

LIGHT OF THE EAST

"GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS."

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, YOUNGSTOWN-WARREN OHIO CHAPTER
VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2, MARCH-APRIL, 2012

VITO R. CARCHEDI, EDITOR, 35 SCHENLEY AVE. STRUTHERS, OH 44471

TELEPHONE: 330-755-5635 E-MAIL: vcarchedi@hotmail.com WEBSITE: www.byzcath.org/stjohnchrysostom/



DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS...

Our next regular meeting of the Youngstown-Warren Chapter of the Society of St. John Chrysostom will be **Tuesday the 8th of May, 7 pm at St. Mark's Antiochian Orthodox Church in Liberty Township.** Our speaker will be **Dr. Edith Humphrey, William F.**



Orr Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. She will speak on the topic: 'It is Not Good...to be Alone:' Gender, Sexuality and Communion in the Bible and the Christian Tradition. As an Orthodox Christian, she

will lead us in

--an investigation of the God-given gift of communion in marriage, as seen in the Bible and Tradition,

--an analysis of how some contemporary theologians are misinterpreting the Bible and Tradition so as to make a space for same-sex "unions,"

--and a discussion of distorted eroticism, how it is being approved by many today, and the challenges that this brings to those engaging in it, to society at large, and to the twenty-first century Church.

Dr. Humphrey will have for sale copies of her new book, Grand Entrance: Worship on Earth As in Heaven.

THE FOLLOWING HAVE PAID 2012 CHAPTER DUES: BERI & CHRIS BERARDI, FR. ROHAN, FR WITMER, MSGR. SPINOSA, CARCHEDI, FR. GAGE, LIMBERT, VASILCHEK, SKURICH, CALABRO, HUDAK, MSGR. MIHALIC, CHORBISHOP KAIL, FR. RUDJAK, FR. GALL, MCGIFFIN, L.DEMIDUK, FR. SCHMIDT, PETER & NORMA KOPKO, FR. DENAS, MATTIUSI, FR. HILINSKI, ELSEY, STANISLAW, DECKANT, RENDULIC, BENEDICTINE BYZANTINE SISTERS, FR. BONNOT, MSGR. SIFFRIN, DEMOCKO, BILLCHECK, MSGR. APPELYARD, NAKLEY, KATZ, PERANTINIDES. WE WANT DUES COLLECTED FOR THE YEAR BY MAY. PLEASE MAKE A CHECK FOR \$20 (25 FAMILY, 15 STUDENT) PAYABLE TO THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM AND MAIL TO VITO R. CARCHEDI, 35 SCHENLEY AVE. STRUTHERS, OH 44471. THANK YOU.

Cardinal Daoud dead at 81

<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=13936> (Edited by LOE)

Cardinal Ignace Moussa I (Basile) Daoud, who served as Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches from 2000 to 2007, died on April 7 in Rome at the age of 81. He was the first Eastern Catholic prelate to head the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

PRAYER OF SOUFANIEH

Unity of Hearts!

Unity of Christians!

Unity of the Feast of Easter!



Seminarians Train for Post-Abortion Counseling

8 March 2012 • Off-campus Event • By Seminarian Dn. David Wooten

Five of us from St. Vladimir's—Dn. Timothy Yates, Monk James Stevens, Seminarian Adam Horstman, Hierodeacon Herman Majkrzak, and myself, Dn. David Wooten—recently traveled to nearby St. Joseph's Seminary (aka "Dunwoodie"), a Roman Catholic seminary in Yonkers, to take advantage of a post-abortion counseling training seminar. St. Joseph's was hosting "Lumina Ministries," the post-abortion counseling ministry of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, and had graciously invited all clergy and seminarians to attend, free of charge, these sessions that sought to help church leaders provide help for *all* victims of abortion—not only the unborn but also the mother, father, and family of the unborn child.



(from left)

Dn. Timothy Yates, Monk James Stevens, Seminarian Adam Horstman, Theresa Bonapartis, Hierodeacon Herman Majkrzak, and Dn. David Wooten Theresa Bonapartis, head of Lumina Ministries, delivered the afternoon sessions (seminarians from St. Vladimir's were unable to attend the morning sessions due to class requirements), in which she detailed the hurt and confusion that the would-be parents or siblings experience in the aftermath of abortion. Accompanying her in her presentations was Fr. Mariusz Koch, CFR, Vicar of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. Together, they outlined common emotional responses and spiritual dilemmas that these living victims of abortion often suffer through. Theresa spoke from her own experience as a post-abortive woman, while Fr. Koch provided anecdotes of how these responses usually manifest themselves in confessional or parochial settings. The sessions were oriented specifically towards training priests, and Theresa spoke of her own soul's healing, effected by a priest who was sensitive to the trauma of

abortion: he not only acknowledged her pain over a sin that had damaged her soul but also declared to her that, yes, God *is* merciful, and that there is no sin that our heavenly Father cannot forgive, no wound He is unwilling to make whole.

We trainees were told over and over that these two attributes of truth *and* compassion—affirming the sinfulness of abortion, *and* declaring the mercy and forgiveness of God—were always to be presented together in order to effectively and rightly minister to men and women who are confused and hurt in the wake of their ordeal. The clarity this approach provides serves as a remedy for the lies many women tell themselves and for the lies that family, friends, and even clergymen may tell them. From serial confession (“God couldn’t possibly have forgiven me last time, or ever!”) to presumption and false compassion (“Well, since God forgives and the baby’s in heaven instead of in a hard life on earth, abortion is technically OK.”) and all points in between, these ways of dealing with emotional and spiritual wounds were addressed and diagnosed.

Following Theresa’s and Fr. Koch’s sessions, we listened to a very moving testimony by a woman, Gail, who had had two abortions—one at her parents’ behest when she was in her teens and one as an adult—and her moving story of the emotional turmoil that ensued; her invitation to a retreat at a Roman Catholic monastery by a devoutly Catholic friend and coworker; her subsequent confrontation of her past through the guidance of loving, compassionate lay, clergy, and monastic attendees of the retreat; and her final encounter with Jesus Christ during the night when she confessed her sins and felt for the first time that forgiveness was not only possible, but a reality He was ready to give to her. It was evident that the constant presence of concerned, loving people all along the way was vital to her healing; had the people not been present to provide caring support for her, she would have known neither the severity of her sin, nor the forgiveness of her Savior.

We were very grateful for the opportunity to attend the afternoon half of these sessions, and **we hope that this relationship between Catholics and Orthodox will continue to flourish. We also hope that our shared heritage of care for life in** (Continue next page)

and out of the womb would result in our mutual stance being not only “anti-abortion” but also truly “pro-life.” (emphasis added by LOE)

For, what does it mean to be “pro-life”? Many who style themselves as “pro-life” are all too often simply “anti-abortion,” and often simply lock themselves into concern for the baby’s pre-natal development while neglecting other, post-natal needs. Furthermore, many anti-abortion advocates focus so much on the baby’s survival that they neglect (or worse, condemn!) the “living victims” that are also traumatized by the horrific event. From the despair of young or poor mothers who very often are thrust into a seemingly hopeless situation by a boyfriend or husband who refuses to stay and care for her and the little one growing inside of her, to the anguish of would-be fathers whose partners had aborted their children, to the “survivor’s trauma” of children who were told that their parents had aborted the children who would have been their older siblings—these are also the victims of the reality of abortion.

