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Cardinal: US church ready to receive Anglicans

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WASHINGTON -- The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said the American church "stands ready to collaborate" with the Vatican in implementing a new provision to receive Anglicans into the Catholic church.

See the *NCR* story: Vatican reveals plan to welcome disaffected Anglicans [1]

In a statement released in Washington Oct. 20, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, conference president, also emphasized the U.S. Catholic church would continue to work toward Christian unity with Episcopalians.

The same day at the Vatican, U.S. Cardinal William J. Levada, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said Pope Benedict XVI was preparing an apostolic constitution that would establish a special structure for Anglicans who want to be in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church while preserving aspects of their Anglican spiritual and liturgical heritage.

The Anglican province in the United States is the Episcopal Church.

"The Catholic bishops of the United States remain committed to seeking deeper unity with the members of the Episcopal Church by means of theological dialogue and collaboration in activities that advance the mission of Christ and the welfare of society," Cardinal George said.

At the Vatican, Cardinal Levada also reaffirmed the church's commitment to Christian unity. However, he said, in establishing the new church jurisdictions -- "personal ordinariates," similar to dioceses -- Pope Benedict was responding to "many requests" submitted by individual Anglicans and Anglican groups, including "20 to 30 bishops," asking to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.

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