

**An Experiment in Ecumenical Dialogue before Vatican II:
The Shared Path of the International League for Apostolic Faith
and Order and the Catholic Conference on Ecumenical
Questions.**

Saretta Marotta

Ecumenical memory is a vital compass for charting the path toward Christian unity. Remembering where we come from and the processes that have shaped our present not only deepens our understanding of current realities but can also unlock new insights for the future. This article explores a largely forgotten chapter in ecumenical history: the collaboration between the International League for Apostolic Faith and Order (ILAFO) and the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions (CCEQ) in the years leading up to Vatican II. Initiated in 1960 after years of planning, this ecumenical dialogue unfolded through joint conferences in Warmond, Mirfield, and Chevetogne, fostering exchanges between Catholic and non-Catholic theologians. The study explores the origins, motivations, and challenges of this partnership, analysing how shifting dynamics within the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Vatican II preparations influenced its development. Drawing on archival sources, it sheds light on internal debates and the broader ecumenical landscape of the time.

The Primacy of the Bishop of Rome and the Synod.

Catherine Clifford

This paper explores the guiding theological principles identified by the Instrumentum Laboris of the second session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, 'For a Synodal Church,' in view of a renewed exercise of papal primacy. Returning to the establishment of the Synod by Pope Paul VI in 1965 and considering the more recent emergence of ecumenical consensus, it elucidates the interdependence of primacy and synodality. Over the last sixty years the Synod has fostered a deeper awareness of the interdependence of the Bishop of Rome and the whole college of bishops. The effort to recover practices of synodality in the life of the Church today aims at enlivening the bonds of communion between bishops and the baptized faithful of the local churches they serve.

Unity for the Sake of the World.

Sofia Camnerin

In 1925, six hundred Christian leaders from thirty-seven different countries met in Stockholm at the invitation of Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, for the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work, to discuss such themes as peace, collaboration among the churches, and the relationship between the Kingdom of God and this world. Taking her cue from the legacy of Stockholm 1925, the author of this article reflects on basic questions underlying work for Christian unity, such as ‘why engage in ecumenism?’, ‘why is unity important, what is it for?’, and ‘what do we mean with the word “unity”?’

A New Liturgical Feast? The Feast of the Mystery of the Creation in Christ.

James Puglisi

*Over the past decades, environmental awareness has become fertile ground for ecumenical collaboration, especially following Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’*, and the institution of an ecumenical Season of Creation. Following this, a movement to establish a Feast of the Mystery of Creation in Christ has been steadily evolving through ecumenical discussions, particularly those held in Assisi since 2024. This article gives an outline of the background and development of the movement, presents the current state of affairs as well as giving pointers to the way forward.*

Method and Breakthroughs in the International Lutheran–Orthodox Joint Commission after 2010.

Heta Hurskainen

The Joint International Commission on Theological Dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Orthodox Church published a remarkable Common Statement on the Filioque in 2024. How did the dialogue ultimately address the age-old historical division between Eastern and Western Christianity? What methodology made the attempt successful and led to the Filioque statement? This article focuses on the developments of the joint commission from 2011 onwards and claims that methodological choices on how to discuss controversial topics considerably influenced the results of the dialogue and led to formulating the Common Statement on the Filioque.

Christophorus.

Peter Allan

Fifty years ago, in 1975, Fr Christopher Lowe of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, initiated a series of ecumenical meetings for religious communities in Poland and Eastern Germany. After his passing in 2001, participants in these meetings decided to continue the tradition and create a network. This paper gives a short presentation of the history and purpose of this network which came to be known as 'Christophorus'.

Light not Shadow: McClendon's Misapprehension of the Creeds.

Elizabeth Newman

Baptists have had conflicting responses to the ancient creeds. Some have seen them as central for Baptist life while others have interpreted them as obstacles to the supreme authority of Scripture. This essay engages Baptist theologian James Wm. McClendon's understanding that today the ancient creeds undermine Christian discipleship. I argue instead that rightly understood the ancient creeds, particularly the Nicene Creed, make such discipleship possible.

Catholicity: An Ecumenical Challenge.

Anne-Cathy Graber

In 2023, twelve years after its last publication, the French Catholic-Protestant dialogue group, le Groupe des Dombes, published an extensive document, the fruit of a long common reflection on the topic of the catholicity of the Church: 'De toutes les nations...' Pour la catholicité des Églises ('Out of every nation...' For the Catholicity of the Churches). In this article, a member of the Groupe gives an overview of the content of the document and presents the central thesis proposed by the Groupe to the Churches: is it possible to affirm that Catholics and Protestants together make up one single Church, albeit in imperfect communion?

Chances for a Process-oriented Ecumenism: On a New Ecumenical Document from the Churches in Germany.

Johanna Rahner

In the spring of 2024, the German Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EDK) published a joint document entitled 'More Visibility in Unity and More Reconciliation in Diversity. On the chances of a process-oriented ecumenism'. Its aim was to reassess the ecumenical process in light of current challenges and offer a vision for the way forward. While the document originated in and is primarily concerned with the German context, its reflections can be useful for the wider ecumenical world. In this article, German ecumenist Johanna Rahner presents its context and its content.

Apostolicity—Sacramentality—Visibility: Building Blocks for a Consensus on the Fundamental Truths of Ecclesiology.

Oliver Schuegraf, Burkhard Neumann, Andreas Ohlemacher

In 2023 a working group convened by the German National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the Johann Adam Möhler Institute for Ecumenism published a study on the topics of 'Apostolicity—Sacramentality—Visibility'. The aim is to contribute to answering the question of which ecclesiological consequences might follow from the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. The article first presents the genesis and content of the study, before summarising initial statements and discussions.

Sermon for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2025.

Joanna Udal

Jürgen Moltmann—Master of Dialogue: An Appreciation.

Alan Falconer

Ecumenical Reflections on Pope Francis.

+Richard Clarke

Review article: Nathan Söderblom. His Life and Work.

Magdalena Dahlborg

Book review: A. Melloni (dir.) and L. Ferracci (ed.), *A History of the Desire for Christian Unity. Vol. II. Paths Towards Communion*.

James Cassidy

Book review: Brother Roger of Taizé, *Journals*, vols 1–3.

Charlie Annis