



RC DIOCESE OF EAST ANGLIA

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Ecumenical Covenant The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

Message from the Bishop of East Anglia, The Rt Revd Alan S Hopes

For nearly one thousand years, pilgrims have been coming to Walsingham. They come to England's Nazareth to pray with the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is the Mother of Our Lord, Mother of the Church, and Mother of all Christians.

Mary provides in this holy place the model for all our pilgrimages: her great 'yes' to God, in the Annunciation, teaches us that faith and obedience are the only path for all who seek to journey more closely with her Son and with each other.

For Mary is the one who is "blessed because she believed:" she was the first to believe. From the moment of the Annunciation, Mary follows Jesus step by step in her maternal pilgrimage of faith; and since the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, disciples of Christ from all nations have united, to "devote themselves to prayer together with Mary, the mother of Jesus".

So Mary is uniquely placed to lead us to the unity which was so clearly willed by our one Lord. Today, as with faith and hope we make this ecumenical covenant between the Catholic and Anglican Shrines, here in Walsingham, we recall the great hope of the Second Vatican Council, that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of all Christians, "may now intercede before her Son, until all families of people may be happily gathered together in peace and harmony into one holy people of God."

May Our Lady of Walsingham pray for us all!

September 24th 2018