

## **Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians and Roman Catholics Engage in Exploratory Ecumenical Dialogue**

September 23, 2021

WASHINGTON – A historic, exploratory, ecumenical dialogue between representatives of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) met September 14–16, 2021, in Washington. The meeting was convened because of initial discussions between the Rev. Dr. Harold D. Hunter, International Pentecostal Holiness Church liaison to the Greater Christian Community and member of PCCNA Christian Unity Commission Steering Committee, and Rev. Walter F. Kedjierski, Ph.D., executive director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the USCCB, out of a shared desire to explore together a theological understanding of rituals and ordinances/sacraments. This was the first time scholars representing the two groups met at a national level for a theological dialogue in what is expected to be a three-year exploratory dialogue that could lead to further dialogues exploring areas of convergence in the future.

At the first meeting, the theme of “Initiation” was discussed as scholarly papers were presented for discussion and reflection by those in attendance. Subsequent engagement of the two groups will focus on the themes of “Healing” and “Vocation.”

Presenters of the scholarly works at the meeting were as follows:

- Rev. Dr. Frederick L. Ware, associate dean, Howard University School of Divinity, *Initiation (Water Baptism) in North American Pentecostalism*
- Dr. Kimberly Belcher, Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, *Initiation from the Roman Catholic Perspective*

Those in attendance at the meeting facilitated by Dr. Hunter and Rev. Kedjierski were:

- Rev. Dr. Tammy Dunahoo, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- Rev. Dr. David Han, dean, Pentecostal Theological Seminary
- Dr. Martin Mittelstadt, Evangel University
- Rev. Dr. Leonardo Gajardo, St. Paul Catholic Community
- Rev. Andrew V. Menke, executive director, Secretariat for Divine Worship, USCCB
- Dr. Andrew Prevot, Department of Theology, Boston College
- Mr. Nathan Smith, Glenmary Home Missioners (in attendance as a meeting observer)

The first meeting was hosted by the USCCB at the Washington Retreat House. The attendees alternated in leading morning and evening prayers and had the opportunity to visit the [Saint John Paul II National Shrine](#), the [Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America](#), and [Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception](#). The next meeting will be hosted by PCCNA at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa and is scheduled for September 14–16, 2022.

The PCCNA represents 40 million Christians through its member denominations and organizations serving in Canada, the United States, and Mexico ([www.pccna.org](http://www.pccna.org)). The USCCB is the assembly of the hierarchy of Catholic bishops who jointly exercise pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands ([www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)). The provisional dialogue is sponsored by the PCCNA's Christian Unity Commission and the USCCB's Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

###

**Media Contacts:**

Chieko Noguchi  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
(202) 541-3200, [media-relations@usccb.org](mailto:media-relations@usccb.org)

Rev. Kay Horner  
Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America  
Phone: (423) 790-0757  
Email: [communications@pccna.org](mailto:communications@pccna.org)