Saturday, March 10, 2012

Calendar and Sanctorale for Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter published

From Anglican Use of the Roman Rite blog



The web site of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter has published its particular calendar and sanctorale. Like the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in England and Wales, this calendar has the following differences from the Roman Calendar:

- The term "Ordinary Time" is not used of the Sundays. Sundays following the Christmas season are named "Sundays After Epiphany", while the three Sundays before Ash Wednesday regaining their historic names of Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima.
- The Sundays following the Easter season and the feast of the Most Holy Trinity are named "Sundays After Trinity", according the practice

of northern Catholicism in general and the Church of England in particular.

- The Rogation Days before the feast of the Ascension are restored.
- Observance of the Octave of Pentecost is restored (in vestments and propers, but using the weekday readings from the Roman Lectionary).
- The Ember Days, at their traditional times, are restored.
- The first Sunday of October is permitted to be used for a parish's dedication festival, if the date of the dedication is unknown

The Calendar specifies that the Sundays After Epiphany will use the Roman Lectionary, and so Second Sunday after Epiphany would use the readings for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time; and the Sundays After Trinity will use the Lectionary readings from the weeks of Ordinary Time.

In the Sanctorale, several feast days are added to the US calendar, and some feasts of the US calendar are raised in rank: The Chair of St. Peter on February 22 becomes a Solemnity. Our Lady of Walsingham on September 24th is added to the calendar as a Feast, and Our Lady of the Atonement is added to the calendar on its traditional day of July 9th as an optional memorial.

ORIENTALE LUMEN XVI

WASHINGTON June 18-21, 2012

THEME: THEOLOGY OF THE LAITY

(go to <http://www.olconference.com/> for details)

Plenary Speakers: Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia (Orthodox) Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople Oxford, England
Bishop William Lori (Roman Catholic) -- Invited Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut
Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ (Greek Catholic) Pontifical Oriental Institute (Retired) Boston, Massachusetts
Sr. Dr. Vassa Larin (Orthodox) Russian Orthodox Church University of Vienna, Austria
Frederica Mathewes-Green (Orthodox) Author, Media Commentator and Lecturer Baltimore , Maryland
Carl E. Olson (Greek Catholic) Author, Editor and Lecturer Moderator - Bishop John Michael Botean (Greek Catholic) Romanian Catholic Diocese of Canton, Ohio

The Brothers of the Holy Spirit

Email: brother@catholicweb.com

Canonically established in the Diocese of St. Josaphat-Parma

(These brothers were with us at our chapter meeting at Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church, LOE)



by learning and living this typikon and being faithful to the magisterium of the Church.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Because of the requests of several members I have posted in the “Articles by Friends and Members” page of our newsletter a summary by Rich Mattiussi of Fr. Gage’s talk: The Miracle of Damascus.” Our website address is in the masthead of this newsletter.

Archbishop of Canterbury to be Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge



Friday 16th March 2012

Archbishop Rowan Williams has today announced his acceptance of the position of Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge with effect from January 2013. He will therefore be stepping down from the office of Archbishop of Canterbury at the end of December 2012.

A little bit about us... (taken from our Typikon)

§14 We are a community of Catholic brothers in the Ukrainian Catholic Church in communion with Rome, who share and serve in its traditional and accepted way of consecrated life. We are also privileged to participate, serve, share and celebrate with all Catholic Churches in communion with Rome.

§15 The community of the Brothers of the Holy Spirit exists for the salvation of its members by living in common the evangelical life: the renouncing of sin and sinful passions in favor of the Kingdom of the Father revealed in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit poured forth in the Church.

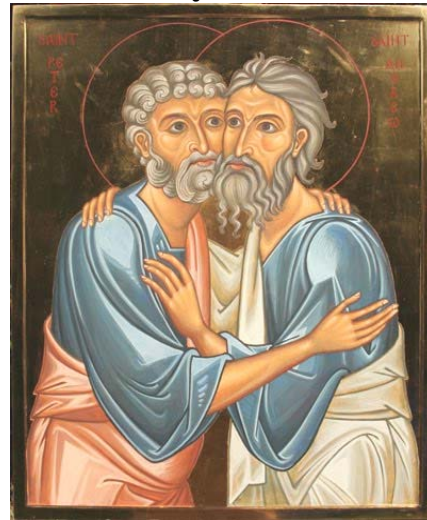
§16 For this purpose, the brothers:

- profess promises of poverty, chastity and obedience,
- strive for ceaseless prayer and for the perfection of the Gospel by constant repentance (*metanoia*), and the practice of virtues (*praxis*),
- minister, insofar as they are able, to the spiritual and temporal needs of all who ask their help, and support this lifestyle as far as possible by the labor of their hands.

§17 In living this common life, the Brothers of the Holy Spirit serve the whole Church by their prayer, and also by providing a model of living the Gospel.

§18 The brothers do not seek, and do not accept, the major Holy Orders. We simply live our lives as brothers,

Prayer for Christian Unity



Lord Jesus, you prayed, “Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, just as we are.” (John 17:11) Gather us from east and west around the table of reconciliation. Open our minds and hearts to the power of your love. Soon may we be one Bread, one Body to the glory of your name. Amen

SCHISM 1054?

from <http://unamsanctamcatholicam.blogspot.com/2008/02/did-anything-happen-in-1054.html>

(edited by LOE)

Following the Norman conquest of southern Italy in the early 1050's, the Normans began forcibly imposing Latin customs on the Greek churches in Calabria and Sicily, Churches which had maintained a happy coexistence with both Rome and Constantinople for centuries.



Seeing that the popes had fallen under the sway of the Normans (Pope Leo IX was even held prisoner by them on 1053), the Greek Italian churches pleaded with the Patriarch of Constantinople to assist them in maintaining their cultural and liturgical identity. Patriarch Michael I Cerularius ordered the head of the Bulgarian church to draft a letter to be sent to all of the western bishops, including the pope, in which the Latin Church was accused of "Judaizing" (a reference to the west's use of unleavened bread for the Eucharist).

Pope Leo ordered Cardinal Humbert to make a reply to the charges, and sent him, along with Frederick of Lorraine (future Pope Stephen IX) and Archbishop Peter of Amalfi, to Constantinople empowered with legatine powers to answer the charges made against the Latin Church. When they arrived, they immediately got into a heated quarrel with the Patriarch and stormed out of his palace. The Patriarch refused to recognize their authority and would not meet with them anymore.

Meanwhile, Leo IX died on April 19, 1054. The legates waited around Constantinople for several more months, until their anger drove them to their famous act: on July 16, they entered Hagia Sophia during the Divine Liturgy and placed a Bull of Excommunication upon the altar, then left for Rome. The city was in riots over the Bull, and the legates were lucky to escape with their lives. The legates were in turn anathematized by a Byzantine Synod.

Now, a few things to consider:

First, the **powers of a legate expire when the pope who grants the legatine powers dies**. Pope Leo IX died in April, and the legatine powers were *not* reconferred upon Humbert, Frederick and Peter, at least not prior to their return to Rome. Therefore, when the excommunication was declared, in July, their legatine powers had expired four months earlier.

