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### **GWU Associate Professor Attends Meetings Between Baptist and Catholic Representatives**

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# GWU Associate Professor Attends Meetings Between Baptist and Catholic Representatives

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Office of University  
Communications

January 16, 2020

*Rev. Dr. Steven Harmon Serves as Secretary During Discussions on 'Challenges to Common Witness'*



Members of the Baptist-Catholic joint commission, who attended the recent meeting, were, front row, left to right: Rev. Dr. William Henn O.F.M. Cap. (Italy), Sr. Dr. Susan Wood S.C.L. (USA), Sr. Dr. Marie-Hélène Robert N.D.A. (France), Rev. Dr. Frank Rees (Australia), Rev. Dr. Lina Toth (Lithuania/UK), Dr. Elizabeth Newman (USA), Rev. Dr. Stephen Fernandes (India); back row, Dr. Peter Casarella (USA), Dr. Derek Hatch (USA), Rev. Avelino Gonzalez-Ferrer, Dr. Valerie Duval-Poujol (France), Rev. Dr. Paul S. Fiddes (UK), Bishop Arthur Serratelli (USA), Rev. Dr. Jorge A. Scampini O.P. (Argentina), Rev. Tony Peck (UK), Rev. Dr. Tomas Mackey (Argentina), Rev. Dr. Steven R. Harmon (USA), Rev. Prof. Przemslaw Kantyka (Poland), Rev. Dr. Glenroy Lalor (Jamaica), Rev. Dr. Mateusz Wichary (Poland).

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—International ecumenical conversations between the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity took place recently in Warsaw, Poland. The meeting was hosted by the Baptist Union of Poland at the Warsaw Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Baptist delegation was led by co-chair Rev. Dr. Frank Rees, associate professor and chair of the Academic Board at the University of Divinity in Australia. Serving as his secretary was the Rev. Dr. Steven R. Harmon, associate professor of historical theology at Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity. The Catholic delegation was led by co-chair Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Bishop of Paterson, New Jersey.

The dialogue took up the theme of “Challenges to Common Witness,” giving attention to contemporary circumstances in church and society that represent challenges faced by Baptists and Catholics in fulfilling their summons to offer common witness to Christ. The group also discussed opportunities for bearing witness to the gospel together.

The BWA and Catholic representatives are in their third phase of dialogues around the theme, “The Dynamic of the Gospel and the Witness of the Church.” Included in the week of ecumenical conversations was an opening worship service featuring representatives from the Polish Ecumenical Council and the Polish Evangelical Alliance, and a meeting with Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Warsaw.



Rev. Dr. Mateusz Wichary (Poland), president of the Polish Baptist Union and vice president of the Warsaw Baptist Theological Seminary, served as local host and participated in sessions of the dialogue. The Baptist delegation consisted of members from the United Kingdom, America, Argentina and Lithuania. Members of the Catholic delegation were from America, India, Italy, Poland and France.

The Baptist-Catholic joint commission will meet annually through 2021 for this third phase of conversations. The joint commission will convene for its next meeting on Dec. 7-11, 2020, in Rome, Italy. The hosts will be the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The theme is “Forms of Common Witness.” Harmon also attended phase two of the joint meetings, which was held from 2006 to 2010. The group began conducting joint meetings in 1984.

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