birthday or the cradle of the movement was the First World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910. This meeting brought together 1200 delegates from the Anglican and Protestant churches of the entire world. At this meeting it became strikingly clear that divisions among Christians were hampering missionary efforts among those hearing of Christ for the first time.
16. Another important event was a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Church of Constantinople in January 1919, at which it was decided to invite all Christian churches to form a league of churches. The following year the Ecumenical Patriarch, Metropolitan Dorotheus of Brussa, issued an encyclical letter in which he spoke of his convictions regarding the importance of establishing a fellowship or league of churches modeled after the newly founded League of Nations.
17. Also in the year, 1919, the Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, Sweden, published an article in *The Contemporary Review* advocating the formation of the common or ecumenical council whereby the unity of Christians might be more fully realized and expressed.
18. The organization of two international bodies during the 1920's had a lasting effect upon the development of the movement. The first of these was the Life and Work movement, which held its first world conference in Stockholm in 1925. The second was the Faith and Order movement, which held its first world conference in 1927. The former focused upon cooperative action on the part of the churches for disaster relief and the second sought to promote unity of belief among Christians.
19. Eventually the Life and Work and the Faith and Order movements joined forces to form the World Council of Churches. Its first general assembly was held in Amsterdam in 1948. Since then, seven or more general assemblies have been held in Evanston (1954), New Delhi (1961), Uppsala (1968), Nairobi (1975), Vancouver (1983), Canberra (1991), and Harare (1998).
20. The Holocaust (or Shoah) and the Second World War also influenced the ecumenical movement. The atrocities of the former convinced countless thoughtful persons of the absolute necessity of breaking down barriers caused by prejudice and bigotry; responding to the ravages of World War II required the cooperative efforts of all concerned. The Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews issued, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah* (March,

1998). The U S. Conference of Catholic Bishops published guidelines on Holocaust education in Catholic schools, *Catholic Social Teaching on the Shoah: Implementing the Holy See's "We Remember."*

21. The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) must also be considered a major event in the modern ecumenical movement. One of the principal purposes of this council, as expressed by Pope John XXIII, was the restoration of unity among Christians. This council marked the formal entrance of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement. Prior to that time, great caution was observed from the perspective of a wait and see attitude. As is obvious from events and official statements that followed, the Roman Catholic Church is irrevocably committed to pursue the goal of unity among Christians.
22. Since the close of the Council, the bishops of Kentucky responded by appointing ecumenical directors and forming commissions to assist them. Father Stanley Schmidt of the Archdiocese of Louisville emerged as one of the nation's outstanding ecumenical leaders and was particularly effective in promoting Catholic/Jewish relations.
23. The Diocese of Covington was a founding member of the Northern Kentucky Interfaith Commission in 1969. In July of 1979, the Louisville based Kentuckiana Interfaith Community was formed with Father Stanley Schmidt as its first president. On November 29, 1983, the dioceses of Kentucky requested full membership in the Kentucky Council of Churches. Msgr. Donald F. Hellmann of the Diocese of Covington served as president of the Council in 1983-84. Father William Brown of the Diocese of Lexington held this same position during the years 1991-94. Father Jude Weisenbeck, S.D.S., of the Archdiocese of Louisville was president of KCC 1997-2000. In January 1988, the bishops of Kentucky jointly issued a pastoral exhortation on ecumenism entitled "That all Christians Be One." In May 1999, they revised this exhortation and issued, *A People Made One*, which was published by the Catholic Conference of Kentucky. The ecumenical activities initiated by the pioneering ecumenical organizations formed in the 1960s and the 1970s have now also expanded beyond those originating bodies into the mainstream ministries of churches in a variety of ways of witness and service (e.g., peace and justice, social services, local parish and congregational cooperation, Bible study groups, common prayer, covenant relationships, and ministerial associations, etc...).
24. *Note:* Although the ecumenical movement is primarily concerned with promoting unity among Christians, it quickly became clear that religious dialogue with other faith traditions flows naturally from the desire to promote unity among Christians. Interreligious initiatives in Kentucky include dialogue with Jews and people of other faith traditions of the world.

### **III: The Unity We Seek**

25. Since the great divisions among Christians occurred so long ago, and since so many things have changed in the meantime, it is sometimes difficult to visualize just what a united Christian Church would really look like.

26. Although heretical and schismatic groups caused divisions among Christians from the very beginning, the first large division occurred in 1054 when mutual excommunication on the part of the Bishop of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople resulted in the division between eastern Christians of the Greek-speaking world and Latin speaking Christians of the West.
27. The second major division took place in the Western Church in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century in the Protestant Reformation under the leadership of Martin Luther in Germany and John Calvin in Switzerland. At nearly the same time, King Henry VIII broke with the Bishop of Rome and declared himself head of the Church of England. Numerous other movements resulted in what we know today as Protestant denominations: Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Assemblies of God, Pentecostals, Disciples of Christ, Church of God, Congregationalists, Quakers, and so forth.
28. Some historians estimate that there are as many as 22,000 separate Christian denominations in the world today. In addition, the numbers are growing. Consequently, it is sometimes difficult to imagine just what kind of unity we seek as the goal of the ecumenical movement. Defining the unity we seek has been a preoccupation of the ecumenical movement from the beginning and persists to this day.
29. The Second Vatican Council distinguishes between full communion and imperfect communion when speaking of the unity we seek. It teaches that baptism incorporates us into the Body of Christ. Therefore, all those who are baptized are already in communion with each other to some degree by reason of their baptism and other spiritual gifts which they share in common.
30. As Pope John Paul II has taught us, the unity of the Church we seek “is not a matter adding together all the riches scattered throughout the various Christian communities in order to arrive at a church which God has in mind for the future. ...the Catholic Church believes that in the Pentecost event God has already manifested the church in her eschatological reality...” (UUS, n.14)
31. Regarding the essentials needed for full communion, the Roman Catholic Church has clearly defined its position on this matter in the 1993 *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* where it speaks of “The Church as Communion,” (nn.13-17). Briefly, the unity of the Church is conceived of as a communion of local churches (dioceses), each under the leadership of a bishop in union with the bishops of other dioceses, all of whom are also in full communion with the Bishop of Rome. To be in full communion with other bishops and the Bishop of Rome implies, of course, the profession of the same apostolic faith, the celebration of the same sacraments, and acceptance of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome. (Cf. UUS, n.9)
32. Full communion does not imply uniformity. Eastern Catholic Churches are in full communion with the Bishop of Rome but have their own unique governance structures, church practices and liturgical rites. An obvious example of something quite different in these Churches is the acceptance of a married clergy.

