

LIGHT OF THE EAST

"GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS."

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, YOUNGSTOWN-WARREN OHIO CHAPTER

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FROM THE EDITOR...

Our next regular meeting of the Youngstown-Warren Chapter of the Society of St. John Chrysostom will be Tuesday the 20th of July, 7 P.M. at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, 7782 Glenwood Ave Boardman, OH 44512-5823. Our speaker, Eric Sammons will have as his topic: Witnessing Orientale Lumen XIV, "The Councils of the Church," June 21-24.

Eric Sammons is the author of the upcoming book Who is Jesus Christ? Unlocking the Mystery in the Gospel of Matthew to be published by Our Sunday Visitor in September 2010.

Who is Jesus Christ? is a series of reflections on the titles given to Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, such as "Teacher," "Rabbi," and "Son of Man." These titles serve as a starting point for contemplation and deeper understanding of the person of Christ. In order to render a fullness of meaning to the study of each term for Jesus in Matthew's Gospel, the reflections of Who is Jesus Christ? bring together many rich resources of the faith. Sources such as other Scriptural texts, the writings of the Fathers and Saints, and the doctrines of the Church assist in illuminating the meaning behind each identification. Shepherd, Bridegroom, Lord of the Sabbath: these and all the other appellations are part of the deposit of faith. Ancestors in the faith, therefore, such as Paul, Jerome, John Chrysostom, and Augustine allow us to see just how and why that is. Who is Jesus Christ? examines the Gospel of Matthew as a work of the universal Church contemplated within its life and teachings.

Sammons began his study of the Catholic faith in 1991 as an Evangelical Protestant, leading to his conversion to the Catholic Church in 1993. He continued his studies of Catholicism and is currently completing his Master's of Theology degree at Franciscan University of Steubenville. His studies have focused on Scriptural interpretation, Patristics, and 20th century Catholic theologians such as Henri de Lubac, Jean Danielou, Yves Congar, and Joseph Ratzinger.



Sammons' exploration of the Catholic faith and the Scriptures



has been informed by years of evangelization and apologetical activities. He is currently head of Evangelization at St. John Neumann Parish in Gaithersburg, MD and has organized parish missions, door-to-door evangelization campaigns, and public forums on the Catholic faith. The emphasis of these activities has been to bring others to a deeper intimacy with the person of Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church. His speaking experience includes talks about the Catholic faith at parish missions, pre-Cana marriage preparation seminars, parish Bible

studies, and small-group question-and-answer sessions. A recent door-to-door evangelization campaign that Sammons initiated and organized was spotlighted by The Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association and The Catholic Standard.

In 2002 Sammons co-founded Little Flowers Foundation, a non-profit whose mission is to assist Catholic families seeking to adopt special-needs children. He currently serves on the Board of Directors. Since it was established, Little Flowers Foundation has distributed more than \$160,000 in grants to assist in the adoption of over 30 children. Sammons resides with his wife of 14 years and their five children in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

PLEASE PAY 2010 DUES. SEND \$20 (\$25 FAMILY) TO ADDRESS IN MASTHEAD. THOSE LISTED HAVE PAID: Witmer, Democko, Kilpatrick, Limbert, Elsey, Cariglio, N. Nolfi, Billcheck, Lordi, Venrose, Rossi, Mansour, Beri & Chris Berardi, Gage, Carchedi, Schmidt, Gall, Hopko, Rohan, Nakley, Mattiussi, Mistovich, D. Demiduk, L. Demiduk, Gorup, Tavolario, Stanko, Bonnot, Skurich, EOCA, Benedictine Sisters, Siffrin, Perantinides, Pauline & Costas Sarantopoulos, McCarthy, Vasilchek, DeMas, Hudak, Rudjak.

PRAY FOR THE UNITY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCHES!

Orthodox Constructions of the West

Second International
Conference of the
Orthodoxy in
America Lecture
Series
Co-Sponsored by the
Center for Medieval
Studies, Fordham
University
June 28-30, 2010, at
the Rose Hill campus
of Fordham
University in the
Bronx



Conference Aims
In preparation for
the publication of *Orthodox Readings of Augustine* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008), the co-founding directors of the Orthodox Christian Studies Program were struck by ways in which Orthodox authors, especially in the twentieth century, had created artificial categories of "East" and "West" and then used that distinction as a basis for self-definition. The history of Orthodox Christianity is typically narrated by Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike as developing in the 'East', which is geographically ambiguous, but usually refers to the region in Europe east of present-day Croatia, Hungary and Poland. In contemporary Orthodoxy, 'West' refers not simply to a geographical location, but to a form of civilization that was shaped and influenced by Latin Christendom, which includes both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. The "West," thus, represents a cluster of theological, cultural and political ideas against which Orthodox self-identify. In other words, Orthodox self-identification often engages in a distorted apophaticism: Orthodoxy is what the "West" is not.

Given that much of the Orthodox world has until recently suffered oppression from the Ottomans and the Communists, one can read the creation of the "East-West" binary as a post-colonial search for an authentic Orthodox identity in the wake of such domination. After centuries of repression, it is not surprising that the Orthodox recovery of identity would take the form of opposition to that which is seemingly the religious, cultural and political "Other." The question that the conference will attempt to answer is whether such a construction has as much to do with Orthodox identity formation vis-à-vis the West as it does with genuine differences. By creating this opposition to the "West," do Orthodox communities not only misunderstand what Western Christians believe but, even more egregiously,

have they come to believe certain things about their own tradition and teachings that are historically untrue? The importance of addressing these questions is not simply limited to the theological realm. There is evidence of anti-democracy and anti-human rights rhetoric coming from traditional Orthodox countries that have recently been liberated from communism, and this rhetoric often associates liberal forms of democracy and the notion of human rights in general as "Western" and, therefore, not Orthodox. In other words, the self-identification vis-à-vis the "West" is affecting the cultural and political debates in the traditional Orthodox countries in Eastern Europe. Insofar as this conference addresses the broader theme of identity formation, its impact is potentially far-reaching, as it hopes to influence the production of theological, cultural and political ideas within contemporary Orthodoxy.

The purpose of this conference is to explore how these artificial binaries were first created and, by exposing them, make possible a more authentic recovery of the rich Orthodox tradition that is unfettered by self-definition vis-à-vis the proximate other. It is also expected that the deconstruction of false caricatures of the West will impact the discussion on culture and politics throughout the Orthodox world, as well as assist in moving the ecumenical conversation forward.

Keynote Speakers: Robert Taft, Sarah Coakley

For more information, contact George Demacopoulos (demacopoulos@fordham.edu) or Aristotle Papanikolaou (papanikolaou@fordham.edu).

Click here for information on Fordham University Press' new series, *Orthodox Christianity and Contemporary Thought*, edited by George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou.

Catholic-Orthodox dialogue drafting document on steps to unity

Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation, chaired by Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans and Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh, continued to work on a statement on the steps towards unity during its recent June 1-3 meeting in Massachusetts. The statement, entitled "Steps Towards a United Church: A Sketch of an Orthodox-Catholic Vision for the Future," will briefly outline "the history of divergences between Catholics and Orthodox, especially with regard to the role of the Bishop of Rome in the Church, according to a press release issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the in the Americas. It will also outline "all that the two churches share and notes that overcoming differences has become a matter of urgency. The text also reflects on what a reunited Catholic and Orthodox Church might look like, the ecclesial structures

THE NEED TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE AND CO-OPERATION



Press Office of the Romanian Patriarchate informs: Today, 7 May 2010, His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church received at the Patriarchal Residence, His Eminence Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches of Vatican, who was paying a visit to Romania, accompanied by Rev. Dr. Yaroslav Karpyak. His Excellency Francisco-Javier Lozano, Apostolic Nuncio for Romania and the Republic of Moldova, His Grace Mihai, Assistant Bishop of Bucharest and Rev. Valeriu Median, on behalf of the Greek Catholic Church, were also present at the meeting.

His Eminence Cardinal Leonardo Sandri conveyed to His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel the cordial salute of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and his confidence in the development of the good relations present between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel underlined the traditional relations of friendship and collaboration between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, pointing out the fact that the two Churches have the common duty to strengthen these positive relations in a European society marked by secularism, where Christian co-operation is not a simple fashion of the day, but a moral missionary duty.