Second, their **bull only excommunicated Michael I**, not any other person. Even if it was valid, it would have expired after Michael's death and not carried on to his successor, much less any of the other eastern bishops.

Third, the **anathemas against the legates named only Humbert, Peter and Frederick**. Not even the pope was anathematized. Thus, the idea of two churches mutually excommunicating each other is way overblown

BLESSED BREAD

The **Antidoron** (Greek: Ἀντιδωρον, *Antidōron*) is ordinary leavened bread which is blessed but not consecrated and distributed in Eastern Orthodox Churches and less often in Eastern Catholic Churches that use the Byzantine Rite. It comes from the remains of the loaves of bread (prosphora) from which portions are cut for consecration as the Eucharist during the Divine Liturgy.

The earliest historical reference to this custom are in fact found in the Western Church. It is mentioned in the 118th letter of St. Augustine to Januarius (now known as the 54th letter in the new order), and in the canons of a local council in Gaul in the seventh century. Originally it was a substitute, or solatium for such of the faithful as were not properly prepared to receive Holy Communion or were unable to get to the Eucharistic Sacrifice. If they could not partake of the real Body of Jesus Christ, for instance because of not having fulfilled the obligatory fast or for being in a state of mortal sin, they had the consolation of partaking of the non-consecrated, liturgical bread which had been blessed and from which the portions for the real sacred consecration had been taken. In the Eastern Church, mention of occasionally in Italy, on certain feasts (e.g. of Saint Hubert). A similar custom also survives among the the antidoron began to appear about the ninth and tenth centuries. Germanius of Constantinople is the earliest Eastern author to mention it in his treatise, "The Explanation of the Liturgy", about the ninth century. Subsequent to him many writers of the Eastern Church (Balsamon, Colina, Pachemeros) have written on the custom of giving the antidoron. While the practice of blessing and distributing antidoron still continues in the East, the practice was largely abandoned by the Western Church, and now only survives in the Roman Rite in the *pain bénit* given in French churches and cathedrals after High Mass, as well as in certain churches of Lower Canada, and Syrian Christians (Christians of Saint Thomas) of the Malabar coast in India.

Egypt's Coptic Pope Shenuda III dies



By *Samer al-Atrush* | AFP

Egypt's Coptic Pope Shenuda III, spiritual leader of the Middle East's largest Christian minority, died on

Saturday at the age of 88 after a battle with illness, leaving the country's Copts in mourning.

He had suffered health problems for years and recently stopped receiving treatment for liver failure and tumours or swelling in his lungs because he was too feeble, the Coptic Church said.

The pope's health deteriorated Saturday after he suffered "a severe heart attack", sources at the church told the official MENA news agency.

"The last days were the hardest in the Pope's life, as he was unable to walk," said a church statement carried by MENA.

Shenuda was forced to cancel a weekly sermon last week over health concerns.

A funeral will be held on Tuesday at the papal headquarters for Shenuda, who was named pope of Alexandria in 1971.

There was no word on when clergy and laity would convene to begin the process of choosing a successor.

At St. Mark's Cathedral in the central Cairo neighbourhood of Abassiya, thousands crushed through a small opening at the cathedral's gate as bells tolled.

Worshippers had been told the pope's body had been laid out for the night inside and believed they would get a chance to look at the corpse and get blessings.

On the street outside, riot police stood guard at a distance.

"He was the father of every young man, women, widows and the orphaned. We have had many crises, and he gave us wisdom throughout all of them," said Emil Esam, 28 outside the pope's offices.

Shenuda led the Copts, estimated at 10 percent of Egypt's population of more than 80 million, for the best part of a generation, in which Egypt was hit by a wave of Islamic militancy from which he sought to protect his people.

Muslim leaders in the country almost immediately sent their condolences after news of his death broke.

Shenuda's death is "a grave calamity that has afflicted all Egypt and its noble people, Muslims and Christians," the country's mufti, Ali Gomaa, said in a statement.

The Muslim's Brotherhood Freedom and Justice Party, which controls parliament and the senate, sent condolences to the country's Copts and described

Shenuda as having played a big role in Egypt.

Shenuda was placed under house arrest by former president Anwar Sadat for his outspoken criticism of Sadat's courting of Islamists.

But he was supportive of Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, who was overthrown by a popular uprising more than a year ago which led to an Islamist-dominated parliament -- the first in the country's history.

Shenuda, immediately recognisable by his long white beard, was believed to have viewed the widely despised Mubarak as a bulwark against Islamists, who believe non-Muslims should not be allowed to rule the country. He was seen as a check on more radical Copts who urged more forceful reactions to sectarian attacks that have plagued their community, especially after Mubarak's ouster.

He was criticised by his own flock after he blamed "infiltrators" for triggering clashes between Coptic protesters and the army last year in which more than 20 people died, most of them Christians.

Many said they wanted him to take a harsher stand against the military, which has been accused of failing to carry out genuine reforms.

Copts celebrated New Year and Christmas amid tight security, after deadly attacks two years in a row following services.

Shenuda leaves behind a nervous community, a target of frequent sectarian attacks in recent years, who complain of routine harassment and systematic discrimination and marginalisation.

Egypt has also seen increased tensions between Muslims and Christians over the past few months, sparked by neighbourhood quarrels and disputes over church building and rumours of forced conversions.

Copts have been particularly concerned since Islamist parties, including ultra-conservative Salafi groups, won almost three-quarters of the seats in the first parliamentary elections since president Hosni Mubarak was ousted in a popular uprising.

Theologically, Shenuda was conservative, condemning a court decision calling on his church to allow divorce. Shenuda's community is one of the Oriental Orthodox churches that are not in communion either with the Roman Catholic Church or the Eastern Orthodox churches because of a fifth-century disagreement over the nature of Jesus.

However, the pope maintained a keen interest in promoting church unity.

He served as head of both the World Council of Churches and the Middle East Council of Churches, and founded churches in several African countries.

Pope Benedict XVI, the head of the Roman Catholic Church had offered prayers for Shenuda, said a Vatican spokesman.

Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky



Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky was born Count Roman Alexander Maria Sheptytsky in 1865 in the Ukrainian village of Prylbychi. The son of a polonized (and therefore latinized) Ukrainian Aristocrat, Jan Sheptytsky and Sophia Fredro (daughter of the Polish

literary figure), he was conscious of the fact that his ancestors included some notable bishops and Metropolitans of the Greco-Catholic Church of Kyiv. After many obstacles created by his father, the young Count Sheptytsky was able to enter the Ukrainian monastery of the Order of Saint Basil the Great (OSBM) in 1891 and accepted the monastic name Andrey. In 1900 he was made Bishop of Stanyslaviv and shortly afterwards, at the age of 36, became the Metropolitan, i.e. the ranking hierarch of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church. He remained at this post until his death on 1 November, 1944.

His life was an example of heroic virtue. An extremely active pastor, who used his personal wealth to fund thousands of philanthropic projects, he was also a man of deep prayer. A gifted preacher and prolific writer, he reached out to his people constantly, teaching uneducated peasants the basics of hygiene and agricultural techniques, and dialoguing with the intelligentsia among his own people and the cultured classes of all Europe. He traveled widely, visiting his flock in Western Europe, North and South America, and seeing to it that they would have bishops of their own to take care of them. Never of good health, his last fifteen years were a constant agony of pain and paralysis. Even so, he valiantly led his Church through extremely difficult and oppressive times.

