

APPENDIX P

PORVOO CONTACT GROUP AND 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Fifteen members of the Porvoo Contact group met at Jarvenpaa, north of Helsinki, from 8th to 10th October 2002. The venue was a Luthern church educational college with modest but good facilities, including a sauna beside the lake!

Archbishop John Neill was present as Co-Chairman but returned to Dublin for his Enthronement on Saturday 12th and so was unable to be present at the 10th Anniversary Celebrations in Porvoo at the weekend when Bishop Paul Colton, a former Contact group member, was the preacher.

As always, the deepening of friendships through these meetings draws us closer as Christians in Europe.

FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Primates/Presiding Bishops Meeting in Edinburgh on 9th October 2003.
2. A Theological Conference on The Vocation and Mission of the Whole People of God in Iceland at the end of September 2004.
3. There may be a Youth Gathering in Sweden in 2004.

Among the many ongoing items discussed were;

THE DIACONATE

There is very varied understanding throughout the churches with differing boundaries between ordained and lay. C of I thoughts are requested.

TERMINOLOGY

Understanding and misunderstanding the content of words such as deacon, parish council, is an ongoing process.

CONSULTATION

Boards and officers of central church bodies are asked to take into account consultation with other Porvoo churches when major discussions are taking place.

PILGRIMAGE AND RETREAT

Lists of major places of pilgrimage in Europe are being drawn up. Some of these may be suitable for youth visits and interchange visits.

TWINNING AND LINKS

Again lists are being drawn up. We are reminded to use the Porvoo Prayer Cycle and to remember the concerns of other churches and the context in which they witness.

INTERCHANGABILITY OF CLERGY

The Church of England Council for Christian Unity has produced guidelines for such interchanges and while emphasizing the enrichment all round recognizes the issues that have to be faced.

COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES

This is wider than Porvoo but efforts are being made to keep lists of representatives and their involvement so deepen this aspect of fellowship.

COUNTRY REPORTS

Every member spoke of developments in their church. On behalf of the Church of Ireland, I spoke about the number of Episcopal changes, the Church of Ireland – Methodist Covenant, the Summit on Ministry, the Sectarianism Committee, Unorthodox views, Synodical representation and the growth of Orthodox and Ethnic Churches in Ireland.

There are a number of requests for information and I will direct these to our relevant committees.

Desmond Harman

The Church of Ireland Website www.ireland.anglican.org contains information on the Porvoo Communion.