During the meeting, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel affirmed the desire of the Romanian Orthodox Church to resume the dialogue with the Greek Catholic Church of Romania in order to find together practical solutions for solving their patrimonial disagreements, as Pope John

Paul II also proposed during the visit he paid to Romania in 1999. In this context, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel underlined the priority of the permanent dialogue and co-operation between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Greek Catholic Church of our country concerning the patrimonial disagreements present at a certain time. So, the next working session of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church of 6 – 8 July 2010 will also discuss the relations between the two Churches. Then, an invitation will be extended to the Greek Catholic Church of Romania to resume the dialogue with the Romanian Orthodox Church. To end with the meeting, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, referred to a possible invitation that might be extended to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, with the agreement of the Holy Synod, to visit Romania.

METROPOLITAN FILARET: IT'S TIME TO TAKE A STEP TOWARD UNITY

By Jesús Colina

VATICAN CITY, MAY 6, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The time is now for the Orthodox and Catholic Churches to take a step toward unity, and for Benedict XVI and the Orthodox patriarch of Moscow to meet, says the Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus.

Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Sluck said this Tuesday at the international conference held in Rome on "The Poor Are the Precious Treasure of the Church: Orthodox and Catholics Together on the Path of Charity."



During the conference, which was promoted by the Sant'Egidio Community, participants reflected on the reception of the most frail in our societies, the testimony of the Fathers of the Church, and the challenges dictated by new social problems. **(Continue next page)**

According to Metropolitan Filaret, the time has come to take decisive steps toward unity, reported the country's Catholic news service.

The Orthodox leader added that both Churches seek to establish full unity, and stressed that he has come to this conclusion based on the fraternal dialogue and the meetings that they have held with representatives of the Catholic Church.

If Benedict XVI and Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia were to meet, it would be a first for the two pastors of Rome and Moscow.

Metropolitan Filaret's statements coincide with the announcement of the "Days of Russian Culture and Spirituality in the Vatican," which will be held May 19-20, and which will culminate with a concert offered to Benedict XVI by Kirill I.

The musical event will include compositions of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, president of the Department for Foreign Relations of the Patriarchy of Moscow.

On Wednesday, Metropolitan Filaret visited the Holy Shroud of Turin and Cardinal Severino Poletto, archbishop of Turin.

"The impression is so profound that one cannot express the joy one feels," commented the Orthodox representative after seeing the Shroud.

Metropolitan Filaret, in this post since 1978, received the recognition of "Hero of Belarus" in 2006, by decision of president Alexander Lukashenko, in recognition of the service to the spirituality of his country.

US Priest to Head Oriental Pontifical Institute

(Zenit) Benedict XVI appointed Fr. James McCann, head of the U.S. bishops' conference Office to Aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, as rector of the Pontifical Oriental Institute.

Metropolitan Hilarion celebrates Divine Liturgy at the burial site of St. Peter

On 19 May 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, currently in Italy with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the burial site of St. Peter in the crypt of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Concelebrating were Archbishops Kirill of Yaroslavl and Rostov and Feognost of Sergiev Posad.



Assistant to the DECR Chairman, L. Sevastianov sang hymns in Znamenny chant. Present in the crypt were believers who arrived from Russia to take part in Metropolitan Hilarion's pilgrimage.

After the divine service, the hierarchs, clergymen and all worshippers venerated the particles of St. Peter's holy relics, singing magnification to the apostle.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the



Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, who is in Italy with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, visited Ravenna on 15 May 2010.

In the 5th century Sant'Apollinare in Classe, the DECR chairman celebrated the Divine Liturgy, assisted by Archimandrite Mark Davitti, rector of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes in Bologna and Ravenna, **(Continue next page)**

Archpriest Nikolay Makar, rector of St. Ambrose of Milan's Parish in Milan, Hegumen Philip Vasil'tsev, rector of St. Catherine's, Rev. Dimitry Sozonenko, DECR acting secretary for inter-Christian relations, and clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate's Italian Deanery.

After the service, Metropolitan Hilarion addressed the congregation with an archpastoral word: Dear Father, Brothers and Sisters, on the day when the Holy Church commemorates St. Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria, and the holy passion-bearers Boris and Gleb, our Lord was vouchsafed us to celebrated the divine Liturgy in this holy church where the honorable relics of the holy martyr Appolinarius, an associate of the apostles and the first bishop of Ravenna, lie in rest. I am very glad that our pilgrimage to holy places in the Italian land begins here, in Ravenna, where the heritage of the early undivided Church has survived engraved in churches and wall images...

When I first came to Ravenna many years ago as still a hieromonk and student of Oxford University, I was struck by precisely this church of Sant'Apollinare in Classe. The holy image in the sanctuary apse, as I see it, is unparallel in the early Christian art in its power of influence and theological substance. Then, as a student, I felt a wish to celebrate the Divine Liturgy here one day. And today this wish I cherished for many years has come true.

Nicodemus, Sicily's Forgotten Saint

by Vincenzo Salerno

Amid the recent Catholic devotion to more controversial personages, such as Padre Pio (whose likeness abounds in southern Italy), many of Sicily's medieval religious figures have been all but forgotten. One of them is Nicodemus, leader of Sicily's Christians during the last decades of Muslim rule. The early (Orthodox) church of Sicily was distinctly Byzantine, and indeed part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. From around 827 until the 1060s, Christians in Sicily, like Jews, became a subjugated people, mildly persecuted and highly taxed but allowed, in most cases, to practice their religion and professions. There were Orthodox Christian monasteries and churches, and some Christians were permitted land



ownership. Yet, Sicily's population almost doubled during over two centuries of Saracen (Arab) rule under Muslim law. Clearly, some Christians converted to Islam, and Arabic greatly influenced the vernacular language of Sicily, which previously had been closer to Greek.

The Normans arrived in 1061, reaching Palermo, the capital, by early 1072. The last Arab areas, such as Enna, were not conquered until two decades later. Under the Normans, the Sicilian language became more Latinised, and so did the Church.

In Palermo there were twenty Orthodox churches (and hundreds of mosques and dozens of synagogues) when the Normans besieged and captured the city. They found its bishop, Nicodemus, with his congregation. The old Church of Saint Mary, which had been turned into a mosque some two hundred and forty years earlier, was quickly reconsecrated and Nicodemus celebrated a prayer service there. He was known for his kindness and humility, but the new rulers, after establishing their position, sent him to live outside the city in the area now called Mezzomonreale. The precise reasons are unknown, but it is clear that Roger and Robert de Hauteville wished to install bishops loyal to Rome following the Schism of 1054.

In the chronicles of Christianity, the Schism played out at its most dramatic in Sicily, which in the eleventh century was the wealthiest region of Europe and the Mediterranean. By the twelfth century, the tax revenues derived from Palermo alone exceeded those collected by the Norman king of England in his entire realm.

Nowhere was ecclesiastical and temporal power contested as in Sicily. Nicodemus, Count Roger, and even the contemporary popes were minor players in this spectacle, whose ideology transcended human vanity. Bishop of Palermo from 1065, Saint Nicodemus died in 1083. His body is buried in a stone sarcophagus which today can be found in the crypt of the Norman era Palermo Cathedral.

About the Author: Palermo native Vincenzo Salerno has written biographies of several famous Sicilians, including Frederick II and Giuseppe di Lampedusa.

VATICAN PUBLISHES BOOK BY PATRIARCH KIRIL ROME, MAY 14, 2010 (Zenit.org).- The Vatican Publishing House is publishing a book by Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and of All Russia.

This gesture follows a similar move of the Moscow Patriarchate, which last December published a book with texts from Benedict XVI regarding European culture. Now, the Italian-language book with addresses by the Russian Orthodox patriarch, titled "Liberta e Responsabilita alla Ricerca dell'Armonia" (Liberty and Responsibility in the Search of Harmony).

MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA OF GROTTAFERRATA

The group of basilian monks that arrived in the hills of Tuscolo in 1004, was led by an old holy monk,



Nilus. He was anxious to find a place to build a monastery “to gather all his scattered spiritual sons”. Tradition says that the Blessed Mother of God appeared here to the monks, asking that they build a sanctuary dedicated to Her, from whence graces would

flow.

