



**Dennis – Very Rev RC; Episcopal Vicar [= assistant to the Archbishop]**

Luther was a giant – things changed when he came on the scene – and we still deal with the consequences. Catholics will be joining in the commemoration of the Reformation (but not celebrating it) – and it is helping the Catholic community deal with the sadness of a broken community.

But this anniversary, which just happens to be the 500<sup>th</sup>, is unlike all other significant ones because it is happening in a whole new social and ecclesial context. It's the first ecumenical commemoration – and it has to be that way.

Pope Francis has observed that the spiritual experience of Martin Luther challenges us to remember that apart from God, we can do nothing.

Including take any initiative of reconciliation.

So how are we to translate the experience of Luther into language that makes sense in our time and place? *Where can I find a gracious God?*

Hopefully it will be an opportunity to *learn from* each other.

- Both the Catholic and Lutheran churches face global challenges. The Catholic Church is literally catholic, but many places and people have forgotten their Christian heritage, including knowledge of these long-ago disputes. Religious pluralism is the present context. The old ways, including those of commemorating the Reformation, do not work any more.
- AKA – we do our history better and more honestly these days.
- There is now 50 years of Catholic/Lutheran ecumenism behind us. The Joint Declaration on Justification lays out the richness that each has to offer to the other.

But for today – what does it mean to believe in a merciful God? How can we find it?  
It's all about Jesus.

**Comments relayed from Rev D'Arcy Wood (absent unwell)**

\* The World Methodist Conference has affirmed the Joint Declaration.

John Wesley thought that Luther's teaching was fine – except for the absence of sanctification.  
What is the UC doing?

- The Basis of Union para 10: the church learns from all the Reformation witnesses.
- The UCA describes itself as Catholic Reformed Evangelical.
- The UCA is a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

A "Wittenberg Witness" was signed on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2017.

Anglicans have also been active in the field.