33. From the Roman Catholic point of view, it can be assumed that entering into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church would require a Church to be headed by a bishop (or the equivalent) ordained in apostolic succession through the historic episcopate, profession of the same apostolic faith, celebration of the same sacraments, and acknowledgment of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome
34. Obviously, there are many ramifications to these essential conditions for full communion which cannot be pursued here. What, for example, is the essential content of the apostolic faith? And what exactly is required for a bishop to be ordained in apostolic succession in the historic episcopate? Still, this in capsule form is an image for Roman Catholics of the unity we seek in the ecumenical movement.
35. As in almost every discipline, profession, or movement, certain terms are used by ecumenists whose meanings are not self-explanatory. Consequently, an explanation of the meaning of terms is needed lest confusion or misunderstanding arise. Definitions are particularly important because some terms are often used incorrectly. The following are some of these terms:

#### **IV. Definitions**

36. *Ecumenical*...from the Greek word *oikoumene* meaning in the one house refers to relationships and interaction among two or more Christian Churches. Strictly speaking, the ecumenical movement has as its purpose promoting unity among and between the Christian Churches, or the restoration of unity in the Church founded by Jesus Christ. It is a movement of and for Christians. The final goal is the unity of the Church.
37. *Interfaith*... has progressively come to refer to relationships and interaction between Christians and Jews. Although there are differences between Christians and Jews in their understanding of God, they do nonetheless worship the same God. Also the faith of Christians has its origin in the faith of the Jews, hence the appropriateness of the term “interfaith” when referring to relationships and interaction between Jews and Christians.
38. *Interreligious*...refers to relationships and interaction between Christians and the members of other world religions. It reflects recognition of the faith of Jews and Christians and their relationship to the members of other world religions (Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Mormonism, etc). However, the choice of a special term to refer to this kind of dialogue provides evidence of widespread convictions regarding its importance and value in a global village.
39. *Church* ...has both a strict meaning and broader meanings. Within the Roman Catholic lexicon, “Church” also has a technical meaning not necessarily shared by other Christian Communities.
40. When speaking of “Church” (preceded by the definite article and sometimes capitalized), reference is to the assembly of God’s People called together by its founder, Jesus Christ. The term always has a theological content, over and above the sociological meaning.



41. In a broader sense, “Church” is often used to refer to a particular grouping of Christians such as the Roman Catholic Church (including Eastern Catholic Churches in full communion with Rome), the Orthodox Church, the churches of the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran, Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal, etc.
42. Officially, Roman Catholics restrict the use of term “Church” to those Christian communities that possess the fullness of ordained ministry and consequently the fullness of the Eucharist and the other sacraments. For example, ordination by a bishop in apostolic succession through the historic episcopate is required for the fullness of ordained ministry.
43. *Ecclesial Community*... a Roman Catholic term, used to refer to Christian communities that possess many of the gifts of Christ to His Church, but lack the fullness of ordained ministry. Through the use of this term, the Roman Catholic Church recognizes a genuine ecclesial character in these communities of Christians. The term may also apply to Christian communities that do not designate themselves as a church (e.g., Salvation Army, Quakers, Amish, etc.)
44. *Local Church* ... the Church universal is comprised of numerous churches located or at least based in specific geographical areas. For Roman Catholics, local church means a diocese, which in turn is made up of individual parishes or congregations. For Roman Catholics, every local church is headed by a bishop ordained in apostolic succession through the historic episcopate.
45. *Denomination* ... refers to Protestant churches or, ecclesial Communities. Although there is no universally accepted definition of a denomination, three things are generally required: regular Sunday worship in designated places, recognizable criteria for membership, and at least five congregations belonging to the denomination. This is a way of distinguishing a denomination from individual congregations that have no affiliation with a larger body of Christians or from one that exists only on paper for whatever reason.
46. *Apostolic Succession* ... succession in an unbroken line from the apostles to the present day. This doctrine includes succession in the apostolic faith as well as succession in ordained ministry.
47. *Historic Episcopate* ... that body of bishops who have succeeded in an unbroken line from the apostles to the present through the ordination of one bishop by another.
48. *Synagogue* ... a Jewish congregation or a house of worship and communal center of a Jewish congregation.
49. *Temple* ... a building for religious services. The Reform and Conservative Jews sometimes call their synagogue a temple.
50. *Mosque* ... a building used for public services by Muslims.

