



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO PROFESSOR W. PETER STEPHENS,
PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CONFERENCE IN GREAT BRITAIN***

Thursday, 6 May 1999

Dear Professor Stephens,

Dear Friends,

In the love of the Most Holy Trinity, I welcome you and thank you for your kind words. More than ever in this Easter season, Christians look to the risen Lord, in whom we find the hope that leads us ever further in the search for Christian unity, which is both the will of Christ and the desire of our own hearts. Our meeting this morning is a sign of how far we have come in that search and how deeply we desire to go further. It is a moment to give thanks and to renew the hope that urges us on.

In its recent report "Revelation and Faith", the Joint Commission for Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council was inspired by the words of the Apostle John: "The Word of Life ... was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us" (1 Jn 1:1-2). It is the Word himself who draws us into unity. It is only in hearing and seeing Jesus that we will find strength to bear common witness to the eternal life which the Father has given us in the Son. I pray therefore that ecumenical contacts between Catholics and Methodists will be a genuine experience of hearing and seeing the Word, so that our dialogue may enable us to be ever more convincing witnesses before the world.

With heartfelt thanks to God for all that you are doing in the service of ecumenical dialogue, I cordially invoke upon you and your fellow Methodists the joy and peace of the risen Lord.