This group of monks of the Byzantine rite was formed in the years between 950-955. The foundation of the Monastery of Santa Maria of Grottaferrata preceded only by a few months the death of St. Nilus, which happened on the 26th of September, 1004. This monastic foundation came fifty years before the division between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Church, and for these historical reasons it is not an *uniata* community. Since its beginning, it was always under the protection and jurisdiction of the Holy Roman Church and the Patriarch of Rome.

This Byzantine Monastery witnesses with its continuing prayers, maintained for more than a thousand years, the unity of the Church in its several traditions of spirituality and culture.

With many Orthodox Churches and monasteries, we Basilian Monks – spiritual sons of St. Nilus – have fraternal and friendly relationships and reciprocal



esteem. We join with them in the conscious and compelling service of the ecumenical dialogue. For our part, we cultivate it with the multiple personal and of community encounters, with generous and open hospitality to the orthodox brethren that visit us, often remaining as guests for varied times, and above all with prayer, humility, insistent trusting to the maternal hands of the Blessed Mother of God that guides the Christians (Theotòkos Hodigitria), whose ancient icon has for centuries been the symbolic heart and life-blood of our monastery.

This monastery is a place of meeting and dialogue between the latin West and the Orthodox East, open to anyone who desires to live in, to think about and to go deep into the spirituality of Byzantium.

JOYMAKING-SORROW

By Hiermonk Maximos of Holy Resurrection Monastery



In my teens and through my early twenties I suffered from a debilitating spiritual condition. The problem was that I couldn’t seem to help thinking of myself in categories. I was either “good” or “bad.” I’d go to confession and come home feeling light and happy. A few days would go by, I’d fall into some sin that seemed very serious to me at the time and a crippling guilt would set in. So I went on for years, oscillating wildly (so it seemed to me) between alternate states of sin and grace.

In these difficult years I could never really experience repentance as anything except the crushing guilt that I had to go through as the pre-condition to getting to that place of, well, not really joy (it was too fleeting, too fragile to be that), but a kind of psychological relief, the release of absolution. No wonder, then, when I discovered the spirituality of Eastern Christianity in my mid-twenties, that I fell so far—and so fast!—in love. One of the things this tradition taught me was to shake free of the debilitating, **(Continue next page)**

strobe-light cycle of shame/relief, shame/relief, shame/relief. This is not to say that freedom was not also available to me within the western tradition. It most certainly was, but for me the path to freedom was hidden under layers of a dry, juridical theology to which I was unfortunately too much exposed in my youth. What I needed most was to discover that real repentance does not consist in lightning-swift movement from one state to another, a “state of sin” to a “state of grace”. I needed to learn to think of repentance as a long, deeply beautiful and joyous process. I needed to think of it as a form of love. Within the liturgy of the Byzantine Rite, and in the writings of the Greek Fathers, I learned a whole new vocabulary of repentance. I began to appreciate why metanoia, the traditional Scripural and patristic Greek word for what we call in English “repentance,” means “change of mind” or “change of heart.” This is not the language of shame and anxious sorrow, but of transformation, of coming to see things differently, of new light, new understanding, new wisdom. Metanoia belongs not so much to the grammar of guilt, but to that of desire, of yearning for beauty, for truth and for love.

This was the experience of authentic Christian repentance about which the sixth century abbot of Sinai, St. John Climacus, famously wrote in his Ladder of Divine Ascent (a book, incidentally, that monks and nuns of the Byzantine tradition are supposed always to read during Lent). In the seventh chapter (or “step”) of this work, St. Climacus wrote, *peri tou xarapoioi penthous*, of the “joy-making sorrow” which is true repentance:

When I consider the actual nature of sorrow for sin I am amazed at how that which is called mourning and grief should contain joy and gladness interwoven within it like honey in the comb.

This is how the Eastern Churches generally seem to see the repentance: not as a necessary evil, as something to be got through as quickly as possible on the way to a state of relieved happiness. Repentance is seen as itself the transformation of sorrow into joy, a lingering sad sweetness of inestimable beauty; a deep, mature and maturing joy.

The penitential season of Lent, known by many Eastern Christians as the Great Lent, or the Great Fast (to distinguish it from the other fasting periods in the Church year) begins precisely with an invitation to joy. At the Vespers service that, in the Byzantine Rite, inaugurates the new season, we sing: Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast

from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in the virtues of the Spirit may we persevere with love, and so be counted worthy to see the solemn Passion of Christ our God, and with great gladness of spirit to behold his holy Passover.

The following morning, the day known as “Clean Monday,” as we set our bodies to the work of strict fasting, we sing at Matins:

Let us joyfully begin the all-holy season of abstinence; and let us shine with the bright radiance of the holy commandments of Christ our God, with the brightness of love and the splendour of prayer, with the purity of holiness and the strength of good. So, clothed in raiment of light, let us hasten to the holy third-day Resurrection that shines upon the world with the glory of eternal life.

And again:

O faithful, with joy let us enter upon the beginning of the Fast. Let not our faces be sad, but let us wash them in the water of dispassion; and let us bless and exalt Christ above all forever.

One of the reasons this way of looking at repentance seemed so liberating to me was not that it somehow obscured the reality of sin. This was not a soft option spirituality. Properly understood, the Eastern Churches leave one in no doubt that sin is obscene, its consequences tragic, that its addictive quality endangers everything good, including life itself. Nothing about this view of repentance made me less repentant. That’s exactly the point. It made me want to repent. It gave me hope that I could repent.

Or perhaps I should rearrange those italics: it made me feel that I could repent. My old spiritual anxieties had had the effect of alienating me not only from God, but also from myself. That cycle of shame and relief, shame and relief, seemed to drive my personality under a flashing whirl of circumstances over which I really had very little control. My soul was a battle ground over which fought forces—Sin, Nature, Grace, God and the Devil—far stronger than I. What was my role in this spiritual battle? I was just collateral damage, patched up every month in a confessional field hospital and sent back to be wounded all over again.

But when I discovered joy in the midst of my repentance it was as though I finally had something to offer. Not much, perhaps, a little grief mixed with hope “as honey in the comb;” not much but my not much! And from this little bit of me in the process of repentance grew an awareness that I actually had all kinds of resources to offer **(Continue next page)**

in the process of changing my heart. Asceticism became, for the first time in my life, not simply another way of punishing myself, but a real expression of new-found hope. Fasting opened up the possibility of real discipline, of the kind of discipleship by which hearts really do change. Prayer became dialogue, not merely a court-marshal. And with prayer and fasting came a new urgency to show mercy, a mercy flowing from the grace of authentic repentance:

While fasting with the body, brethren, let us also fast in spirit. Let us loose every bond of iniquity; let us undo the knots of every contract made by violence; let us tear up all unjust agreements; let us give bread to the hungry and welcome to our house the poor who have no roof to cover them, that we may receive great mercy from Christ our God.

--From Byzantine Rite Vespers for the first Wednesday of Great Lent

In short, my old way of thinking saw repentance as a messy, painful business to be gotten out of the way as quickly as possible in order to begin living like a Christian. My new way of thinking revealed to me that repentance is precisely the joy-making foundation of any Christian life, one that feeds every other aspect from deep and mystical prayer to authentic and active social justice.

Or as the Lord once said it so much better than I: "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4).

Ecumenical Gathering Focuses on Resurrection

FATHER PAUL A. BURKE, Special To The Bulletin
Published: April 15, 2010

ATLANTA—The Archdiocese of Atlanta has announced an Orthodox-Catholic ecumenical gathering commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord at Holy Spirit Church on Tuesday, April 27, at 7 p.m. This gathering, hosted by the Archdiocese of Atlanta and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta, will emphasize the themes of the Resurrection/Pascha and religious freedom. Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory and His Eminence, Alexios, Metropolitan of Atlanta, will preside at the event, which will include music from the Chantors of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral and the traditional choir of Holy Spirit. A reception will follow in McDonough Hall. All are welcome to attend.

The Lord Jesus, at the hour of his Passion, prayed "that they may all be one" (John 17:21). His prayer for unity is echoed by the church in every time and in every place. As never before, there is an urgent need for the unity of all Christians. The Catholic Church is firmly committed

to ongoing dialogue with various churches and ecclesial communities in the quest for Christian unity. In his encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint* ("May They Be One"), published in 1995, Pope John Paul II wrote: "This unity, which the Lord has bestowed on his Church and in which he wishes to embrace all people, is not something added on, but stands at the very heart of Christ's mission" (*Ut Unum Sint*, no. 9).

