

## Anglican leader to Pray with Pope on Saturday



The Archbishop of Canterbury will pray together with Pope Benedict XVI in a rare gesture of unity on Saturday despite simmering resentment over the Catholic Church's move to recruit Anglicans.

Anglican leader Rowan Williams and the pope will celebrate vespers together in the monastery of San Gregorio al Celio near the Colosseum in Rome and a stone Celtic cross brought from Canterbury will be put up in the church.

Late pope John Paul II held ecumenical prayers with the Anglican archbishop's predecessors Robert Runcie in 1989 and George Carey in 1996.

There have been tensions, however, following Benedict's move in 2009 to set up special structures in Britain and the United States to allow disgruntled conservative Anglican clergymen and faithful to join the Roman Catholic Church.

But Vatican spokesman Federico Lombardi said the prayers, as well as two joint performances by the choirs of Westminster Abbey and the Vatican later this month, were "a sign of moving together along the same path."

The San Gregorio monastery of Camaldolese monks has developed close ties with the Anglican Church since it was from here that pope Gregory the Great sent out 40 monks in the sixth century to evangelise Britain.

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