## **V: Religion in the Commonwealth of Kentucky**

51. The total Catholic population of the Commonwealth of Kentucky numbers approximately 406,000 (source: Glenmary Research Center), nearly ten percent of the total population. Since religious population statistics are known to be unreliable and the various sources are not in agreement with each other, the figures given here should be considered only approximations. Nevertheless, even as approximations, these figures are very revealing and interesting.
52. Slightly more than half of the Catholics in the Commonwealth are located within the twenty-four-county area comprising the Archdiocese of Louisville, with 79 percent of all Catholics in the Archdiocese living in Jefferson County. Roman Catholics represent the largest religious body in Jefferson County. Looked at from another perspective, more than 40 percent of all Catholics in the Commonwealth live in Jefferson County.
53. The 2002 Kennedy Directory reports the Catholic population for each diocese:
- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| Archdiocese of Louisville approximately | 200,000 |
| Diocese of Covington approximately      | 90,000  |
| Diocese of Owensboro approximately      | 52,000  |
| Diocese of Lexington approximately      | 46,000  |
54. The counties with the largest concentrations of Catholics (in round figures) are:
- |                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Jefferson (Archdiocese of Louisville) | 157,000 |
| Kenton (Diocese of Covington)         | 42,000  |
| Campbell (Diocese of Covington)       | 25,000  |
| Fayette (Diocese of Lexington)        | 26,000  |
| Daviess (Diocese of Owensboro)        | 20,000  |
| Boone (Diocese of Covington)          | 18,000  |
| Nelson (Archdiocese of Louisville)    | 13,000  |
| Marion (Archdiocese of Louisville)    | 9,000   |
| Hardin (Archdiocese of Louisville)    | 9,300   |
| McCracken (Diocese of Owensboro)      | 5,000   |
55. There are some counties having no Catholic churches and many others with only one small congregation, while one county (Marion) is approximately 57 percent Catholic. The Catholic population of Kentucky is very unevenly distributed.
56. Based on square-mileage, the dioceses rank in size as follows:
- |                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Diocese of Lexington      | 16,423 square miles |
| Diocese of Owensboro      | 12,502 square miles |
| Archdiocese of Louisville | 8,124 square miles  |
| Diocese of Covington      | 3,359 square miles  |
57. Although Roman Catholics are the largest religious body in Jefferson, Kenton, Campbell, and Marion Counties, they are not the largest in the entire Commonwealth. Adherents of the Southern Baptist Convention (including those who are not full members) number nearly 980,000, or more than 2.5 times the number of Catholics. In addition, the members of the two National Baptist Conventions are also very high, although statistics are not readily available. There

are many other groups of Baptists, so that Baptists and Roman Catholics make up the vast majority of the members of churches in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

58. Many other Christian Churches are found in Kentucky: United Methodists, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Churches of Christ, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion Churches, the Assemblies of God, Lutheran (ELCA and Missouri Synod) and the Episcopal Church USA. All of the other Christian churches in the region, of which there are many, have fewer members than those listed above.
59. Although the Commonwealth of Kentucky is predominantly Christian, other faith traditions are also found here. Notable among these are the Jews, who in 1993 celebrated their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Louisville. Currently there are approximately 11,350 Jews living in Jefferson, Oldham and Shelby Counties. These comprise two Reform congregations, two Conservative congregations, and one Orthodox congregation.
60. There are approximately 7,500 Jews living in other parts of the Commonwealth including 2,250 in Kenton County and 1,300 each in Campbell and Fayette Counties.
61. Other non-Christian religions include Muslims, who have various Islamic Cultural Centers, the Baha'i religion, Buddhists, Mormons, Jains, Sikhs, and Hindus.
62. Note: Statistics are taken from: *Churches and Church Membership in the United States 2000: An Enumeration by Region, State and County Based on Data Reported for 133 Church Groupings*. Published by the Glenmary Research Center, Atlanta, Georgia. Copyright 2003 by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB).

## **VI: Diocesan Offices of Ecumenism**

63. All of the dioceses in Kentucky have an ecumenical officer and offices of ecumenism. Ecumenical commissions or committees assist the directors. The diocesan directors of Kentucky meet regularly under the auspices of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky.
64. The aim of these diocesan offices of ecumenism is to promote Christian unity, interfaith and interreligious sensitivity, understanding, respect and collaboration among the people of Kentucky. More specifically, these offices:
  - Assist the bishop in promoting and guiding ecumenical, interfaith and interreligious dialogue;
  - Work for reconciliation and unity between Roman Catholics and other Christian believers;
  - Initiate and participate in dialogue and collaboration between Roman Catholics and other peoples of faith;

- Encourage interreligious sensitivity in every aspect of Roman Catholic Church life;
  - Collaborate with organized religious groups and interreligious agencies on matters of community concern;
  - And, provide support and encourage an emphasis on ecumenical, interfaith and interreligious efforts at the parish level.
65. Although the activities of the ecumenical offices have much in common, the particular thrust of each office is influenced by the specifics of each diocese. For example, the national office of the Presbyterian Church, USA is located in Louisville as are the regional offices of several denominations, whereas there is only one judicatory office in the entire geographic area of the Diocese of Owensboro, that of the Roman Catholic Diocese. In 2003, Bellarmine University and the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary began cooperatively offering a Masters Degree in Spirituality. Also, the Lexington Theological Seminary, sponsored by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), is located within the boundaries of the Diocese of Lexington. It is one of the few seminaries in the nation with an intentional ecumenical orientation in its entire structure. This institution is a partner in a major cooperative educational program with the Diocese of Lexington. Diversity of ecumenical activity follows demographic diversity in the various regions of the Commonwealth.

## **VII: Ecumenical Formation**

66. Twenty pages are devoted to ecumenical formation in the 1993 *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*. More recently, *The Ecumenical Dimension in the Formation of Pastoral Workers* was issued in 1998. The need for ecumenical formation has become increasingly clear, both within and outside the Catholic Church. Progress in promoting unity among Christians requires serious attention to ecumenical formation for people at all levels.
67. Regarding the ecumenical formation of the faithful, six principal means are listed: 1) hearing and studying the Word of God, 2) preaching, 3) catechesis, 4) liturgy, 5) shared spiritual life, and 6) collaboration in service of human needs (DAPNE, nn.58-64). Explanations are provided for each of these given means. The Catechism of the Catholic Church should also be considered a primary point of reference in ecumenical catechesis (nn.816, 820-822).
68. In addition, DAPNE lists four particularly appropriate settings for ecumenical formation: 1) the family, 2) the parish, 3) the school, and 4) groups, associations, and ecclesial movements. In Kentucky, attention should consciously be directed to an additional setting, namely, the religious education (CCD) program of the parish.
69. Sensitivity is needed when working with children and parents because of the large number of interchurch, interfaith and interreligious marriages. A great opportunity is provided to work with families in pastoral ways that draw them closer together in their common beliefs while instilling respect for diversity of individual beliefs.