During the Pauline Year, the Ecumenical Patriarch visited Pope Benedict XVI several times. On the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul in 2008, both the Pope and the Patriarch preached at the Mass for the imposition of the pallium on Metropolitan Archbishops from around the world.

His Holiness Bartholomew I noted the considerable progress that has been made in Roman Catholic-Orthodox relations, stating: "Theological dialogue between our churches 'in faith, truth and love,' thanks to divine assistance, is moving forward, beyond the considerable difficulties that exist and the known problems. We truly desire and pray for this: that these challenges may be overcome and the issues may be resolved as quickly as possible so that we may reach the ultimate goal desired for the glory of God." This goal is full communion between both Churches.

His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios, the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, told of a visit he had with the late Pope John Paul II at the Vatican. The Holy Father had invited His Eminence to dinner, and the archbishop was accompanied to Rome by his official photographer, a Roman Catholic. When the photographer knew of the archbishop's dinner plans, he asked that he bring with him several rosaries that he had bought for his family, so that the Pope could bless them. The Holy Father blessed the rosaries and then said to Archbishop Demetrios, "Now, my brother, you bless them too." In recounting the story, Archbishop Demetrios spoke of his love for Pope John Paul II but also of the significance of the Holy Father's gesture. He said that theological discussions and writings are important, but what are more necessary are concrete gestures of love and friendship; this is how he viewed the incident with the Pope.

Organizers for this ecumenical celebration of the Lord's Resurrection hope that it will likewise be a concrete expression of the love and esteem between the sister churches.

<p>PRAYER OF SOUFANIEH: UNITY OF HEARTS, UNITY OF CHRISTIANS, UNITY OF THE FEAST OF EASTER!</p>
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ROME AND THE ORTHODOX EAST

BY AIDAN NICHOLS, O.P.

Rome and the Orthodox East | Aidan Nichols, O.P. | The Conclusion to Rome and the Eastern Churches: A Study in Schism (Ignatius Press, 2010; 2nd edition) | Ignatius Insight

The present study has not been intended simply as an historical excursus—though without historical study there can be no illumination of existing reality. It is also meant as a contribution to the overcoming of the various schisms described—through an eirenic, yet confessionally responsible, adjudication of the chief "separating issues" involved. This is not to say, however, that the author is especially optimistic about the possibility of a positive outcome for the various bilateral negotiations, whether formal or informal, currently taking place. Quite apart from the dogmatic investment of the different churches in their own interpretations of the apostolic deposit and the relative intractability of a number of the questions involved (especially, perhaps, the matter of the status of doctors regarded as heretical by opposing traditions and, at the heart of it all, the Roman claims themselves), the Catholic theologian must face the fact that the present and future of the separated Eastern churches are not and will not be shaped by doctrinal considerations alone. These churches, considered as human communities with a given history, and determinate hopes and anxieties vis-à-vis other communities whose living space they share, will be obliged to give due weight to nontheological factors relevant to their survival and flourishing.

It is obvious that the operation of these nontheological factors—which are basically political, whether in a broad or a narrow sense of that word—will vary from country to country, from church to church. [1] The Copts of Egypt, for instance, an exposed island buffeted by the winds of an Arab ocean, may be expected to welcome sympathy and solidarity from the Christian West, although working against this will be the corporate mystique of the Coptic church as the "true" Egyptian nation and the guardian of Athanasian and Cyrilline orthodoxy when all the world was Arian (or semi-Arian) and "Nestorian" (or Chalcedonian). In India, by contrast, the Syrian Orthodox, self-governing (with the exception of the small minority still dependent on the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch) and proudly aware both of their Palestinian origins and centuries of Indian domicile, will not find it notably politic to create links with a Rome

associated in the minds of Indian nationalists, whether secularising or Hindu, with the territorial aggression of the Portuguese or the spiritual "aggression" of the later European missionaries.

The issue of nationalism—the greatest political conundrum of the twentieth century—is also highly relevant to the position of the Chalcedonian Orthodox. [2] If the Byzantine church came to function as a church of the Hellenes, it nevertheless retained some sense of "PanOrthodoxy" thanks to the intricate relations that bound the East Roman basileus to other Orthodox princes and peoples in what Dimitri Obolensky called the "Byzantine commonwealth". [3] But the particularist lesson of Byzantine Hellenism was only too well learned by the Orthodox nations in the course of time. An emerging state apparatus naturally wishes to utilise, and dominate, the religious organs of its territory—a phenomenon as well known in the Catholic West as in the Orthodox East. But the existence of a supranational common centre in the see of Rome, endowed with a primacy not merely decorative but functional, has prevented the crystallisation in the West of truly national churches that operate as the religious arm of their ethnos, with scant regard to the needs, desires, or values of a wider communion. The failure of the ecumenical patriarchate to maintain at any rate an effective analogy with the church of Rome in this regard has—to the eye of the outside observer—cost Orthodoxy dearly. Although at the present time there are signs that the see of Constantinople may try to regain a Pan-Orthodox significance largely obscured in modern times, it may be doubted whether it will find the resources to overcome the tendency of many of its sister churches to become vehicles for cultural and political nationalism. For the factors that led to the partial eclipse of the ecumenical throne of New Rome are still potent today. The Ottoman Empire, it is true, lies beyond any conceivable possibility of historical reconstruction. But the Turkish state, though still committed to a secular ideology, takes as its long-term policy goal the achievement of an ethnically homogenous Turkey of the Turks, while recent governments have shown themselves not averse to significant concessions to a newly renascent Islam. In these circumstances, the patriarchate's freedom of initiative is obviously limited. Again, whereas the attempt of the Russian church to unite all Orthodox under its own aegis largely collapsed with the tsardom, that church remained, and remains, a formidable competitor to Constantinople. Used by the Soviet state for its own foreign policy ends, [4] it is in the process of becoming the (officially or unofficially) established church of the Russian Federation, post-Communist and thirsty for the slaking of historical memories, passions, and dreams. **(Continue next page)**

Since the Russian church will, on any reckoning, remain numerically the single most important Orthodox community, it is clearly possible that it may regain something of the position of dominance that it achieved through the Romanov dynasty before the Great War of 1914-1918. Once again, the spectre of ecclesiastical nationalism rears its head. The third factor that maintains the wings of the ecumenical patriarchate in a state of clippedness derives from the circumstance that the emancipation of the Orthodox Church in the lands of the former Ottoman Empire coincided with the arrival in those territories of the ideological packhorse of nineteenth-century nationalism. The new patriarchates of Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria, as well as the autocephalous churches that orbit as planets these minor stars, are too firmly wedded to the national idea to be divorced therefrom at Constantinople's say-so—as the ineffective late nineteenth-century condemnation of "Filetism" by the Phanar demonstrates. [5] Finally, owing to a mixture of insouciance towards temporary schism and an attitude of "pick and choose" towards the canons, both aided and abetted by the lack of a clearly recognised and effectively functioning universal primacy, there is, in much Orthodox church life, a wilfulness that lends itself only too easily to the free play of corporate egoisms.

Rome must reckon, then, with the probable continuance and even accentuation, within Orthodoxy, of a vigorous ecclesiastical nationalism, and, from her viewpoint, little seems more depressing. If the movement in the church of Greece known as "Neo-Orthodoxy" (essentially an Orthodox nationalism of Christian Hellenism, opposed not only to the Latin West but also to the non-Greek churches of the Orthodox world) plays a major part in the continuing resistance of many Greek Orthodox to the ecumenical movement, the hostility of the Moscow patriarchate to the Ukrainian church [6] and that of the Romanian patriarchate to the Uniates of Transylvania is no less founded on the national church idea. [7] If the ploys of the Moscow patriarchate and the harshness of its hierarchs have earned well-merited strictures from such an admirer of Orthodoxy as the Anglican Russianist Michael Bordeaux, [8] it is at least encouraging to find that among the Greek monastic clergy there are stern critics of the gains made in recent times by religious nationalism. [9] Until those attitudes are purified and replaced by an internationalism, a catholicity, better befitting the pattern of the Christian *koinônia*, there can be no place within Orthodoxy for a Roman see embodying the universal pastorate of Peter and the apostolate to the Gentiles of Paul.