His two great passions in life were the restoration of authentic Eastern Christian Monasticism in his Church, (which he achieved through the creation of monasteries following the Studite Typicon) and the union of Churches. He specifically laboured at Orthodox-Catholic reconciliation, decades before this became fashionable. For this he was often looked upon as dangerous and insufficiently loyal to Rome. He was, however, a firm believer in a strong papacy, which caused many Orthodox to mistrust this saintly man as well, even though he loved them dearly and stood up for them when they were persecuted. He valued education (having the

equivalent of three doctorates himself) and founded the L'viv Theological Academy in 1929, naming Fr. Josyf Slipyj as its rector. This same man would later be Metropolitan Andrey's coadjutor and successor, and a direct heir to many of Metropolitan Andrey's great dreams and aspirations.

Metropolitan Andrey led his flock of some five million faithful through two world wars. He was arrested by the Czarist forces in World War I. Polish and Nazi German authorities would keep him under house arrest in later years. He courageously saved many Jews from the Nazis during World War II. Metropolitan Andrey died as the Red Army occupied his city of L'viv once again in 1944. Before his death, he predicted the annihilation of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church, and its eventual resurrection. Both his predictions came true. In 1946 the Soviet Secret Police, with the assistance of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church staged a pseudo-council of the Ukrainian Church, during which a small group of frightened clergy voted to liquidate their Church and join the Moscow Patriarchate. No Ukrainian Greco-Catholic bishop ever agreed to this. For almost half a century, the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church was the world's largest outlawed religious body. As the Soviet Union crumbled, this Church came out of the Catacombs with over five million faithful, thousands of priests and over three thousand parishes. Many believe this survival of the Church in Ukraine to be a miracle worked by Metropolitan Andrey. The cause for his beatification and canonization is underway. Metropolitan Andrey believed in the necessity of the Union of Churches, to be achieved through mutual understanding and sacrificial love, as well as a return to the sources of the faith. He enjoined all people to pray for God's Wisdom. His life and his legacy are an inspiration to the staff and students of the Institute that bears his name.

Prayer for the Beatification of the Servant of God Metropolitan Andrey

Our Lord Jesus Christ – You always reward Your faithful servants, not only with special gifts of Your love, but also with the eternal reward of the saints in heaven, and in many cases You grant them the recognition of sanctity by Your Church here on earth. We humbly pray: grant that Your faithful servant Metropolitan Andrey be numbered among the saints. Throughout his just life, “full of suffering and trials,” he was a good shepherd for his flock and a great labourer for Christian unity. And through his beatification and intercession, grant our entire people the great gift of unity and love. Amen.

*****AT OUR LAST MEETING BISHOP JOHN OF PARMA SPOKE ON THE LIFE OF MET. ANDREY**

POPE INVITES ST. PIUS X LEADER TO HEAL RIFT

Group's Response to Vatican Offer Judged Insufficient for

Overcoming Doctrinal Problems

VATICAN CITY, MARCH 16, 2012 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org))- A statement from the Vatican today says that problems continue with the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X.

Discussions between the Vatican and the society, founded by Marcel Lefebvre, had intensified recently, after the Vatican presented the group with a "doctrinal preamble" it hoped would be the basis for achieving reconciliation.

Today's statement explained: "During the meeting of 14 September 2011 between Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and president of the Pontifical Commission 'Ecclesia Dei', and Bishop Bernard Fellay, superior general of the Society of St. Pius X, the latter was presented with a Doctrinal Preamble, accompanied by a Preliminary Note, as a fundamental basis for achieving full reconciliation with the Apostolic See. This defined certain doctrinal principles and criteria for the interpretation Catholic doctrine, which are necessary to ensure faithfulness to the Church Magisterium and 'sentire cum Ecclesia'."

The preamble has never been released to the public. The Society of St. Pius X considered the preamble and in January of this year, gave a response to the Vatican. This response, today's communique continued, "was examined by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith before being submitted to the Holy Father for his judgement."

Bishop Fellay was today given a letter informing him of the Vatican's evaluation

"The letter states that the position he expressed is not sufficient to overcome the doctrinal problems which lie at the foundation of the rift between the Holy See and the Society of St. Pius X," the Vatican note explained.

"At the end of today's meeting, moved by concern to avoid an ecclesial rupture of painful and incalculable consequences, the superior general of the Society of St. Pius X was invited to clarify his position in order to be able to heal the existing rift, as is the desire of Pope Benedict XVI."

*****PLEASE NOTE THAT IN THE INTEREST OF INQUIRY, OUR NEWSLETTER SOMETIMES PRESENTS ARTICLES WITH POINTS OF VIEW WITH WHICH WE DON'T NECESSARILY AGREE.*****

Catholic, Orthodox leaders reach accord on reconciliation between Poland and Russia

March 16, 2012

<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=13699>

Representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and the Russian have reached agreement on a joint statement calling for reconciliation between the people of Russia and Poland: a historic agreement on an issue that has caused enormous friction between the two countries and the two churches. The joint statement, which is the product of two years of careful negotiations, received final approval at a meeting in Warsaw on March 15. Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow is expected to sign the statement when he visits Poland in August.

The document, which calls for mutual forgiveness and an end to lasting animosities, represents a breakthrough in relations between Catholics and Orthodox. Archbishop Stanislaw Budzik of Lublin, who participated in the talks leading up to the agreement, noted that "never before in history" have bishops of the Polish Catholic Church joined with entered into such a joint statement with their Russian Orthodox counterparts.

The Society of St. John Chrysostom Western Region presents Praise of the Mother of God in Eastern and Western Traditions

May 19, 2012 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Organizer: Fr. George Morelli

Phone: (760) 920-6530

Email: president@lightoftheeast.org

Venue: St. John the Baptizer Ukrainian Catholic Church

Phone: (619)464-8783

Address:

4400 Palm Ave., La Mesa, CA, 91941, United States

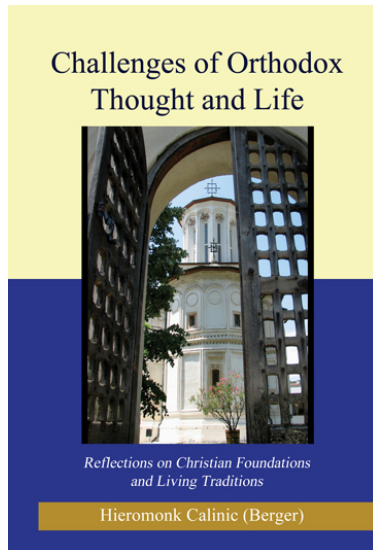
PRAY AND WORK FOR THE UNITY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCHES!

"Challenges of Orthodox Thought and Life"

presents a series of short essays centered around essential and provocative questions of Christian belief and life, all meant to bring the reader into the spiritual arena, where the decisive challenge

of salvation is presented. Based on the Holy Scriptures, engaging the living and patristic Tradition and informed by contemporary scholarship, these short reflections provide a source-book of knowledge and inspiration for a vibrant Orthodox faith in today's world.

