

LIGHT OF THE EAST

"GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS."

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

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FROM THE EDITOR...

Dear Members and Friends,
Our first regular chapter meeting for 2015 will be **Tuesday, January 13, 7pm at Holy Trinity Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic Church, 526 West Rayen Avenue, Youngstown, 44502. Our speaker will be Rev. Father Lubomir Zhybak, Administrator of Holy Trinity. His topic will be "The Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Current Conflict in Ukraine."**

Father is a native of Ivano-Frankivsk (Ukraine). His education has included St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas Angelicum in Rome where he received a Sacred Theology Licentiate. Father Lubomir served the UGCC in various Patriarchal Curia offices including Cardinal Lubomyr Husar's personal secretary. Father is also currently administrator of St. Anne's in Austintown. In addition to his native Ukrainian Father is fluent in English, German, Italian, Polish and Russian and has a knowledge of French, Spanish, Latin and Greek. He is married to the former Nataliya Mytyuk.

Chapter dues 2015 paid

Demiduk, Fr. Conoboy, Fr. Rohan, Br. Calabro, Br. Scalise, Sleever, Tavolaro, Billcheck, Sarantopoulos, Limbert, Fr. Gage, Carchedi, Fr. Hilinski, Joan Binsley, Jenna Binsley, Fr. Schmidt, Chorbishop Kail, Msgr. Spinosa, Fr. Bleahu, Jim Dershaw, Esther Dershaw, Beri Berardi, Chris Berardi, Kolitsos, Basista, Jacquet, Borak.



WHO ARE WE?

The Society of St John Chrysostom promotes greater appreciation of the spiritual, theological and liturgical traditions of Eastern Christendom, works and prays for the unity of the Churches of East and West, and encourages support for the Eastern Churches :

- the Byzantine and

Oriental Catholic Churches

- the Orthodox Church
- the Oriental Orthodox Churches and
- the Church of the East.

In the United Kingdom and Europe the Society was founded in 1926

In 1998 the Society was also founded in the United States, where it runs the annual North American and international Orientale Lumen conferences

Following some exploratory and preparatory meetings in 1998 and early 1999, the first regular meeting of the Youngstown-Warren Chapter took place May 4, 1999.

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

PRAY FOR THE UNITY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCHES!

'Ecumenism of blood' should unite Christians, Pope says after meeting Orthodox Patriarch



Catholic World News - December 01, 2014

In an exchange with reporters on November 30, Pope Francis spoke optimistically about prospects for ecumenical progress with the Orthodox churches and said that he is prepared to meet with Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow whenever the Russian prelate is ready. In a question-and-answer session aboard his plane on the return flight after his visit to Turkey, where he had met with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, the Pope stressed the importance of “spiritual ecumenism” and the common witness of Christian martyrs. “There is the ecumenism of blood,” the Pope said. “When they kill Christians, bloods mix. Our martyrs are crying out: ‘We are one!’” That powerful witness should be the impetus to resolve theological disputes, the Pope said. But while he offered his support for ecumenical dialogue, he expressed some impatience with the process. “If we wait for theologians to reach an agreement, that day will never come!” he said. Nevertheless, Pope Francis observed that some theological disputes could be resolved. He said that the Orthodox churches already accept the notion of primacy, although they are not prepared to embrace the Catholic understanding

of that concept. Following a suggestion made by St. John Paul II, he said that a final resolution to the question of Petrine primacy may require a return to the role of the papacy in the first millennium of Christianity.

The Pope also observed that the Orthodox churches, like the Catholic Church, faces internal tensions, with some more conservative groups resisting the changes that might lead toward Christian unity. The antidotes to those tensions, he said, are “patience, meekness, and dialogue.”

Regarding the relationship between the Holy See and the Russian Orthodox Church, the Pope said that he was ready to travel to Moscow. At the moment, he said, Patriarch Kirill is preoccupied with the violence in Ukraine. But he revealed that he had told the Russian primate, “we can meet wherever you want; you call me and I’ll come.”