Rome looks at this important aspect of contemporary Orthodoxy with such dismay because she not only desires but needs reunion with the Orthodox East. In the

face of her own numerous theological liberals and the innovationist tendencies of churchmen (and churchwomen) in various portions of her far-flung "Western" patriarchate, from Santiago de Chile to Manila, from Melbourne to Detroit, Catholicism's grasp of the historic Christian tradition can only be strengthened by the accession of Orthodoxy to communion with Rome. In such matters as the upholding of the transcendentality of revelation vis-à-vis human understanding; the defence of the Trinitarian and Christological doctrine of the first seven councils; a perception of the nature of salvation as more than temporal alone; the maintenance of a classical liturgical life; the nourishment of group and personal devotion to Mary and the saints; the preservation of the threefold apostolic ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons (in that same gender in which the incarnate Word exercised his own high priesthood); the encouragement of the consecrated life, especially in its most basic form, monasticism; and the preservation of the ascetic dimension in spirituality, in all of these the present struggle of the papacy to uphold Catholic faith and practice in a worldwide communion exposed to a variety of intellectual and cultural influences often baleful, if sometimes also beneficent, can only benefit from Orthodox aid. The energies of authentic Catholicism can only be increased by the inflow of Orthodox faith and holiness: the precious liquid contained within the not seldom unattractive phial of Orthodoxy's canonical form. Can this greatest of all ecclesiastical reunions be brought off? The auguries are not good, yet the Christian lives from hope in the unseen.

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Fr Hunwicke's Liturgical Notes

Anglo-Catholic 12 May 2010

We share His Divinity

In recent posts I did talk about Divinisation in the teaching of S Gregory Palamas and the Hesychast tradition; of course, the basis of the tradition is much older and indeed Biblical. The *locus classicus* is II Peter 1:4: we become (**Continue next page**)

theias koinonoi phuseos (shareholders in the Divine Nature). S Leo (or conceivably an admirer soaked in his thought and latinity) wrote the prayer we still use *secreto* at the filling of the chalice at Mass: *eius divinitatis esse consortes* (to be sharers of his Divinity). And the ancient Western Preface for the Ascension seems to come from the same mind: *ut divinitatis suae truibueret esse participes* (that he might grant us to be partakers of his Godhead).

Cranmer, in one of his less fortunate expansions of his Latin originals, made this into 'to prepare a place for us; that where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory'. (I suspect one reason for this mutilation is the Protestant Reformation belief that even the justified sinner is still totally a sinner, *simul justus et peccator*: against the Catholic view that sanctifying grace truly transforms.) Bad Old ICEL rendered this 'to claim for us a share in his divine life': where 'claim' is not the same as 'grant us to be partakers', and 'divine life' is a watering down of 'Divinity'.

We shall have to wait and see what Good New ICEL has drafted for us. As so often, accuracy in Latin translation, as well as being desirable in itself, would have the bonus of manifesting the essential unity of the Latin and Byzantine traditions.

Posted by Fr John Hunwicke SSC

A Family of Churches

From Father Gregory Jensen's blog:
<http://palamas.info/?p=3901&cpage=1#comment-2438>

One of the most frustrating things about grassroots ecumenical conversations is that rarely do the participants have an accurate understanding of the other tradition. Complicating this even further, it is not uncommon for participants to have a faulty, and even erroneous, understanding of their own tradition. And this doesn't speak to the real prejudice and hardness of heart that some bring to the table.

While I can't do much about hardness of heart, as much as I try to present the traditions of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches as accurately, and sympathetically, as possible. This is done not to minimize our differences but from the conviction that (on the grassroots level at least) there is nothing that can be done to resolve these differences. Better it seems to me to work to understand each other. This seems to work well in marriage and in the parish so why not in grassroots ecumenism?

Yesterday on First Thing's blog "On the Square," the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Denver, Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. has an interesting [column](#) that I think is of value for Orthodox Christians as we work to understand the Roman Catholic Church and to structure our life here in America.

Briefly, Archbishop Chaput argues that the idea of a "monolithic Catholic Church" is simply not true. It is he says the invention of nineteenth century critics of the Catholic that was used "to frighten America's Protestant masses." Instead he says Catholic Church "is much closer to a confederation of families than a modern corporation." He continues by reflecting on his own experience as a bishop and writes that

...this has real, everyday results. In practice, the influence of the Holy See on the daily life of the Archdiocese of Denver is strong in matters of faith and morals. We're deeply grateful for the leadership and wonderful teaching of the papacy. But in the operational decisions of our local Church, the Holy See's influence is remote. In twenty-two years as a bishop, my problems have never included a controlling or intrusive Vatican.

No doubt for many Orthodox Christians this is hard, I dare impossible, to believe. In fact I suspect that, for many Catholics this is also new information about their own Church.

Contrary to the popular notion of the Catholic Church marching in lockstep to the papacy, Chaput describes a more familial—dare I say, Orthodox—model of his Church. He writes:

Every bishop in the United States has a filial love for the Holy Father and a fraternal respect for his brother bishops. But these family like words—*filial, fraternal, brother*—are not simply window dressing. They go to the heart of how the Catholic community understands and organizes itself—and, more important, to *how the Church actually conducts herself*, guided by her own theology and canon law.

As the Archbishop of Denver, Chaput is head of "the Province of Denver includes the dioceses of Pueblo and Colorado Springs in Colorado, the Diocese of Cheyenne in Wyoming, and the province's metropolitan (or senior) see, the Archdiocese of Denver." Though he is the senior bishop of his region he has "neither the authority nor the foolishness to meddle in the life of a sister diocese." He continues by saying that he would not "intrude on the ministry(**Continue next page**)

of a brother bishop. The title *archbishop* does entail some rights and duties in the life of a province, but these are strictly limited.”

Rather, and again contrary to the popular view of many Orthodox and not a few Catholics, “each diocese is a separate, autonomous community of believers. Each bishop in a province is an equal. Each is a successor of the apostles. And each is the chief teaching and governing authority in his own local church.” To be sure, all of this is done within an organizational structure within which the Pope as the bishop of Rome has “real authority as pastor of the whole Church.” Even so, the Pope “is not a global CEO, and Catholic bishops are not—and never have been—his agents or employees.”

How well this works in practice is not something I can speak to with any authority. As a sympathetic outsider, I can say however that within the limits of their tradition, the Catholic bishops in America seem a diverse as their Orthodox counterparts. And both groups, I suspect, are equally, if quietly, fractious.

Whatever might be the human problems with the way the Catholic Church is organized on the regional level, I think what Archbishop Chaput outlines is an administrative structure that the American Orthodox Church has adopted, at least informally, for itself.

For the foreseeable future, the Orthodox Church will continue to maintain overlapping jurisdictions based primarily on ethnicity. But even with this uncanonical structure, we have established regional gatherings of clergy and even bishops. While this falls short of the kind of administrative unity we should have—it does seem to me to be a good next step.

As for how we might express an administratively unified American Orthodox Church, I think we could do worse than adopt the Catholic model of regional provinces under the primacy of an archbishop. This is after simply the synodal model of the Church.

Finally, I also think that Archbishop Chaput offers us a way of understanding primacy on the universal level that is less micromanaging and intrusive than the popular understanding (and again, for Orthodox AND Catholics) would hold. How this works out in practice is something I think we as Orthodox Christians would do well to explore both to understand our Catholic brothers and sister and as we face the question of what, if anything, a universal primacy might mean for us.

As always, your comments, questions and criticisms are not only welcome, they are actively sought.

In Christ,

+Fr Gregory

POPE'S PENTECOST HOMILY (EXCERPT)

From this, dear brothers, there derives a practical criterion of discernment for Christian life: When a person or a community, limits itself to its own way of thinking and acting, it is a sign that it has distanced itself from the Holy Spirit. The path of Christians and of the particular Churches must always confront itself with the path of the one and catholic Church, and harmonize with it. This does not mean that the unity created by the Holy Spirit is a kind of homogenization. On the contrary, that is rather the model of Babel, that is, the imposition of a culture of unity that we could call “technological.” The Bible, in fact, tells us (cf. Genesis 11:1-9) that in Babel everyone spoke the same language. At Pentecost, however, the Apostles speak different languages in such a way that everyone understands the message in his own tongue. The unity of the Spirit is manifested in the plurality of understanding. The Church is one and multiple by her nature, destined as she is to live among all nations, all peoples, and in the most diverse social contexts. She responds to her vocation to be a sign and instrument of unity of the human race (cf. “Lumen Gentium,” 1) only if she remains free from every state and every particular culture. Always and in every place the Church must truly be catholic and universal, the house of all in which each one can find a place.