The Rev. Hieromonk Calinic (Berger) has written and lectured on Orthodox theology in numerous academic and popular venues. He is a graduate of Santa Clara University (BSEE, 1988), Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (MTS, 1994), and the Catholic University of America (PhD, 2003). He is the pastor of Holy Cross Romanian Orthodox Church in Hermitage, Pennsylvania. Hieromonk Calinic (Berger) has spoken to our Chapter.



East Meets West in D.C.

April 8 issue arts feature from <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/east-meets-west-in-d.c/>



BY DANA LORELLE
04/07/2012

Our Lady of Lebanon

– Cameron Smith
As a student at North Carolina State University in the 1990s, Cameron Smith was pondering the

definition of art. Concluding that art was an interaction with the Holy Spirit, he has built his life around this definition. Even deviations into side careers out of financial need couldn't silence the calling. Although

there are times now, as a husband and father of five, that he is tempted to walk away from the difficult task of creating a living based on art, he continues.

He has considered himself a Catholic artist ever since he read Pope John Paul II's 1999 "Letter to Artists." Smith's sketches of Pope John Paul II and his paintings of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary are undeniably Catholic in content. But other examples, at SmithCatholicArt.com, are scenes of family and beachside busyness. "All my art is not religious in subject," said Smith. "You could rightly say it is all Catholic, in that it is shaped by my Catholic worldview. It is my faith more than the subject of my work which really makes me a 'Catholic artist.'"

Most commissioned paintings come from liturgical design firms. For an artist such as Smith, trying to support a family, relying on sacred art is not easy, even if God's call is clear.

"It's amazing how God works," said Smith. "He seems to love a good, dramatic story. Never knowing where work will come from or when a painting will sell has taught us to live by faith. Just when the finances look the worst, something happens."

An Eparchy's Dream

Facing another period of uncertainty last year, Smith was surprised one day to receive a phone call asking if he would consider one of his biggest jobs ever to be displayed in a venue that he had only dreamed about: the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

While Smith concentrated on painting and supporting his wife, Kristen, as she home-schooled their three oldest children, further up the Eastern seaboard the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn was doing some work of its own. The Syriac Maronite Church of Antioch is an Eastern Catholic Church in full communion with the Holy See of Rome. Its origins can be traced to the fourth century and a community founded by St. Maron, a monk and contemporary friend of St. John Chrysostom. Although Maronites share the same doctrine as all Catholics, the Maronite Church retains its own spirituality, liturgy, theology, discipline and hierarchy and uses Syriac as its liturgical language. Worldwide there are more than 3 million Maronites, but many of the estimated 1 million U.S. Maronites have been absorbed into the Western-tradition churches, and only about 60,000 are affiliated with a Maronite diocese.

In 2007, a committee under the direction of Bishop Gregory Mansour of the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn brainstormed a list of basic financial needs — and one other thing: a chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. "It was too expensive," Bishop Mansour said. "But then, last year, we went back and tried again." (Cont. next pg.)

This time, the Maronites had better luck. They learned that the price would be less than previously thought; emboldened, Bishop Mansour and his staff secured pledges for the maintenance projects and the chapel.

D.C. Basilica

The basilica itself is an example of classic Catholic art. Modeled in the Romanesque-Byzantine style both inside and out, the basilica's outer structure boasts life-size sculptures of saints and detailed archways and tympana, while, inside, mosaics, stained-glass windows and polished-stone sculptures direct visitors toward God. Among the more than 70 small chapels housed in the basilica, the Maronite chapel is the only representative of the Eastern Catholic tradition.

The Eparchy of St. Maron hired St. Jude Liturgical Arts Studio, a design, fabrication and installation firm in Haverstown, Pa., to draw up the plans. In keeping with the Maronite art tradition, they wanted a stone interior reminiscent of the stone churches in Lebanon. A Syriac cross adorning the altar and Lebanon wood on the floor would reflect the same aesthetic of simplicity and history.

"Maronite art is beautiful and simple, almost childish," said Bishop Mansour.

Behind the altar they planned scenes of the Four Evangelists, the Crucifixion, and Mary and the Infant Jesus, all taken from a sixth-century illustrated Book of the Gospels. Facing the altar on either wall were to be two paintings, one of St. Maron, the other of Our Lady of Lebanon, to be modeled after the statue at the famous Marian shrine and pilgrimage site in Lebanon.

Louis DiCocco, master designer of the Maronite Chapel and the president of St. Jude Liturgical Arts, is pleased to share traditional art: "What I'm finding is there's a move to go back to the traditional and the devotional — what we, a generation ago, used to use. Not only St. Joseph and Blessed Mary shrines, but Stations of the Cross and other saints. In lieu of recent church closings, some of the materials are now being reused, and we're acting as mediators, taking old pieces and adding them to a contemporary building."

To implement the right vision they needed a special artist. Several years ago, Smith sent an email to St. Jude Liturgical Arts, asking the firm to consider him for commissions. He never heard back, but the firm didn't forget him. "I admired his work," DiCocco said of Smith. "It was rare that an artist had such a great flair for Catholic art, and I kept (his information) until I found a commission that would be appropriate for him."

The two paintings for the chapel proved to be the perfect choice. "My job was to capture these works in a way recognizable to the Maronite people, while also uniting the pieces in style and quality so they work together in the new chapel," said Smith.

God, it seemed, was always right there.

At a time when Smith was struggling with St. Maron's features, he made a special prayer one day at Mass, then bumped into an old friend immediately afterward. The friend, it turns out, is of Lebanese heritage and ended up serving as a model for the saint.

In early September, Smith readied the paintings for their new home. Bishop Mansour presided at the dedication. "This is a beautiful day for the Maronites and for the national shrine," said the bishop at the dedication. "The Church breathing with both lungs."

Added Msgr. Walter Rossi, rector of the basilica, "With the dedication of the Chapel of Our Lady of Lebanon, one of the most ancient Eastern Churches is now represented at the patronal church of the United States. The chapel visibly expresses the beauty of another distinct community in the Roman Catholic Church, the Maronite Church."

It was a beautiful day for Smith, too. As he said, "The certainty that art is my calling is greater now than ever."

How I became a medieval-style anchorite

The author, a hermit, explains how she was transformed in her mid-50s from a professional woman into a 'prisoner of the Lord'

By [Anonymous](#) on Wednesday, 29 February 2012 from: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/features/2012/02/29/how-i-became-a-medieval-style-anchorite/>



w-i-became-a-medieval-style-anchorite/
An anchorite's cell at Fore Abbey, County Westmeath, Ireland
Before 2003 I thought that hermits were

extinct – as dead as a Dodo. I had heard of some of the medieval hermit saints, but in the 21st century, in Britain, surely not.

Yet now I am an anchorite, as was Julian of Norwich, and for one precious year the bishop locked me in. I had a bed area, a shower room, an enclosed garden of 10 square feet, and my oratory with the wicket window opening into our chapel. I had stable doors, the top half being under my control, the lower half locked. I was a "prisoner of the Lord": no radio, phone, (Continue next page)

or internet. It was a wonderful year, but due to us moving it could not be prolonged after the initial trial year.

How did I, a professional woman in my 50s become a medieval-style anchorite? Well, it was a shock. I worked while looking after my mother, until her death in 2002. The next year, I was helping in Lourdes when I felt God calling me. So on my return I spoke to my parish priest and was very surprised when he referred me to a hermit-priest for vocations advice. We decided that I would become a consecrated virgin living in the world, but God had other ideas. Christ's challenge to the rich young man kept coming back to haunt me: "Go, sell what you own... then come, follow me."