70. A child's faith is formed by both parents, each of whom has an integral role in their child's religious formation. Initiation to the sacraments is a particularly formative experience, and both parents should be involved in a meaningful way to the extent that this is possible.
71. When speaking of the fourth setting for ecumenical formation, DAPNE does not name any specific group, association, or ecclesial movement; but it would seem clearly to include organizations like Cursillo, Marriage and Engaged Encounter, the Knights of Columbus, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Teens Encounter Christ, the Serra Club, the Holy Name Society, the Legion of Mary, to name but a few. Although these are Catholic groups intended to build up and support the Church, they also are asked to consider what it means for each of them to develop an ecumenical spirit and how ecumenical formation might help them achieve their specific goals.
72. EDFPW deals with the formation of those engaged in pastoral work, specialized formation and permanent formation (what we in the United States would refer to as continuing formation). It is clearly intended that every formation program should have an ecumenical dimension, whether at the diocesan level, the parish level, in universities, colleges and seminaries, in religious houses of formation, or any other formation program. It must not be assumed that being sympathetic to the ideals of the ecumenical movement is enough. Formal training and conscious attention to this dimension of formation are needed.
73. The choice of teaching materials is especially important, lest historical inaccuracies and a careless use of terms and phrases contribute to producing an unwanted effect. Ecumenical attitudes are instilled directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, positively or negatively, in virtually every teaching situation. Accuracy in content and sensitivity in expression cannot be emphasized too much.
74. In Kentucky, a partial listing of available resources for ecumenical formation, follows: 1) the office of ecumenism of each diocese, 2) the Catholic colleges and universities, 3) the Kentucky Council of Churches, 4) the Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, 5) the Northern Kentucky Interfaith Commission, 6) the Lexington Theological Seminary, which is deliberately ecumenical in its entire program. All of these are rich resources, directly or indirectly, for ecumenical formation.

### **VIII: Principles, Norms and Directives Regarding Sacraments, Prayer Services, Worship**

75. The chapter in DAPNE dealing with matters covered by the title of this section is twenty pages in length and covers much more than will be covered here. DAPNE itself and the appropriate sections of the Code of Canon Law should always be consulted as the definitive sources of information.
76. The intended purpose here is threefold: 1) to highlight some of the more practical and frequently recurring pastoral applications of the norms; 2) to provide a brief commentary on selected points; and 3) to assist in understanding how the norms intended for the universal Church are to be concretely applied in the dioceses of Kentucky.

## Baptism

77. Starting with Baptism, it is important to remember the great fundamental ecumenical principle espoused by the Second Vatican Council in the *Decree on Ecumenism* that baptism incorporates us into Christ and His Church. Therefore, all baptized persons are in real, although sometimes imperfect, communion with all other baptized persons. For this reason, ceremonies in which Catholics, Orthodox and other Christians renew their baptismal promises together are to be encouraged.
78. The Catholic Church recognizes baptism conferred “with water and with a formula which clearly indicates that baptism is done in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” (n. 93) The normal way of knowing if baptism has been conferred validly is reviewing the prescription of the rituals, liturgical books, or established customs of a Church or ecclesial Community. Sufficient intention is to be presumed unless there is evidence to the contrary. Regarding the following list of Christian denominations, some do not practice baptism and of those that do, the validity of their baptism is questioned: Apostolic Church, Bohemian Free Thinkers, Christadelphians, Christian Community (Rudolf Steiner), Christian Scientists, Church of the Divine Science, Church of Divine Science, Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints (Mormons), Jehovah’s Witnesses, New Church of Emmanuel Swedenborg, (a.k.a., Church of New Jerusalem in the U.S.), Pentecostal Churches, People’s Church of Chicago, Quakers, Salvation Army, Unitarians.
79. Conditional baptism is to be administered **only** when there is a genuine doubt regarding the baptism of a person seeking entrance in to the Catholic Church. This is to be done in a private ceremony.
80. *Minister of Baptism* ...Baptism may not be conferred by more than one minister much less jointly by ministers belonging to different Churches or ecclesial Communities. “...the local Ordinary may sometimes permit, however, that a minister of another Church or ecclesial Community take part in the celebration by reading a lesson, offering a prayer, etc. ” (n. 97)
81. *Sponsors (godparents and witnesses)*... There is a distinction between a godparent and a witness, particularly regarding the responsibilities of each (Cf. Code of Canon Law nn.872-874). “Godparents, in a liturgical and canonical sense, should themselves be members of the Church or ecclesial Community in which the baptism is celebrated. They do not merely undertake a responsibility for the Christian education of the person being baptized (or confirmed) as a relation or friend; they are also there as representatives of the community of faith, standing as guarantees of the candidate’s faith and desire for ecclesial communion.” (n.98) The role of witness at the conferral of the sacrament not only enables them to testify to the event but also contributes to the solemnity and joy of the occasion. Therefore:
- There is to be at least one Catholic godparent at baptisms administered in the Catholic Church.

- Members of Eastern Orthodox Churches may act as additional godparents.
- Baptized members of other Churches or ecclesial Communities may participate as witnesses. The names of such witnesses should be entered as such into the baptismal register.
- Catholics may act as witnesses at baptisms in other Churches or ecclesial Communities.
- If invited, a Catholic may act as godparent in an Eastern Orthodox Church.