Patriarch Bartholomew is willing to advance convening of the All-Orthodox Council

Strelna, May 31, Interfax - Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople thinks it necessary to advance convening of the All-Orthodox Council with the participation of all local Orthodox Churches.

"We decided to facilitate the process of convening the holy and great Council of all Orthodox Churches," Patriarch Bartholomew said in an interview to *Vesti 24 TV* which was recorded Sunday in the Constantinovsky Palace in Strelna near St. Petersburg. **(Continue next page)**

He referred to the Council as one of the major objectives for the Constantinople Church and stated that the Council and its outcomes would "have the greatest impact on the entire Orthodox world."

According to him, the event's agenda "has been already set up and is well-known to the Orthodox community," it covers ten major points, including the principles of autocephaly and autonomy of the Orthodox Churches, challenges of fasting, and a set of issues related to diptych (the order of mentioning Churches during service - *IF*.)

"Our Orthodox Church continuously seeks to keep up with the times avoiding to give up anything of its teaching, but at the same time, respond to the spirit of the time helping believers to stand up to the current real world," Patriarch Bartholomew said.

The preliminary work to convene the Council was started as far back as 1960s. The All-Orthodox Council is preceded with the meetings of All-Orthodox Pre-Council Conference and Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission. The Council shall decide the problems which have been accumulating within several centuries, from the time of the last 7th Ecumenical Council, which should be addressed by the entire Church.

CYPRUS DOSSIER



Papal Press Conference On Route to Cyprus (04 Jun

10 – RV) Your Holiness, there has been a lot of progress in dialogue with the Orthodox in terms of cultural, spiritual and life issue. At the recent concert hosted for you by the Patriarch of Moscow, the profound harmony between Orthodox and Catholics was felt particularly in relation to the challenges to Christianity in Europe from secularization. But what is your assessment from a more strictly theological point of view?

Let me start by underscoring these great strides that we have made in our common witness to Christian values in the secular world. This is not just a coalition of political morality, but it is really something profoundly rooted in faith, because the fundamental values for which we are in this secular world is not moralism, but the

fundamental physiognomy of Christian faith. When we are able to witness these values, to engage in dialogue, discussion of this world, witnessing to live these values, we have already made a fundamental witness of a very deep unity of faith. Of course there are many theological problems, but here there are very strong elements of unity. I would like to mention three elements we unite us, which see us getting closer, drawing closer. First, Scripture; the Bible is not a book that fell from heaven, it is a book that grew within the people of God, that lives in this common subject of God's people and only here is always present and real, that can not be isolated, but is the nexus of tradition and Church. This awareness is essential and belongs to the foundation of Orthodoxy and Catholicism, and gives us a common path. As a second element, let us say, tradition that interprets us, it opens the door of Scriptures to us, it also has an institutional, sacred, sacramental form, desired by the Lord, that is the episcopate, it has a personal form, that is the college of bishops which together is a witness and presence of this tradition. And the third element, the so-called *Regula fidei*, that is the profession of faith drawn up by the ancient councils is the sum of what is in Scripture and opens the door to interpretation. Then other elements of the liturgy, our common love for Our Lady which unites us deeply, and it also becomes increasingly clear that they are the foundations of Christian life. We must be aware, and delve deeper into the details, but it seems that although different cultures, different situations have created misunderstandings and difficulties, we are growing in awareness of the essential and unity of the essential. I would add that of course it is not the theological discussion alone that creates unity. It is an important dimension, but the whole Christian life, mutual knowledge, learning despite the experiences of the past, this brotherhood are processes that also require great patience. But I think we are learning patience, so love, and with all dimensions of theological dialogue, where we are moving forward leaving it to the Lord to decide when to gift us perfect unity."

**International Paphos Airport
Friday, 4 June 2010**

Following in the footsteps of our common fathers in the faith, Saints Paul and Barnabas, I have come among you as a pilgrim and the servant of the servants of God. Since the Apostles brought the Christian message to these shores, Cyprus has been blessed by a resilient Christian heritage. I greet as a brother in that faith His Beatitude Chrysostomos the Second, Archbishop of Nea Justiniana and All Cyprus, and I look forward shortly to meeting many more members of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, (**Continue next page**)

“Η χάρις και η ειρήνη ας είναι πλούσια μαζί σας” (1 Pet 1:2). Με μεγάλη μου χαρά χαιρετώ εσάς που αντιπροσωπεύετε τις διάφορες χριστιανικές κοινότητες παρούσες στην Κύπρο. [1]

I thank His Beatitude Chrysostomos the Second for his gracious words of welcome, His Eminence Georgios, the Metropolitan of Paphos, our host, and all those who have helped to make this meeting possible. I am also pleased cordially to salute the Christians of other confessions present, including those of the Armenian, Lutheran and Anglican communities.

It is truly an extraordinary grace for us to gather together in prayer in this Church of Agia Kiriaki Chrysopolitissa. We have just heard a reading from the Acts of the Apostles which reminds us that Cyprus was the first stage in the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul (cf. Acts 13:1-4). Set apart by the Holy Spirit, Paul, accompanied by Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, and Mark, the future evangelist, first came to Salamis, where they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues. Traversing the island, they reached Paphos where, close to this very place, they preached in the presence of the Roman pro-consul Sergius Paulus. Thus it was from this place that the Gospel message began to spread throughout the Empire, and the Church, grounded in the apostolic preaching, was able to take root throughout the then-known world.

The Church in Cyprus can rightly be proud of her direct links to the preaching of Paul, Barnabas and Mark, and her communion in the apostolic faith, a communion which links her to all those Churches who preserve that same rule of faith. This is the communion, real yet imperfect, which already unites us, and which impels us to overcome our divisions and to strive for the restoration of that full visible unity which is the Lord’s will for all his followers. For, in Paul’s words, “there is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph 4:4-5).

The Church’s communion in the apostolic faith is both a gift and a summons to mission. In the passage from Acts which we have heard, we see an image of the Church’s unity in prayer, and her openness to the promptings of the Spirit of mission. Like Paul and Barnabas, every Christian, by baptism, is set apart to bear prophetic witness to the Risen Lord and to his Gospel of reconciliation, mercy and peace. In this context, the Special Assembly for the Middle East of the Synod of Bishops, due to meet in Rome next October, will reflect on the vital role of Christians in the region, encourage them in their witness to the Gospel, and help foster greater dialogue and cooperation between Christians throughout the region. Significantly, the labours of the Synod will be enriched by the presence of fraternal

delegates from other Churches and Christian communities in the region, as a sign of our common commitment to the service of God’s word and our openness to the power of his reconciling grace.

The unity of all Christ’s disciples is a gift to be implored from the Father in the hope that it will strengthen the witness to the Gospel in today’s world. The Lord prayed for the holiness and unity of his disciples precisely so that the world might believe (cf. Jn 17:21). Just a hundred years ago, at the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, the acute awareness that divisions between Christians were an obstacle to the spread of the Gospel gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement. Today we can be grateful to the Lord, who through his Spirit has led us, especially in these last decades, to rediscover the rich apostolic heritage shared by East and West, and in patient and sincere dialogue to find ways of drawing closer to one another, overcoming past controversies, and looking to a better future.

The Church in Cyprus, which serves as a bridge between East and West, has contributed much to this process of reconciliation. The path leading to the goal of full communion will certainly not be without its difficulties, yet the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church of Cyprus are committed to advancing in the way of dialogue and fraternal cooperation. May the Holy Spirit enlighten our minds and strengthen our resolve, so that together we can bring the message of salvation to the men and women of our time, who thirst for the truth that brings authentic freedom and salvation (cf. Jn 8:32), the truth whose name is Jesus Christ!