So I sold my house and bought a caravan, and a year later became a novice hermit.

I thought that I had given up the chance to become a consecrated virgin – a spouse of Christ, but during my final profession as

a hermit the bishop also performed the beautiful 11th-century rite of the consecration of a virgin.

The taking of public vows to the bishop as a hermit, and the rite of consecration as a virgin were both brought back into the Catholic Church at the time of Vatican II and are the oldest form of religious life in the Church, pre-dating the start of monastic life.

Throughout the medieval era there were hundreds of hermits. St Augustine of Canterbury was met by a Celtic hermit who acted as the spokesman for the Christian Britons. By the seventh century there were many "English" (Anglo-Saxon) hermits including such well-known saints as St Herbert of

Derwentwater, St Cuthbert of Lindesfarne, and St Guthlac of Crowland. By the late medieval period there were at least 750 hermitages in England alone, probably many more, as this number only includes the ones about which the early 20th-century

historian Rotha Mary Clay could reliably verify. To put it into context, in Norwich alone she found evidence of 14 hermitages and 18 anchor-holds. But this all came to an end at the time of the

Reformation, when even a female anchorite who was over 100 years old was forcibly evicted from her anchorhold.

But what is this creature, a hermit or anchorite? It is someone who responds to Christ's invitation to "come away to a lonely place alone and rest a while" (Mk. 6:31), whose heart and soul "is yearning, is yearning for the courts of the Lord", because "my body pines for

you, like a dry weary land without water. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory." (Ps 83:3 and Ps 62:2-3). Hermits like St John the Baptist, in being withdrawn from the world, tend to have a different overview of what is happening in the world, and so are voices "crying from the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths" (Mt. 3:3). And in this technological world that means careful use of the internet, therefore we have a website (Trumpeteer.co.uk).

Hermits must also be mindful of the Letter of St James: "If you really fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself,' you do well. ... If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them: 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (Jas 2:8, 14-17). Therefore hermits should, by one means or another, show charity towards others.

Before the Reformation hermits looked after the sick, maintained roads and bridges, and manned hermitages on coastal hillocks and cliffs, as at St Catherine's on the Isle of Wight, so that they could keep a beacon burning to warn and guide sailors. Even anchorites, enclosed in their anchorholds, repaired the clothes of the poor. They were also "beadsmen", praying for all who came requesting prayers. In fact Rotha Mary Clay states in her book, *Hermits and Anchorites of England*: "Hermits were the pioneers of philanthropic works which in these days are undertaken and carried out by public bodies." If people think of hermits at all, they usually think of them as solitaries or recluses, and that can be the case. But hermits often lived in groups (the Desert Fathers, for example) usually each to his own cell, but with the newer hermits sharing a cell with an "Abba" in order to learn the life first-hand. Medieval anchorites, on the other hand, were always solitaries, locked (or walled) up in a small dwelling attached to the side of a church, with a small window opening into the church through which they could see the Tabernacle and receive Holy Communion. Their cells were called anchorholds as they were supposed to "anchor" the church by their prayers. Although anchorites were solitaries, they were certainly not recluses, as they also had a window on to the street, through which

they received their food, but also where people could talk to them and ask them to pray for their intentions. So all anchorites are hermits, but not all hermits are anchorites.

As far as what I personally do all day, I make candles and rosaries, I do religious embroidery and I try to pray. I pray for the world. I pray for those individuals who have asked for my prayers, I pray for the Church. I pray for the priests, both the good and the bad, but especially the bad, those to whom it can be said: "He that shall scandalise one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh" (Mt 18:6-7). And I pray for myself, that God may have mercy on me, a sinner.

To those who think that the hermit life is too horrific to consider, I would disagree, using the words of the 10th-century Eastern Orthodox hermit, Symeon the New Theologian:

Let me alone, sheltered in my cell.

Let me be with God, who alone is good.

Why should I move out of my cell?

Back to that which I left?

Let me be.

I want to cry and mourn over the days and nights I have wasted.

800-Year-Old Frescoes Leave Texas For Cyprus

by [Wade Goodwyn](#) from

<http://www.npr.org/2012/03/14/148602378/800-year-old-frescoes-headed-home-to-cyprus>



March 14, 2012

A set of 13th-century Byzantine frescoes — plundered after Turkey invaded Cyprus and on display in Houston for the last 15 years — is headed home at last. It's the closing chapter in what turns out to be a remarkable odyssey.

It all started in the summer of 1974, when the Turkish army invaded Cyprus and nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots became refugees fleeing south.

"And so all the churches and homes and art was left behind," says Josef Helfenstein, director of the Menil Collection in Houston. "And after years, some of these churches began to be looted."

Hundreds of them, in fact, including a tiny 13th-century limestone chapel outside the small Cypriot town of Lysi. It took several years before somebody noticed the two incredible 800-year-old frescoes inside the Greek Orthodox sanctuary, but eventually somebody figured it out. Thieves took a chainsaw and brutally hacked the frescoes out of the dome and apse — in 38 pieces.

"The only way to get them out of there was to cut them into pieces," Helfenstein says. "And they were shipped to Germany."

In Munich, a Turkish dealer offered them to Dominique de Menil, a noted collector and art patron. He claimed they'd been found in a private home in Anatolia, Turkey. Menil, standing in a warehouse in front of a set of chopped-up 13th-century frescoes, was pretty sure she knew better.

"That was a lie," Helfenstein says. "And so Mrs. de Menil was very quickly suspicious — and she had very good advisers. She had a world-class specialist in Byzantine art."

De Menil told the Turkish dealer she wanted to take pictures of the frescoes to look at while she pondered her decision to buy. But that was a trick; instead her researchers painstakingly tracked the frescoes back to Cyprus. It took more than a year.

De Menil contacted the archbishop responsible for the looted chapel, offering to ransom the frescoes from the so-called "owners" and then restore them — at a cost of more than \$1 million. In return, she wanted to display them in Houston for a while before repatriating them. The deal she struck, Helfenstein says, means "we are the only place west of Cyprus to have frescoes of that significance on display."

'Heartbreaking' Losses, But One Major Step In The Right Direction

For the last 15 years, the frescoes have been on display in Houston, in a \$4 million chapel that was designed and built especially for them on the Menil Collection campus. Hundreds of thousands of visitors have worshiped there, listened to concerts and education programs, or simply sat in quiet appreciation under their gaze. (Continue next page)

But now it's time for the frescoes to go home, and the Rev. Demosthenis Demosthenous has traveled from Cyprus to accompany them. He says what's been stolen from Greek Orthodox churches is heartbreaking. "Twenty-three thousand icons dated from the 12th to the 20th century," he says. "Most were paintings, even mosaics. They are lost — and they are found all over the world."

Demosthenous says what Dominique de Menil did stands as an example to the collecting world. Instead of quietly purchasing the frescoes for her museum — in the guise of "rescuing them for mankind" — and then defending her acquisition against subsequent ownership claims, she negotiated a historic agreement with the Church of Cyprus. The black-robed priest beams as he talks, his smile lighting up his bearded face. It's his first time to America.