### **Confirmation**

82. Regarding the sacrament of Confirmation, "...under the present circumstances, persons entering into full communion with the Catholic Church ... are to receive the sacrament of Confirmation according to the doctrine and rite of the Catholic Church." (n.101)

### **Eucharist**

83. Regarding the Eucharist, two principles are important and must be balanced one with the other. The first principle is that the Eucharist is "a visible manifestation of full communion in faith, worship and community." (n. 104e) "Thus, Eucharistic communion is inseparably linked to full ecclesial communion and its visible expression." (n. 129) The second principle is that "The Eucharist is, for the baptized, a spiritual food which enables them to overcome sin and to live the very life of Christ, to be incorporated more profoundly in Him and share more intensely in the whole economy of the Mystery of Christ." (n. 129)
84. These principles are the theological framework upon which the norms regarding sacramental sharing are based. Since the Catholic understanding of intercommunion differs considerably from that of many Protestants, instruction should be provided periodically so that the members of our congregations are knowledgeable about Catholic teaching on the Eucharist, rights of conscience, and the sacramental beliefs of other Christians.
85. Since, as a result of the ecumenical movement, Catholics are encouraged to interact more extensively with other Christians, there may be occasions when the Catholic position on the Eucharist, if not correctly understood, could cause offense or seem to contradict the spirit of unity which the movement engenders. This makes instruction all the more important.
86. There are times when sacramental sharing of the Eucharist is permitted. In other words, under extraordinary conditions, Catholics may receive the Eucharist from ministers of the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Polish National Catholic Church. Orthodox and Protestants may receive these sacraments under certain conditions from Catholic ministers. (See paragraphs 89-97 in this ecumenical handbook.)
87. Needless to say, disregard for Catholic teaching in this area on the part of some only leads to confusion and/or indifference. It cannot be stressed too much that

church-dividing differences among Christians are painful. There are no easy solutions.

88. Certain consequences follow from the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist.
89. Since the Eucharist is a visible manifestation of full communion in faith, worship and community, concelebration with ministers of other Churches or ecclesial Communities is never permitted. Moreover, this principle excludes a general invitation to persons who are not Catholic to receive Holy Communion in a Catholic church.
90. Catholic ministers (priests, deacons and extraordinary ministers for the Eucharist) may administer the Eucharist under certain circumstances to persons who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church.
91. *Communion in danger of death*: Any baptized person who does not have recourse to a minister of his or her own Church or ecclesial Community and who is in danger of death may be given communion by a Catholic minister if the person initiates the request for the sacrament and manifests Catholic faith in this sacrament and is properly disposed. (n. 131). Manifesting Catholic faith in the sacrament means that approximately the same knowledge and faith should be required of a Catholic in similar circumstances. Being properly disposed means being in a good relationship with God or, if not, taking whatever steps are necessary to return to a good relationship with God. Ministers of the sacraments who have questions regarding these conditions should direct their inquiries to their diocesan office of ecumenism.
92. *For other grave reasons* ... The conditions mentioned in paragraph 91 in this handbook apply in these circumstances as well. Conferences of bishops may and diocesan bishops are urged to establish general norms for judging “situations of grave and pressing need and for verifying the conditions mentioned...” (n. 130)
93. Where no such norms exist, the ministers of the sacraments, both ordinary and extraordinary, are to judge individual cases according to the norms of DAPNE (cf. n. 131). In the absence of national norms and in keeping with the provisions of DAPNE (n. 130), the bishops of Kentucky have established the following norms and directives.
94. “*Grave and pressing need*” ... means a condition in which being deprived of the Eucharist would, in the judgment of a reasonable person, cause someone to experience a significant sense of deprivation. This need means more than casually wanting to receive the Eucharist.
95. In accord with the spirit and norms of DAPNE, giving communion to persons who are not Catholic should always be by way of exception and not done routinely. As DAPNE indicates, even in the case of persons in interchurch marriages, “Eucharistic sharing can only be exceptional.” (n. 160) Also, at public events, if it is commonly known that the person receiving communion is not Catholic, then care should be taken so that observers understand this is an exceptional act and not common practice.



96. When other Christians request communion from a Catholic minister, efforts should be made to determine that their beliefs are substantially the same as Catholic beliefs regarding the nature of the Eucharist.
97. Communion should not be withheld at the time of distribution from persons known not to be Catholic and who have not previously consulted the Eucharistic minister. Rather, this circumstance should be dealt with on another occasion in an appropriately pastoral way.
98. *Special Categories:* The practice of the Roman Catholic Church is different with those Christians who, although not in full communion with the Church, certainly retain ordained ministry in apostolic succession through the historic episcopate. These include Eastern Orthodox Christians, Assyrian Church of the East and the Polish National Catholic Church. The norms for Eucharistic sharing have special application to these Churches. In the case of members of these Churches, all that is required is that they ask and are sincerely trying to do God's will.
99. *Catholics receiving communion in other Churches:* Catholics may receive communion in other Churches but only under specific circumstances, and only in Eastern Orthodox Churches (Presently, there are no congregations of National Polish Catholics or of the Assyrian Church of the East in Kentucky.) The directive here is brief, and therefore may be quoted in full:
- “Whenever necessity requires or a genuine spiritual advantage suggests, and provided that the danger of error or indifferentism is avoided, it is lawful for any Catholic for whom it is physically or morally impossible to approach a Catholic minister, to receive the sacraments of penance, Eucharist and anointing of the sick from a minister of an Eastern Church.”  
(n. 123)
100. DAPNE, however, notes that respect for the discipline of the Church in question should guide our actions in this respect. Eastern Orthodox parishes are generally more restrictive in this regard. In light of the large number of Catholic parishes in Kentucky and the small number of Eastern Orthodox churches, the conditions for applying this norm would rarely if ever occur.