Dear sisters and brothers, I cannot conclude without evoking the memory of the saints who have adorned the Church in Cyprus, and in particular Saint Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis. Sanctity is the sign of the fullness of Christian life, a profound inner docility to the Holy Spirit who calls us to constant conversion and renewal as we strive to be ever more conformed to Christ our Saviour. Conversion and holiness are also the privileged means by which we open our minds and hearts to the Lord’s will for the unity of his Church. As we give thanks for this meeting and for the fraternal affection which unites us, let us ask Saints Barnabas and Epiphanius, Saints Peter and Paul, and all God’s holy ones, to bless our communities, to preserve us in the faith of the Apostles, and to guide our steps along the way of unity, charity and peace.

[1] “Grace and peace to you in abundance” (1 Pet 1:2). With great joy I salute you who represent the Christian communities present in Cyprus. **(Continue next page)**

From a religious perspective, we are members of a single human family created by God and we are called to foster unity and to build a more just and fraternal world based on lasting values. In so far as we fulfil our duty, serve others and adhere to what is right, our minds become more open to deeper truths and our freedom grows strong in its allegiance to what is good. My predecessor Pope John Paul the Second once wrote that moral obligation should not be seen as a law imposing itself from without and demanding obedience, but rather as an expression of God's own wisdom to which human freedom readily submits (cf. *Veritatis Splendor*, 41). As human beings we find our ultimate fulfilment in reference to that Absolute Reality whose reflection is so often encountered in our conscience as a pressing invitation to serve truth, justice and love.

Your Beatitude,

Σε χαιρετώ με αδελφική αγάπη εν τω Αναστημένω Κυρίω. Σε ευχαριστώ για την θερμή σου υποδοχή. [1] I recall with gratitude your visit to Rome three years ago, and I rejoice that today we meet again in your beloved homeland. Through you, I greet the Holy Synod, and all the priests, deacons, monks, nuns and lay faithful of the Church of Cyprus.

Before all else, I wish to express my gratitude for the hospitality which the Church of Cyprus so generously offered to the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue on the occasion of its meeting last year in Paphos. I am likewise grateful for the support that the Church of Cyprus, through the clarity and openness of her contributions, has always given to the work of the dialogue. May the Holy Spirit guide and confirm this great ecclesial undertaking, which aims at restoring full and visible communion between the Churches of East and West, a communion to be lived in fidelity to the Gospel and the apostolic tradition, esteem for the legitimate traditions of East and West, and openness to the diversity of gifts by which the Spirit builds up the Church in unity, holiness and peace. This spirit of fraternity and communion also found expression in the generous contribution which Your Beatitude sent in the name of the Church of Cyprus for those suffering from last year's earthquake in I'Aquila, near Rome, whose needs are close to my heart. In that same spirit, I now join you in praying that all the inhabitants of Cyprus, with God's help, will find the wisdom and strength needed to work together for a just settlement of issues remaining to be resolved, to strive for peace and reconciliation, and to build for future generations a society distinguished by respect for the rights of all, including the inalienable rights to freedom of conscience and freedom of worship.

Cyprus is traditionally considered part of the Holy Land, and the situation of continuing conflict in the Middle East must be a source of concern to all Christ's followers. No one can remain indifferent to the need to support in every way possible the Christians of that troubled region, so that its ancient Churches can live in peace and flourish. The Christian communities of Cyprus can find a most fruitful area for ecumenical cooperation in praying and working together for peace, reconciliation and stability in the lands blessed by the earthly presence of the Prince of Peace.

With these sentiments, Your Beatitude, I thank you once more for your fraternal welcome, and I assure you of my prayers for you and for all the clergy and faithful of the Church of Cyprus.

Η χαρά και η ειρήνη του αναστημένου Χριστού ας είναι πάντοτε μαζί σου. [2]

[1] I greet you with fraternal affection in the Risen Lord and I thank you for your gracious welcome.

[2] May the joy of the Risen Christ be always with you!

Αγαπητοί εν Χριστώ αδελφοί και αγαπητές αδελφές, σήμερα είμαστε καλεσμένοι σαν ένα σωμα και μιά ψυχή να εξετάσουμε σε βάθος την κοινωνία μας με τον Κυριον και με τον πλησίον και να τον μαρτυρήσουμε μπροστά σε ολο τον κόσμο. [1]

We are called to overcome our differences, to bring peace and reconciliation where there is conflict, to offer the world a message of hope. We are called to reach out to those in need, generously sharing our earthly goods with those less fortunate than ourselves. And we are called to proclaim unceasingly the death and resurrection of the Lord, until he comes. Through him, with him and in him, in the unity that is the Holy Spirit's gift to the Church, let us give honour and glory to God our heavenly Father in the company of all the angels and saints who sing his praises for ever. Amen.

[1] Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today we are called, just as they were, to be of one heart and one soul, to deepen our communion with the Lord and with one another, and to bear witness to him before the world.

I also recall with gratitude my meetings with other Christian leaders, in particular with His Beatitude Chrysostomos the Second and the other representatives of the Church of Cyprus, whom I thank for their brotherly welcome. I hope that my visit here will be seen as another step along the path that was opened up before us by the embrace in Jerusalem of the late Patriarch Athenagoras and my venerable predecessor Pope Paul the Sixth. Their first prophetic steps together show us the road that we too must tread. We have a divine call to be brothers, walking side by side **(Continue next page)**

in the faith, humble before almighty God, and with unbreakable bonds of affection for one another. As I invite my fellow Christians to continue this journey, I would assure them that the Catholic Church, with the Lord's grace, will herself pursue the goal of perfect unity in charity through an ever deepening appreciation of what Catholics and Orthodox hold dearest.

Words of Cypriot Orthodox Archbishop to Pope

"It Is Here ... That the Christian Roots of Europe Took Seed"

PAPHOS, Cyprus, JUNE 4, 2010 (Zenit.org).- Here is the address delivered today by the Cypriot Orthodox Archbishop Chrysostomos II during an ecumenical celebration at the archeological area of the Church of Agia Kiriaki Chrysopolitiss.

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Your Holiness, Pope Benedict of old Rome,
Welcome to the Island of Saints and Martyrs!

Welcome to the first Church of the Nations, founded by the Apostles Barnabas, Paul and Mark!

Welcome to the Church of the Apostles, after the establishment of which the Holy Spirit led the Apostles to separate themselves from their brethren and sent them towards the Nations!

"So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews ... they had gone through the island to Paphos" (Acts 13:4-6).

In this very spot, your Holiness, stood the synagogue of the Jews and from this place St Barnabas and St Paul preached the word of God to the Jews.

"But the word of God is not chained" (2 Timothy 2:9). It could not have been possible for the Spirit of Love of the Incarnate, Crucified and Resurrected Lord to remain restricted among the Jews. Jesus Christ came to the world "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:15).

The commandment of the Holy Ghost was for them to preach to the Nations. Thus, when the Roman deputy, Sergius Paulus, "a prudent man" according to St. Luke, invited the Apostles "to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:7) they gladly went forth to the place where the

political administration of the island was based in order to preach the word of the Lord for the first time among the Gentiles also.

At this point, "Barnabas and Paul exchanged their roles. Here was a place not for the Cypriot, but the Roman citizen".

As of that moment Paul became the leader of the mission. He also changed his name. From this moment on he was no longer called Saul in the New Testament, but Paul!

It was in this town that the first miracle of the Apostles was performed, as recorded in the New Testament. It was here that the first European citizen was baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. It was here that the first official citadel of idolatry fell and in its place the glory of the Cross was raised in all its splendor, and would gradually spread to cover the whole of Europe and shape its historical future.

It is here, your Holiness, that the Christian roots of Europe took seed and from here its spiritual shoots first burst forth. The foundations of the edifice of Christian civilization in Europe were laid on this very spot where we now stand, deeply moved by the sense of history. It is for this reason that Cyprus is justly called "the Gate of Christianity in Europe".

Here in Paphos, after the wondrous events that took place, Paul became established as the Apostle to the Nations, and went on to sow the seeds of the bread of life in your own cathedra and throughout the whole of Europe.

Your Holiness,

Since 45 AD when the Apostles first set their foot upon this island until the present day, the Church of Cyprus has had a long and fruitful Christian course. Throughout its long progress it has endured numerous troubles and difficulties, lived through dark nights, experienced many conquests, gone 'through fire and water', but guided always by the Holy Spirit, not only did it survive, but it continues to give its Orthodox Christian Testimony, and to fulfill its God-given mission.