"I am really very, very, very happy to be here in America," he says. "I always remember Neil Armstrong and Martin Luther King." And he remembers Dominique de Menil, who died in 1997. It's a short but strong list of favorite Americans.

In these last few weeks of the frescoes' Houston life, visitors flocked to the Byzantine Fresco Chapel to see them before they left forever. The artwork will not go back to the small chapel outside Lysi where they'd lived for the last 800 years — it's still inside Turkish-occupied Cyprus.

But they will be displayed about 40 miles away, in the archbishop's museum. There, they'll join other plundered artwork that's been rescued from around the world, but can't make it all the way home

The Pope will go to Lebanon in September

The ad agency francophone I.Media religious information, citing as a source of news, the patriarch of Antioch, Gregory Laham II

VATICAN INSIDER STAFF
ROME

The Pope "will come in support of Christians, so that they remain united" and will bring a "message of peace in the Middle East," said the patriarch of Antioch of the Syrians Gregory Laham II who leads the second largest religious community in the region, with about 700,000 faithful distributed between Egypt, Israel, Palestinian Territories, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan and Syria.

Divine Liturgy of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark

Posted on [March 21, 2012](#) by [Paul Wharton](#)

<http://heartsonfire33.wordpress.com/2012/03/21/divine-liturgy-of-the-holy-apostle-and-evangelist-mark/>

Divine Liturgy of St. Mark is the primary worship service of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria. While the format [The of the Divine Liturgy is much the same as the Roman Catholic and other western churches, the words are different. Here is a beautiful prayer by the priest after the Anaphora (Eucharistic Prayer) and right before the Lord's Prayer and distribution of communion.]



O God of light,
Father of life,
Author of grace,
Creator of worlds,
Founder of

knowledge, Giver of wisdom, Treasure of holiness,
Teacher of pure prayers, Benefactor of our souls,
who givest to the faint-hearted who put their trust in Thee
those things into which the angels desire to look:
O Sovereign Lord,
who hast brought us up from the depths of darkness to light,
who hast given us life from death,
who hast graciously bestowed upon us freedom from slavery,
who hast scattered the darkness of sin within us,
through the presence of Thine only-begotten Son,
do Thou now also, through the visitation of Thy all-holy Spirit,
enlighten the eyes of our understanding, that we may partake
without fear of condemnation of this heavenly and immortal food,
and sanctify us wholly in soul, body, and spirit,
that with Thy holy disciples and apostles we may say this prayer to Thee: Our Father who art in heaven.....

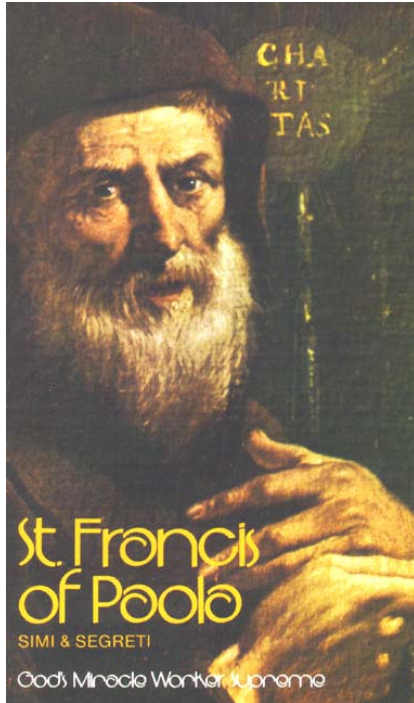
The Last Byzantine Saint of Calabria

The Significance of Choosing the Hermetical Life

Article edited by LOE with information taken from New Advent Encyclopedia and from writings of Filippo Burgarella, translated by LOE.

A book about the saint:
St. Francis of Paola
God's Miracle Worker Supreme

By: Gino Simi & Mari Segreti Book available from TAN BOOKS. Those who know the history of Calabro-Greek monasticism and the "Lives" of the numerous ascetics and miracle workers who exemplified it can't help but seeing in Saint Francis of Paola the last Byzantine saint of Calabria. His was the hermetic and monastic, ascetical and miracle working experience in continuity with that of Italo-Greek monasticism.



Therefore, when we compare the Saint of Paola's origins of saintly life with those of Calabrians of the Byzantine era and the Greek tradition the close connections are obvious. Just as they did, St. Francis became a passionate practitioner of solitary ascetics. Later he became a teacher, reformer, and organizer of cenobitic life.

St. Francis was still an adolescent when he embraced religious life. From his early years Francis showed signs of extraordinary sanctity, and at the age of thirteen, being admonished by a vision of a Franciscan friar, he entered a convent of the Franciscan Order in order to fulfill the vow made by his parents. Here he gave great edification by his love of prayer and mortification, his profound humility, and his prompt obedience. At the completion of the year he went with his parents on a pilgrimage to Assisi, Rome, and other places of devotion. Returning to Paola, he selected an isolated spot on his father's estate and there lived in solitude; but later on he found a more isolated dwelling in a cave on the sea coast. Here he remained alone for about six years giving himself to prayer and mortification as did his Calabrian-Greek predecessors.

An indication of his closeness to the spiritual and monastic traditions of the Italo-Greeks was his living an ascetic life as a hermit on his father's land but soon moving to a more isolated location because of those strangers and visitors who frequently came to him; eventually establishing cells and oratories for those who wished to imitate his life. Thus, he was repeating the pattern of those Italo-Greeks who without leaving the fields of their family were able to live the ascetic life. This form of hermetical life or rather individual monasticism of an individual nature rather than communitarian is amply attested to in 10th century Calabria and beyond.

By 1436, he and two followers began a movement that would become the foundation of the Hermits of Saint Francis of Assisi, which would later be renamed as Minim Friars. Their name refers to their role as the "least of all the faithful". In 1435 two companions joined him in his retreat, and to accommodate them Francis caused three cells and a chapel to be built: in this way the new order was begun. The number of his disciples gradually increased, and about 1454, with the permission of Pyrrhus, Archbishop of Cosenza, Francis built a large monastery and church. The building of this monastery was the occasion of a great outburst of enthusiasm and devotion on the part of the people towards Francis: even the nobles carried stones and joined in the work. Their devotion was increased by the many miracles which the saint wrought in answer to their prayers. The rule of life adopted by Francis and his religious was one of extraordinary severity. They observed perpetual abstinence and lived in great poverty, but the distinguishing mark of the order was humility. They were to seek to live unknown and hidden from the world. To express this character which he would have his disciples cultivate, Francis eventually obtained from the Holy See that they should be styled Minims, the least of all religious

But in all this the dynamic of development the movement founded by St. Francis remains typically Calabro-Greek because of its austere ascetic hermetical beginnings then passing to cenobetic life then to conventual community life as, little by little, more disciples come to gather around the master.

Perhaps that which most closely ties St. Francis of Paola to Italo-Greek monasticism and its Eastern beginnings is the so called "Lenten diet". Practiced by generations of ascetics and monks of earlier centuries and expected to be the practice for the followers of Francis. It would be a regime of total abstinence from meat, and in the case of the Saint even from fish.

