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## **England and Wales: Catholic and Anglican Bishops' meeting. Mgr Arnold to SIR, "on the right path to unity"**

(Norwich) Full unity between Catholics and Anglicans is possible in the UK, after the long centuries of Henry VIII's Protestant Reformation which separated the English Church from Rome back in the 16th century. Catholic Bishop John Arnold, in charge of the Diocese of Salford, which includes Manchester City and much of the north west of England, believes in this "goal that we must always have in mind, even if it is not a short-term ideal". In Norwich, a city in the far north-east of England, the prelate is participating in an intense two-day ecumenical retreat with about fifty of his fellow pastors, Catholics and Anglicans. "We are on the right path and we are making a lot of progress compared to the past. And of course, Catholics and Anglicans are working side by side in the local reality. All this makes the goal of true unity more realistic", Bishop Arnold explained. "Even if there are differences, in pastoral practices and theology, between the Catholic Church and the Church of England, we may be able to resolve them with dialogue over time". "I don't think there is still much that divides us", the head of the Diocese of Salford continued. "The fact that this joint retreat is taking place is very important. It confirms that Catholics and Anglicans share so many values. Faith in Jesus Christ, first of all, and then the fight against poverty, the sacredness of human life, peacebuilding. Secularisation brings us closer because our ideal is clearly not an individualistic and consumerist society". Differences remain, according to Bishop Arnold, both in pastoral practices and at the theological level. "In the conception of the Sacraments, the Eucharist, for example. In what we mean by marriage. In the definition of the priestly ministry, and also", the prelate concluded, "as regards the Marian dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption".

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