But, alas, since 1974, Cyprus and its Church have been experiencing the most difficult times in their history. Turkey, which attacked us barbarously and, with the power of its arms, occupied 37% of our territory, is
(Continue next page)

proceeding -- with the tolerance of the so-called 'civilized' world -- to implement its unholy plans, first to annex our occupied territories and then the whole of Cyprus.

In the case of our island, as it has done elsewhere, Turkey has implemented a plan of ethnic cleansing. It drove out the Orthodox Christians from their ancestral homes and brought -- and continues to bring -- hundreds of thousands of settlers from Anatolia, thus altering the demographic character of Cyprus. In addition, it has changed all the historical place names into Turkish ones.

Our cultural heritage has been plundered relentlessly and our Christian monuments are being destroyed or sold on the markets of illicit dealers in antiquities, in an attempt to rid the island of every last trace of all that is Greek or Christian.

We hope that in this terrible ordeal, which has caused so much agony to the Christian congregation of our Church since 1974, the Good and All-Merciful Lord will not turn His face from our suffering people, but will grant us Peace, Freedom, and Justice, thus granting to us the all-fulfilling love given by His presence in our hearts.

In this struggle of ours, Your Holiness, which the Cypriot people are waging with the guidance of their Leaders, we would greatly appreciate your active support. We look forward to your help in order to ensure protection and respect for our sacred monuments and our cultural heritage, in order that the diachronic values of our Christian spirit might prevail. These values are currently being brutally violated by Turkey -- a country desirous of joining the European Union.

Your Holiness,

In this joyful moment of your presence among us together with your retinue, we, the President of the Republic, the Government, the Holy Synod, the pious congregation of our Church, and I personally, would like once again to address to you a heartfelt welcome and wish you a pleasant stay.

+Chrysostomos Archbishop of Cyprus
Holy Archbishopric of Cyprus
4 June 2010

But Are We Christians?

Ecumenical Bedfellows of the Manhattan Declaration

According to the website of the British organization Ekklesia, which calls itself "the religion and society think-tank at the cutting edge of culture, spirituality, and politics," St. Matthew's in the City, an Anglican church in Auckland, commissioned a billboard depicting a glum-looking Joseph in bed with a disappointed Mary, over the legend, "Poor Joseph. God is a hard act to follow." The agency that designed it said it was supposed "to challenge stereo-types about the way that Jesus was conceived, and get people talking about the Christmas story." The church's priest, clearly pleased with this clever bit of prig-baiting, identified the defecation as an effect of "progressive Christianity . . . distinctive in that not only does it articulate a clear view, [but it] is also interested in engaging those who differ."

I was alerted to that little bijou while I was pondering the remarks of Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox who would not sign the Manhattan Declaration because it presumes co-belligerency based on a common profession of the gospel. The protesting writers did not believe members of communions other than their own could be considered Christian, properly speaking, so cooperation based on fellowship in the gospel was impossible. While agreeing with their principles, I question their judgment of fact, finding occasion to remember what certain of their own authorities, all themselves downwind of "progressive Christianity," have said about the ovinity of other folds' sheep.

First, the Roman Catholic scholar Louis Bouyer:

While acknowledging that this liberalism is rooted in the very origin of the Reformation, we would be making a serious mistake to see in it the true face of Protestantism. Wherever liberal Protestantism has gained the upper hand, "Protestantism is but an aggregate of different religious forms of free thought" [Monod]. . . . Protestantism, for its [devout and serious] members, means, not private judgment, but Biblical Christianity, incomplete or illogical as it may be. . . . Protestantism is Christian, not in its departure from the primitive and essential features of the Reformation, but in its adherence or return to them. (*The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism*, pp. 2,15.)

(Continue next page)

55 Maxims for Christian Living by Fr. Thomas Hopko

1. Be always with Christ.
2. Pray as you can, not as you want.
3. Have a keepable rule of prayer that you do by discipline.
4. Say the Lord's Prayer several times a day.
5. Have a short prayer that you constantly repeat when your mind is not occupied with other things.
6. Make some prostrations when you pray.
7. Eat good foods in moderation.
8. Keep the Church's fasting rules.
9. Spend some time in silence every day.
10. Do acts of mercy in secret.
11. Go to liturgical services regularly
12. Go to confession and communion regularly.
13. Do not engage intrusive thoughts and feelings. Cut them off at the start.
14. Reveal all your thoughts and feelings regularly to a trusted person.
15. Read the scriptures regularly.
16. Read good books a little at a time.
17. Cultivate communion with the saints.
18. Be an ordinary person.
19. Be polite with everyone.
20. Maintain cleanliness and order in your home.
21. Have a healthy, wholesome hobby.
22. Exercise regularly.
23. Live a day, and a part of a day, at a time.
24. Be totally honest, first of all, with yourself.
25. Be faithful in little things.
26. Do your work, and then forget it.
27. Do the most difficult and painful things first.
28. Face reality.
29. Be grateful in all things.
30. Be cheefer.
31. Be simple, hidden, quiet and small.
32. Never bring attention to yourself.
33. Listen when people talk to you.
34. Be awake and be attentive.
35. Think and talk about things no more than necessary.
36. When we speak, speak simply, clearly, firmly and directly.
37. Flee imagination, analysis, figuring things out.
38. Flee carnal, sexual things at their first appearance.
39. Don't complain, mumble, murmur or whine.
40. Don't compare yourself with anyone.
41. Don't seek or expect praise or pity from anyone.
42. We don't judge anyone for anything.
43. Don't try to convince anyone of anything.
44. Don't defend or justify yourself.
45. Be defined and bound by God alone.
46. Accept criticism gratefully but test it critically.
47. Give advice to others only when asked or obligated to do so.
48. Do nothing for anyone that they can and should do for themselves.
49. Have a daily schedule of activities, avoiding whim and caprice.
50. Be merciful with yourself and with others.
51. Have no expectations except to be fiercely tempted to your last breath.
52. Focus exclusively on God and light, not on sin and darkness.
53. Endure the trial of yourself and your own faults and sins peacefully, serenely, because you know that God's mercy is greater than your wretchedness.
54. When we fall, get up immediately and start over.
55. Get help when you need it, without fear and without shame.

Second, the Reformed theologian J. Gresham Machen:

We would not indeed obscure the difference which divides us from Rome. The gulf is indeed profound. But profound as it is, it seems almost trifling compared to the abyss which stands between us and many ministers of our own Church. The Church of Rome may represent a perversion of the Christian religion, but naturalistic liberalism is not Christianity at all. (*Christianity and Liberalism*, p. 35.)

Finally, the Orthodox monk Seraphim Rose:

We should view the non-Orthodox as people to whom Orthodoxy has not yet been revealed, as people who are potentially Orthodox (if only we ourselves would give them a better example). There is no reason why we cannot call them Christians and be on good terms with them, recognize that we have at least our faith in Christ in common, and live in peace especially with our own families. St. Innocent's attitude toward the Roman Catholics in California is a good example for us. A harsh, polemical attitude is called for only when the non-Orthodox are trying to take away our flocks or change our teachings. (Cited in Damascene Christensen, *Not of this World: The Life and Teachings of Fr. Seraphim Rose*, p. 758.)

So, Bouyer: Liberalism is the natural product of Protestantism, which has free thought at its root, but Protestantism conducted on the primitive principles of the Reformation is a Christian phenomenon. (He accurately anticipates the teaching of *Lumen Gentium* and *Dominus Iesus*: Protestant churches are, properly speaking, only ecclesial communities, so that one cannot say Protestants are, properly speaking, Christians. They can, however, be "honored with the name.") So also Machen: Roman Catholicism is a perversion of Christianity, but in some sense still Christian, while religious liberalism is not Christian at all. Rose: Non-Orthodox believers possess a defective form of the faith, but it is nevertheless recognizable as Christian, so we may rightly call them Christians.

All allow that the others may hold to the Christian faith, even if it is by the merest sliver. At places like *Touchstone*, contemplation of "progressive Christianity" makes the sliver look a bit more like a plank (at least on most days), or maybe even a shooting platform, brings out the ecumenist in us, and moves us to sign things like the Manhattan Declaration. — S. M. Hutchens, for the editors