



## Ecumenical Covenant The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

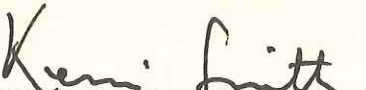



“Our agreed statement concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary as pattern of grace and hope is a powerful reflection of our efforts to seek out what we hold in common and celebrates important aspects of our common heritage. Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ stands before us as an exemplar of faithful obedience, and her “be it to me according to your word” is the grace-filled response each of us is called to make to God, both personally and communally, as the Church, the body of Christ. It is as figure of the Church, her arms uplifted in prayer and praise, her hands open in receptivity and availability to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that we are one with Mary as she magnifies the Lord. “Surely,” Mary declares in her song recorded in the Gospel of Luke, “from this day all generations will call me blessed.”  
*from the Preface to MARY: Grace and Hope in Christ, The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission Agreed Statement*

The joint statement on the Blessed Virgin Mary by ARCIC reflects the experience of the Anglican and Roman Catholic places of pilgrimage in Walsingham. In our devotion to the Mother of God we jointly recognise and celebrate the message of Our Lady to Richeldis when she asked her to build a replica of the Holy House of Nazareth, in honour of the “joy of my salutation”. The joys of Mary, which have long been celebrated in England, are the joys she experienced in her life through her son and redeemer Jesus Christ. We wish to share in that joy, which is the foundation of our faith, by our common witness and worship in Walsingham, as together with Mary we praise and magnify God’s holy name (Luke 1.46).

To this end we declare:

- As God’s pilgrim people, journeying together to share with Mary and all the saints in the joy of his eternal Kingdom of which this holy place is a sign, we commit ourselves to praying for that unity which is Christ’s will for his Church (John 17.21).
- Recognising that we share custodianship of the ‘Holy Land of Walsingham’, and alongside our brothers and sisters in the Orthodox Church and in the Methodist tradition, we will ensure our Shrine sites are places of reciprocal welcome and hospitality for pilgrims from all traditions.
- Conscious of our common witness to the unique vocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary we will look for ways we can collaborate in joint teaching initiatives in our churches and to our nation on her place in the economy of salvation.
- We shall on certain agreed feasts share together in prayer and procession. In particular on the Solemnity of the Assumption we shall celebrate with a solemn procession and preaching at St Mary’s, the Church of the Annunciation and the Anglican Shrine.
- The Rector and the Priest Administrator will work to support one another, welcoming the presence of one another as honoured guests at each Shrine.
- The staff of both Shrines will, under the direction of the Rector and Priest Administrator, work together where appropriate to share information, resources and skills. We will look for ways in which we can establish joint ventures to enhance the life and ministry of the Shrine.
- The Rector and the Priest Administrator will, as members of the European Network of National Marian Shrines, work as partners with other national Shrines of the Blessed Virgin Mary across Europe.
- Walsingham witnesses to God, to his initiative in creation and to his act of re-creation in Christ. Both Shrines recognise the call to take up commitment to creation, to care for the environment and to promote new initiatives to encourage sustainability.

  
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The Reverend Kevin Smith  
Priest Administrator  
Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

  
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Monsignor John Armitage  
Rector  
The Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham

Signed on the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham. 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018