### **Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick**

101. There are times when sacramental sharing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and of the Anointing of the Sick is permitted. In other words, under certain conditions, Catholics may receive these sacraments from ministers of other Churches, and Orthodox and Protestants may receive these sacraments from Catholic ministers.
102. Any baptized person who does not have recourse to a minister of his or her own Church or ecclesial Community and who is in danger of death may receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and of the Anointing of the Sick from a Catholic priest if the person initiates the request for the sacrament(s) and manifests Catholic faith in the sacrament(s) and is properly disposed. (n. 131). Manifesting Catholic faith in the sacrament means that approximately the same knowledge and faith should be required of a Catholic in similar circumstances. Being properly disposed means being in a good relationship with God or, if not, taking whatever

steps are necessary to return to a good relationship with God. Ministers of the sacraments who have questions regarding these conditions should direct their inquiries to their diocesan office of ecumenism.

103. In the absence of national norms and in keeping with the provisions of DAPNE (n. 130), refer to the norms set forth in paragraphs 91ff. in this *Ecumenical Handbook*.

## **Marriage**

104. When dealing with marriage, the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* deals only with marriages between Catholics and baptized Christians who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church. (It refers to these as “mixed marriages,” although the term “interchurch marriage” or “ecumenical marriage” is preferred in the United States, since “mixed marriage” is a term often referring to interracial marriages.) DAPNE does not deal with marriages between Christians and Jews or other faith traditions, although some comments will be made about these later.
105. The special needs of interchurch couples establish a particular claim on their part for pastoral care from all who minister to them. When preparing for marriage, those assisting the couples should attempt to contact the pastor of the other church. “Mutual consultation between Christian pastors for supporting such marriages and upholding their values can be a fruitful field of ecumenical collaboration.” (n. 147)
106. Stress should be given to “the positive aspects of what the couple share together in the life of grace, in faith, hope and love, along with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit. Each party, while continuing to be faithful to his or her Christian commitment and to the practice of it, should seek to foster all that can lead to unity and harmony, without minimizing real differences and while avoiding an attitude of religious indifference.” (n. 148).
107. Regarding instruction on the religious education of children, DAPNE points out that “the non-Catholic partner may feel a like obligation because of his/her own Christian commitment.” (n. 150) Pastoral care of interchurch couples requires that the conscience of the party who is not Catholic be recognized and respected (n. 151), while keeping in mind the declaration and promises required of the Catholic party by Canon 1125. In other words, the consciences of both spouses should be respected.
108. DAPNE points out that the conditions for validity are not the same for marriages between Catholics and members of Eastern Churches as between Catholics and other Christian Churches. (n. 153)
109. When priests or deacons assist at an interchurch marriage in another church (the appropriate dispensation from canonical form having been obtained), the priest or deacon, if invited, may offer prayers, read from the Scriptures, give a homily, and bless the couple. In the dioceses of Kentucky, ministers of other Churches may participate in the same way at weddings in a Catholic church. However, the rites may never be mixed. The marriage ritual of the church in which the wedding

takes place is to be followed. “To emphasize the unity of marriage, it is not permitted to have two separate religious services in which the exchange of consent would be expressed twice, or even one service which would celebrate two such exchanges of consent jointly or successively” (n.156). The principal celebrant or presiding person witnesses the exchange of vows.

110. Catholic priests and deacons should not be the principal celebrant or presiding person at a wedding in a Protestant church. The minister or presiding person should ordinarily be a member of the church tradition in which the wedding takes place: Protestant in Protestant churches, Catholic in Catholic churches. An obvious exception is the case in which the place of the wedding is moved because of the size of the church.
111. DAPNE states that an interchurch marriage “celebrated according to the Catholic form ordinarily takes place outside the Eucharistic liturgy”, but, for a just cause and when the non-Catholic fiancé is baptized, permission to celebrate the Eucharist may be granted by the diocesan bishop. (n.159) Whether or not the party who is not Catholic receives the Eucharist should be determined according to the norms for intercommunion noted in this handbook. If the non-Catholic fiancé is not baptized, then even a bishop is not allowed to give permission for the celebration of a marriage within a Eucharistic liturgy (*Ordo Celebrandi Matrimonium*, n. 8).

### **Other Forms of Sharing**

112. There are numerous other ways in which Catholics are encouraged or permitted to share with baptized Christians of other Churches or ecclesial Communities. Some of the more notable and practical forms of this sharing are the following:
  - The local bishop or the vicar general may permit the funeral rites of the Catholic Church to be given to baptized persons who are not Catholic, “unless it is evidently contrary to their will and provided that their own minister is unavailable, and that the general provisions of Canon Law do not forbid it.” (n. 120) Examples may be when the deceased is a spouse, parent, or child of a Catholic.
  - The bishop may permit other Christians to read from Scripture during a Eucharistic celebration. Catholics, if invited, may do likewise during liturgical celebrations in other churches. (nn. 133, 118)
  - Other Christians may be witnesses at weddings in Catholic churches and Catholics may be witnesses at a wedding in other churches. (n.136)
  - The bishop may give special permission to other Christians to use our churches and cemeteries and lend them what is necessary for their services. (n.137)
  - If children who are not Catholic are enrolled in our Catholic schools, “the authorities of these schools...should take care that clergy of other Communities have every facility for giving spiritual and sacramental ministrations to their own faithful who attend such schools...” (n. 141); this

should include making the chapel available, with the permission of the bishop. Comparable arrangements should be made in hospitals, nursing homes, and so forth. (n. 142)

113. Note: The Code of Canon Law makes special provisions for the rights of catechumens. Consequently, where catechumens are concerned, the appropriate canons should be consulted and observed. (See canons nn. 206; 788: 3)

