The British Archbishop of Canterbury still wants to have ecumenical relations with the Vatican.

VATICAN CITY (RNS) A week and a half after losing five Anglican bishops to the Catholic Church, the leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion reaffirmed his dedication to ecumenical relations between the two churches -- and his belief that female Anglican priests should not be an impediment to union. ...

Earlier this month, five Church of England bishops announced plans to join the Catholic church under a Vatican program that permits them to retain many traditional Anglican forms of worship and governance in special Catholic dioceses. The Vatican designed the program to facilitate the conversion of Anglicans upset by their churches’ growing acceptance of homosexuality and women priests (Williams, in Rome, says women priests shouldn’t be a stumbling block,” www.christiancentury.org, Nov. 17, 2010).

It appears that the Roman Catholic Church is holding firm to some of their historic teachings.

Inspired commentary

Inspiration notes that at some time in the future, even greater uniformity between churches will be accomplished. Unfortunately this uniting is predicted to advocate positions at variance from the teachings of the Bible.

The wide diversity of belief in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a strong and growing sentiment in favor of a union based upon common points of doctrine. To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed--however important they might be from a Bible standpoint--must necessarily be waived (The Great Controversy, p. 444).

Second Coming Time Predicted

Harold Camping, the founder and president of Family Stations, Inc., a group of radio
and low-power television stations, is predicting that Jesus will return to earth on May 21, 2011.

There are 24 shopping days left till Christmas. And 171 days left until Jesus’ second coming.

That’s the message on 40 billboards around Nashville, proclaiming May 21, 2011, as the date of the Rapture. Billboards are up in eight other U.S. cities, too.

Fans of Family Radio Inc., a nationwide Christian network, paid for the billboards. Family Radio’s founder, Harold Camping, predicted the May date for the Rapture.

Their message is simple — “He Is Coming Again” — and their aim is to get unbelievers to turn around quickly. But critics say the billboards are a waste of time, one more failed attempt to predict the end of the world. …

To spread their message, Family Radio is also sending out caravans of RVs across the country, with the Rapture message. One should make its way to Nashville after the first of the year. They’re sending missionaries around the world to hand out tracts (“Nashville billboards claim Jesus will return May 21, 2011,” www.tennessean.com, Dec. 1, 2010).

Inspired commentary

Although we certainly appreciate the desire to be ready for the second coming of Jesus, we have come to understand that setting a definite time is not productive in helping to share a knowledge of and commitment to the Bible with others.

The times and the seasons God has put in His own power. And why has not God given us this knowledge?--Because we would not make a right use of it if He did. A condition of things would result from this knowledge among our people that would greatly retard the work of God in preparing a people to stand in the great day that is to come. We are not to live upon time excitement. We are not to be engrossed with speculations in regard to the times and the seasons which God has not revealed. Jesus has told His disciples to “watch,” but not for a definite time. His followers are to be in the position of those who are listening for the orders of their Captain; they are to watch, wait, pray, and work, as they approach the time for the coming of the Lord; but no one will be able to predict just when that time will come; for “of that day and hour knoweth no man.” You will not be able to say that He will come in one, two, or five years, neither are you to put off His coming by stating that it may not be for ten or twenty years (Selected Messages, v. 1, p. 189).

Obscenities In Prime Time

A study of the overall use of obscene language on top U.S. broadcast networks compared the use of spoken or bleeped profanities between 2005 and 2010.

Obscene language on primetime television, according to a new study, is on a meteoric rise in both frequency and intensity – with the “f-word,” for example, being spoken or bleeped 25 times as often as it was only five years ago.

The Habitat for Profanity study, conducted by the Parents Television Council,
compared primetime programming from the nation’s top broadcast networks in the first two weeks of the 2010 and 2005 fall seasons.

The study found that not only has overall usage of obscene language increased by 69.3 percent since 2005, but also that harsh obscenities have increased most significantly in the first hour of prime time, the so-called “family hour” of 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time. During that hour alone, the use of a bleeped “f-word" rose from 10 instances in 2005, to 111 instances in 2010.

“Our analysis of the first two weeks of this still-new fall television season shows a disturbing trend that shocked even us,” said PTC President Tim Winter in a statement. “Profanity is far more frequent and the profanity itself is far harsher than just five years ago. Even worse, the most egregious language is being aired during the timeslots when children are most likely to be in the audience.”

He continued, "While broadcasters continue to claim that they can regulate themselves, this type of increase in profane words aired on scripted programming – not on live broadcasts that are the subject of ongoing judicial review – suggests otherwise. Are we to expect a 69 percent increase in TV profanity every five years?"

**Inspired commentary**

The study mentioned above confirms what many Christians already know, that watching most network television is likely to be a negative influence on one’s spiritual development.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (Philippians 4:8).

While this newsletter usually focuses on the Bible-predicted negative state of affairs in the days just before Jesus returns, Christians are nonetheless instructed to maintain a personal cheerfulness in God’s provision and protection.

Do not allow the perplexities and worries of everyday life to fret your mind and cloud your brow. If you do, you will always have something to vex and annoy. Life is what we make it, and we shall find what we look for. If we look for sadness and trouble, if we are in a frame of mind to magnify little difficulties, we shall find plenty of them to engross our thoughts and our conversation. But if we look on the bright side of things, we shall find enough to make us cheerful and happy. If we give smiles, they will be returned to us; if we speak pleasant, cheerful words, they will be spoken to us again (Adventist Home, p. 430).