

CONFERENCE REPORT

Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers

Online, 21 September 2021

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The Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers met via Zoom on 21 September 2021. Present were Luke Beckett OSB, Stephen Coleman, James Conn SJ, Helen Costigane SHCJ, Russell Dewhurst, Norman Doe, Benjamin Earl OP, Stephen Farrell, Mark Hill QC, Sion Hughes Carew and Charlotte Wright.

The Colloquium heard presentations from Luke Beckett OSB and Stephen Farrell on the topic of ‘Covid-19 and the Canon Law: Challenges and Opportunities?’. As is so often the case, the presentations included differences and commonality in the experience and reactions of the churches to the pandemic. A wide-ranging discussion followed on areas such as the absence of an explicit consideration of the canon law in the early decision making to close places of worship, the effect of the pandemic on rights under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the adaptability of the Canon Law to the medium of virtual meetings, and the opportunities afforded by the pandemic to bolster teaching in the Canon Law.

The meeting concluded with a discussion on the Colloquium’s next meeting, which is planned for early October 2022 in Rome on the subject of penal law, following the introduction of the new Book VI of the 1983 Code of Canon Law in the Roman Catholic Church and the planned revision of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 in the Church of England.

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