### **IX: Other Ecumenical Organizations in Kentucky**

114. The Kentucky Council of Churches: KCC is an association of Christian churches in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. All four Catholic dioceses in Kentucky are members. It exists to promote unity among the Christian people of Kentucky and to provide a structure for cooperative action in serving the social, economic, and spiritual needs of the people of Kentucky. It functions in four principal areas: Christian Unity, Justice Ministries, Local Ecumenism, and Direct Services.
115. The Northern Kentucky Interfaith Commission: This organization is composed of twelve member bodies, including the Diocese of Covington, which was a founding member in 1969. The Interfaith Commission has been a vital ecumenical presence serving the spiritual and human needs of all people in the Northern Kentucky area. The Exodus jail ministry, the airport ministry, and the Interfaith Hospitality Network are examples of programs and ministries supported and/or sponsored by the Interfaith Commission.
116. The Kentuckiana Interfaith Community: founded in 1979, KIC is an association of Christian Churches, the Jewish Community Federation, the Islamic, the Baha'i Community, individual Christian congregations, the Association of Community Ministries, ministerial associations, and other organizations with roots in the Christian religion. It exists to promote ecumenical, interfaith and interreligious dialogue, to facilitate cooperation in providing social services, and to provide a structure for consultation in the religious community on issues of mutual concern. KIC serves the metropolitan area of Louisville and southern Indiana.
117. Community Ministries of Metro Louisville: Many cooperative social services are provided to the needy people of Louisville and Jefferson County through a comprehensive system of community ministries. Churches in a specified area enter into a cooperative arrangement to provide services in that area more effectively. There are approximately fifteen such community ministries that in turn are organized into the Association of Community Ministries.
118. Paducah Cooperative Ministry: This agency has been in operation since April 6, 1975. Its program concentrates on providing food for the needy, an emergency relief program, and working with other social service agencies, providing resource information, and ecumenical Thanksgiving Day worship services. Many of its initiatives have since gone on to become self-standing agencies.
119. Comparable community ministries or similar arrangements for providing services are active in other cities and counties as well.

120. The National Conference of Community and Justice: This organization, formerly called The National Conference of Christians and Jews, was founded in 1927; it is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America. The NCCJ promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education.
121. In addition to the above, numerous other organizations throughout Kentucky work together in a variety of ways aimed to promote understanding and cooperation among people of differing religious beliefs and practices. Some parishes have covenants with other congregations through which they pledge, formally or informally, to promote unity and cooperation. Many cities and towns have ministerial associations. There are still other organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Cathedral Heritage Foundation, the Council on Peacemaking, Dare to Care, and shelters for the homeless. This is a partial listing of those organizations whose goal to promote unity and cooperation among people of faith.

### **X: Practical Suggestions for Ecumenical Involvement**

122. The fifth chapter of the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* deals with practical suggestions for ecumenical involvement. Fifty-eight paragraphs are devoted to ecumenical cooperation, dialogue and common witness. Many of these suggestions are applicable to the dioceses of Kentucky and can be implemented here.

For example:

- Common Bible study for both adults and children
- Parish covenants with congregations of other Christian churches
- Dialogues and programs of study, both ecumenical, interfaith and interreligious in nature
- Common prayer services, especially on occasions like Thanksgiving Day, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and so forth
- Cooperation in providing social services
- Cooperation in seeking out the unchurched
- Cooperation regarding stewardship of the environment
- Sharing of facilities including churches
- Collaboration in marriage preparation and marriage enhancement programs
- Cooperation in religious education programs
- Conducting services in which there is a common renewal of baptismal vows

### **XI: Ecumenical Etiquette**

123. We sometimes offend others inadvertently, especially if we are unaware or inconsiderate of sensitive areas or are uninformed regarding the unique beliefs and practices of other churches and religious traditions. This also can happen if we fail to remain current with the teachings and posture of the Catholic Church in its attitudes toward other Christians and the members of other faith traditions.
124. Since the Second Vatican Council much has changed for the better in this respect. For these reasons we include this section on Ecumenical Etiquette.
125. We more readily promote understanding and good will and avoid offending others when appropriate attention is paid to the following:
- When leading a prayer in a religiously diverse group, it is recommended that God be addressed by names which would exclude no one in the group from making that prayer their own.
  - Freedom of conscience and religious liberty require sincere respect in attitude and language for those whose sincerely chosen views differ from our own.
  - The best interpretation should be given to the practices of another church or religion that differ from our own even if these practices might be viewed as offensive to us. This is the same consideration that we would hope others would extend to us.
  - All language should be avoided that tends to imply that we are superior to the members of other churches, especially at Catholic services such as weddings and funerals where there may be a number of other Christians present.
  - When speaking to persons in an interchurch marriage or family, care should be taken to avoid implying that the spouse or parent who is not a Catholic is in a less advantageous position than we regarding their relationship to God.
  - When Catholics are guests in another church and participate in a prayer or worship service, the practices of that church should be respected. Although invitations to receive the Eucharist at their table may not be accepted by Catholics, we should try to make it clear that our actions flow from a different perspective on the Eucharist and do not represent disdain on our part for their service. In like manner, it should be made clear that our inability to extend an invitation to receive communion at our table does not intend to imply an attitude of superiority on our part.
  - Disagreements on theological issues, no matter how strongly we hold the truth of our position, should never be used as an occasion to display anger or disdain for the sincerely held views of others. Rather, we should attempt to listen carefully to the views of others in order to discern if and how our seemingly conflicting views might be brought into harmony, at least to some extent. Even when this is impossible, we still should make every effort to respect the person who disagrees with us.

