

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN CATHOLIC  
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE**



**DIRECTORY ON ECUMENISM  
FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**Department for Ecumenism and  
Inter-Religious Dialogue  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	HISTORY OF OUR DIVISIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA .....	3
2.	PROMOTING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S CONTRIBUTION TO ECUMENISM .....	6
3.	ECUMENICAL FORMATION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH .	9
4.	PROMOTING COMMUNITY LIFE AND SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN BAPTISED CHRISTIANS .....	11
5.	SHARING SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES .....	16
6.	SHARING SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS .....	18
	Response to the spiritual need of other Christians who attend the Eucharist:	
	a) "SPIRITUAL COMMUNION" for all .....	22
	b) "BLESSING" for other Christians .....	23
7.	INTERCHURCH MARRIAGES .....	26
8.	CONCLUSION .....	30

## **DIRECTORY ON ECUMENISM FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA**

### **PREAMBLE**

In the spirit of the Gospel expressed in the prayer of Jesus 'that all may be one' (Jn 17:21), the search for Christian Unity was one of the primary aims of the Second Vatican Council (Decree on Ecumenism #1). The Secretariate for Promoting Christian Unity issuing from the Council then produced the Ecumenical Directory (1967 & 1970) and later drew up the Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (1993). It is in this spirit and quest for Christian unity in the Catholic Church that this Directory on Ecumenism for Southern Africa has been prepared and promulgated by the SACBC.

The Directory on Ecumenism requires that Diocesan Bishops and Episcopal Conferences issue norms of application for Dioceses and Conference territories. This does not mean rewriting the Directory which contains general norms which are universally applicable. However, in the territories covered by the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, Catholics form less than 7.2% (2,880,000) of the total population 39,820,000 (1995) which is approximately 70% Christian and in this context it is important that there be special norms for such a situation (DE # 4,6,30,31).