Even the religious habit of the Saint seemed to emulate his Italo-Greek predecessors—rough cut touching directly the flesh and worn (Continue next page)

in all seasons and no shoes. The model of the habit can be compared to the “smirkos chiton,” that is a short tunic or of the “kolobos,” that is a long tunic going to the knees and the elbows—a garment attested to be worn by the Italo-Greek monks. Certainly “the habit doesn’t make the monk” as the saying goes, but that’s not how the Medieval man thought and in particular the Calabro-Greeks who had a rigorous classification of garments for the various stages of monastic life.

To his coregionalists Francis offered an image which was close to that of the Calabro-Greeks especially in his prodigious crossing between Scylla and Charbydis. According to legend, in the year 1464, he was refused passage by a boatman while trying to cross the Strait of Messina to Sicily. He reportedly laid his cloak on the water, tied one end to his staff as a sail, and sailed across the strait with his companions. This became remembered with the attention and devotion reserved to the analogous miracles of St. Fantino the Elder of Taureana, and St. Elias the Younger or of Enna, both of whom were known to have crossed water perhaps emulating the prophets Elias and Elisha who crossed the Jordan River. It’s also noteworthy that the passage across the strait took place near the Italo-Greek Monastery of St. Peter of Arena, still flourishing at the time of St. Francis.

In 1474 Sixtus IV gave him permission to write a rule for his community, and to assume the title of Hermits of St. Francis: this rule was formally approved by Alexander VI, who, however, changed their title into that of Minims. After the approbation of the order, Francis founded several new monasteries in Calabria and Sicily. He also established convents of nuns, and a third order for people living in the world, after the example of St. Francis of Assisi.

He was also renowned as prophet: he foretold the capture of Otranto by the Ottoman Turks in 1480, and its subsequent recovery by the King of Naples. He was no respecter of persons of whatever rank or position. He rebuked the King of Naples for his ill-doing and in consequence suffered persecution. When Louis XI of France was in his last illness, he sent an embassy to Calabria to beg the saint to visit him. Francis refused to come until the pope ordered him to go. He then went to the king at Plessis-les-Tours and was with him at his death. Charles VIII, Louis's successor, was an admirer of the saint and during his reign kept him near the court and frequently consulted him. This king built a monastery for Minims at Plessis and another at Rome on the Pincian Hill. Francis also forcefully influenced many in the French church, particularly Jan Standonck, who founded the Collège de Montaigu along what he thought were Minimist lines. The regard in which Charles VIII held the saint was shared by Louis XII, who succeeded to the French throne in 1498. Francis was now anxious

to return to Italy, but the king would not permit him, not wishing to lose his counsels and direction. The last three months of his life he spent in entire solitude, preparing for death. On Maundy Thursday he gathered his community around him and exhorted them especially to have mutual charity amongst themselves and to maintain the rigor of their life and in particular perpetual abstinence. The next day, Good Friday, he again called them together and gave them his last instructions and appointed a vicar-general. He then received the last sacraments and asked to have the Passion according to St. John read out to him, and whilst this was being read, he died on April 2, 1507 in Plessis, France.

Why Are There Two Dates for Easter?

by **Elias D. Mallon, S.A., Ph.D.**

<http://www.cnewa.org/blog.aspx?ID=276&pagetypeID=35&sitcode=HQ>

On 17 November 2011, at a meeting of the Catholic Patriarchs of the Orient in Lebanon, the bishops once again called on all Christians to agree on a single date for Easter. At present the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches calculate the date of Easter differently than the Orthodox churches. This results in both sets of Christian churches often having different dates for Easter. The bishops believed that all Christians celebrating Easter on the same day would be a sign of Christian unity.

When I was asked to write on this, I thought that there were some deep theological differences involved. Research into the topic made me realize that I was in the exciting area of “things I thought I knew but didn’t.” To understand more, you have to start at the beginning — the *very* beginning.

I know that the Gospels are not in total agreement about the date of the Last Supper. The Synoptics (Matthew, Mark and Luke) see the Last Supper taking place on the first day of Passover, which began at sundown on Thursday. John, on the other hand, sees the Last Supper taking place on the evening before Passover, which according to John would have begun Friday at sunset. I

was aware of a group of Christians in the early church called the “Quattuordecimans” (“Fourteeners”) who celebrated Easter on the 14th of Nisan, the same day Jews celebrated Passover. For the Quattuordecimans, Easter could fall on any day of the week. Most Christians, however, celebrated Easter on the Sunday after Passover. There were some controversies between the two groups. The Council of Nicea (325), however, settled the matter and decreed that Easter would be on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the spring equinox in the northern hemisphere. The date of the equinox, with some slight astronomical inaccuracy, was determined as 21 March.

It would seem, then, that the question was solved in 325. What was the problem? The problem was not based on a deep, theological or mystical difference. The problem was based on an astronomical calculation: the length of the calendar year. The Julian calendar in use during the first 15 centuries of Christianity assumed that the solar year was 365 days and 6 hours. The problem is that the solar year is about 10 minutes and 48 seconds shorter than that. So what? Well, it really doesn’t make that much a difference — *over a short period of time*. However, over a longer period of time, it can make a big difference. By the time of Pope Gregory XIII (1582), after whom the Gregorian calendar is named, the difference meant that the spring equinox was falling on 11 March — some 10 days earlier!

Pope Gregory proposed — actually decreed — a new calculation to the calendar, which went into effect on 24 February 1582. In addition to using a more accurate measure for the length of the solar year, the Gregorian calendar “dropped” 10 days when it was inaugurated. It took several centuries before all countries accepted the new Gregorian calendar. Both political and denominational reasons made many hesitant to accept a “popish” change in the calendar. However, the Gregorian calendar slowly won out. When the British Empire and its colonies accepted it in 1752, 11 days had

to be “dropped” to bring the calendar in line with the new calculations. The last of the Orthodox Christian countries to accept the Gregorian calendar was Greece in 1923. By that time, 13 days needed to be “dropped.” Thus by the mid 20th century, the Gregorian calendar was the dominant calendar in the world, although other — mostly religious — calendars, e.g. Muslim, Jewish, Persian, etc., still continue to exist.

The “problem” with the date of Easter has to do with when the spring equinox occurs. In the Gregorian calendar, it always occurs on 20 or 21 March. The present difference between the Gregorian and Julian calendars is 13 days (thus the spring equinox in the Julian calendar is on about 8 March). In 2100 the difference will be 14 days. To help bridge the gap, in 1923 some Orthodox churches proposed a revised Julian calendar, which was corrected against the solar year by dropping 13 days. However, not all of the Orthodox churches chose to adopt the revised Julian calendar and those that did chose it to calculate the dates of fixed feasts and not the date of Easter. In 1997 at a meeting in Aleppo, Syria, the World Council of Churches proposed that the date for Easter be calculated using astronomical observations for the spring equinox and full moon based at the meridian of Jerusalem. This would have disregarded the question of Gregorian vs. Julian calendar and would have eliminated the disparity in dates. None of the member bodies of the World Council, however, adopted this solution.

For many Christians, especially in the west, the date for Easter is not all that important. For other Christians it is a point of identity. Ultimately the most important issue is whether the common observance of Easter by all Christians would give significant witness to the world. If it would not, then the date or dates of Easter are immaterial. If it would give greater witness, however, the question becomes what theological justification would there be for lessening the impact of Christian witness for what is basically an 11-minute-and-48-second difference in the length of our year?