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ANGLICAN/OLD CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE  
18-22 April, 1977 Chichester

A Theological Conference of delegates representing Old Catholic Churches and the Church of England was held at Chichester from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1977. This followed a series of such conferences held alternately in England and on the Continent since 1946 and was concerned with the subjects of Ministry and Authority in the Church. Within these themes the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood received particular consideration at the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and on that question the following resolutions were agreed:

1. We affirm the principle of the equality of men and women in Christ and we are agreed that women should have a proper role in the whole ministry of the Church.
2. As to the nature of that role we recognize that there is deep concern but at present no consensus within either of our Churches nor between the Churches in general on the issues either of theology or discipline involved in the ordination of women to the priesthood.
3. It is clear that independent action by any of our Churches in ordaining women to the priesthood leads to a certain limitation of communion since the ministry of such women would not necessarily be recognized by the other Churches. Recent events in the United States and Canada show that such independent action may provoke reactions leading to a suspension of communion on the part of individual Churches, and this could cause a wider disruption of our relationships and hinder further progress towards Christian unity.
4. As Old Catholics and Anglicans we agree that these considerations are urgent and must carry great weight with both Churches. But on both sides we are divided as to whether it is right for a particular Church in the last resort to take unilateral action in ordaining women.
5. We recommend that more adequate means be sought for continuing discussion of these questions between our Churches. The Anglican delegates urge that representatives of the Old Catholic Churches be invited to participate in any Anglican/Roman Catholic or Anglican/Orthodox consultations on the ordination of women.
6. We request that before any future decisions are taken on matters of importance which affect the relationship between our Churches, more effective organs of consultation than we have at present should be established and used.

[*One in Christ* 13 (1977) 257]