- The dialogue and activities outlined above and other efforts “must become a common heritage.” The bonds of existing communion must be strengthened in ways and means that involve the “whole people of God.” (UUS n.80)

## **Index** (Numbers refer to paragraph designations)

- Anointing of the Sick, 101-103
- Apostolic Succession, 42, 44-46, 98
- Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 62
- Assyrian Church of the East, 98-99
  
- Baptism, 29, 76-80
  - Catechumen, 113
  - Conditional, 79
  - Minister of Baptism, the, 80
  - Sponsors, 81
  - Godparents, 81
- Baptist Convention
  - Southern, 57
  - National, 57
  
- Calvin, John, 27
- Canon Law, Code of, 75, 81, 107, 112-113
- Catechism of the Catholic Church, 67
- Catechumen, 113
- Cathedral Heritage Foundation, the 121
- Church, 39
  - Local, 44
- Churches and Church Membership in the United States, 62
- Churches, Protestant, 15, 27, 41, 43, 45, 57-58, 78, 84, 86, 101, 110
- Communion, 29-34, 41, 83, 89-106
  - Full, 29-34, 41, 83, 89-91
  - Imperfect, 29, 77
  - Special Categories, 98
- Community Ministries, Association of, 116-117
- Confirmation, 82
- Constantinople, the Church of, 16
- Contemporary Review, The*, 17
- Council on Peacemaking, The, 121
- Counties of:
  - Boone, 54
  - Campbell, 54, 57, 60
  - Daviess, 54
  - Fayette, 54, 60
  - Hardin, 54
  - Jefferson, 52, 54, 57, 59, 117
  - Kenton, 54, 57, 60
  - Marion, 54-55, 57
  - McCracken, 54
  - Nelson, 54
- Covington, Diocese of, 23, 53-54, 56, 115
- Cursillo, 71
  
- Dare to Care, 121



*Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, The*, 9  
*Decree on Ecumenism, The*, 9, 11, 77  
 Definitions, 35  
 Denomination, 45  
 Denomination, Christian, 25-28  
*Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, 11, 31, 66, 71, 75, 93,  
 95, 100, 103-104, 107-108, 111, 122

Eastern Orthodox, 41, 81, 86, 98-100, 108  
 Eastern Catholic Churches, 32, 41  
 Ecclesial community, 43  
 Ecumenical, 36
 

- Commission or Committee, 63
- Etiquette, 123-125
- Formation, 66-74
- Involvement, Practical Suggestions for, 122
- Movement, History of, 14-23
- Organizations in Kentucky, 23, 114-121
- Patriarch, 16, 26

*Ecumenical Dimension in the Formation of Pastoral Workers, The*, 11, 66, 72  
*Ecumenism, The Decree On*, 9, 11, 76  
 Ecumenism, Diocesan Office of, 63-64  
 Engaged Encounter, 71  
 Episcopate, Historic, 33-34, 42, 44, 47, 98  
 Eucharist, 42, 83-100, 111  
 Exodus Jail Ministry, 115

Faith and Order Movement, 18-19  
 First World Missionary Conference (Scotland), 15  
 Formation, Ecumenical, 66-74

Glenmary Research Center, 51, 62

Habitat for Humanity, 121  
 Henry, VIII, King, 27  
 Holocaust, the, 20  
 Holy Name Society, the, 71  
 Holy Synod (Constantinople), 16

Intercommunion, 83-100, 111  
 Interfaith, 23, 37, 64, 69, 115-116, 120-121  
 Interfaith Hospitality Network, 115  
 Interreligious, 24, 38, 64, 69, 116, 121

Jewish Community Federation, 116  
 Jews, 20, 22, 24, 37-38, 48-49, 59-60, 104, 116, 120
 

- Reform Congregations, 49, 59
- Conservative Congregations, 49, 59
- Orthodox Congregation, 59

Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, 23, 74, 116

Kentucky Council of Churches, 23, 74, 114  
 Knights of Columbus, the, 71

League of Nations, 16  
 Legion of Mary, the, 71  
 Lexington, Diocese of, 23, 53-54, 56, 65  
 Lexington Theological Seminary, 65, 74  
 Life and Work Movement, the, 18-19  
 Louisville, Archdiocese of, 10, 22-23, 52-54, 56, 65  
 Luther, Martin, 27

Marriage, 69, 104-112, 125  
     Ecumenical, 104  
     Interchurch, 104-105, 107, 109, 111, 125  
     “Mixed”, 104  
 Marriage Encounter, 71  
 Metropolitan Dorotheus of Brussa, 16  
 Ministerial Association, 116-117, 121  
 Mosque, 50

National Baptist Convention, 57  
 National Conference of Community and Justice, the, 120  
 Northern Kentucky Interfaith Commission, the, 23, 74, 115

Owensboro, Diocese of, 53-54, 56, 65

Patriarch of Constantinople, 26  
 Penance, 101-103  
 Polish National Catholic Church, 86, 98-99  
 Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, 11  
 Pope John XXIII, 9, 21  
 Pope John Paul, II, 11, 30  
 Prayer Services, Principles, Norms and Directives, 75  
 Prison Ministry, 115  
 Protestant Churches, 15, 27, 45, 57-58, 78, 84, 110  
 Protestant Reformation, 27

Reconciliation, 101-103  
 Religion in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, 51, 57-62  
 Resources for Ecumenical Formation, 74

St. Vincent DePaul Society, the, 71  
 Sacraments, Principles, Norms and Directives, 75-111  
 Second Vatican Council, the, 9, 21, 29, 77  
 Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, 9, 11  
 Serra Club, the, 71  
 Sharing, other forms of, 112  
 Shoah, the, 20  
 Southern Baptist Convention, 57  
 Sponsors, 81  
 Statistics, 51-62

Synagogue, 48-49

Teens Encounter Christ, 71

Temple, 49

“That All Christians Be One” document, 23

Unity We Seek, the, 25

*Ut Unum Sint*, 1, 11, 30-31, 125

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 118

Witnesses, 81, 112

World Council of Churches, 19

Worship, Principles, Norms and Directives, 75