Questioned about Christian-Muslim tensions, Pope Francis said that Islamic leaders must condemn terrorism and religious extremism. Speaking more generally about the Middle East, the Pontiff said that the world now seems to be experiencing a third world war, although the fighting now is not concentrated in one time and place. He said that the war in Syria has been fueled by the arms traffic, and charged that there are always profiteers who exploit the opportunities created by war

LOCAL CHURCH

The Catholic Diocese of Youngstown assists Orthodox nuns.

Orthodox nuns from St. Elisabeth convent in Belarus were in the area to sell handcrafted religious items to help support their work of providing spiritual support and social help for the sick and suffering. Their ministry serves boarding homes for special needs children and mentally challenged adults, rehab centers and a tb clinic.

St. Elisabeth Convent is named for the martyr Grand Princess Elisabeth, and was founded in 1999 in the village of Novinki on the outskirts of Minsk in the Republic of Belarus. It originated from an Orthodox Sisterhood of the same name.

Married Catholic Priests Coming to a Parish Near You



REV. WISSAM AKIKI AND FAMILY.
(ORDAINED PRESBYTER IN FEB 2014)

from the blog: <http://prounione.wordpress.com/>

Pope Francis has moved to allow more married Catholic priests.

They are just not *Roman* Catholic priests.

This, according to a document of the Pontifical Congregation for Oriental Churches, leaked today by [Sandro Magister](#), the well-known Italian Vaticanist of *La Repubblica*.

Most people know that Catholic priests of the Latin Church (the Roman Catholic Church) must be celibate. The exceptions being, since the 1980's, former Lutheran or Anglican clergy who come into full communion, who may continue their presbyteral ministry while married.

Most Catholics are at least vaguely aware that this medieval discipline does not apply to most of the 22 Eastern Catholic Churches, who do in fact allow married men to become presbyters – it is only their bishops who are necessarily monastic, and therefore celibate. (Deacons are universally allowed to be either married or celibate).

Fewer people are aware of the [embarrassing history](#) that has restricted these churches from either ordaining married men “outside their traditional ritual territory” or, in some cases, even sending married priests to serve in these countries. Starting with migrations of

Ruthenians in 1880 to the U.S., the Latin bishops (almost entirely Irish) of the States were so scandalized by the idea of married presbyters that they convinced the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to restrict married clergy from following their flocks to the new world. By 1929-30, these limitations were repeated and even expanded to other “Latin territories”.

This move so effectively undercut the sacramental ministry and infrastructure of the Eastern Catholic Churches in the States, that about 200,000 Catholics and their married clergy left communion with Rome, and effectively populated the Orthodox Church of America and other Orthodox jurisdictions.



EASTERN CATHOLIC CLERGY MEETING,
1890.

This is one of many examples of a kind of aggressive Latinization – forcing Eastern Churches to take on Latin/Roman practices – that has occurred over the centuries. The whole idea that Eastern Churches could only follow their own practices within their “traditional territory” is dubious in any case – do we say the same for the Roman Catholics? Is celibacy of diocesan clergy – a particularity of being “Roman” not of being “Catholic” – limited only to the “traditional territory” of the western Roman empire? What sense does it make in an era when there are more Eastern Catholics outside “traditional territory” than within?

What it really shows is a flawed ecclesiology and a lack of due respect to the autonomy of the diverse practices and patrimony of ancient and apostolic churches in communion with Rome. How, our Orthodox sister churches would ask, is it possible to take Rome seriously on proposals for reunion when she treats (Continue next page)

Eastern *Catholic* Churches so inappropriately – flexing her muscles and forcing them to follow her whims (or those of too-easily-scandalized Irish-American bishops). Rome has to show that it remembers that unity does not mean uniformity.

After Vatican II, it was thought this would change. After all, the Eastern Churches were encouraged to return to their proper patrimony and cleanse themselves of any inappropriate Latin influences. Pope Paul VI took the proposal under advisement... and there it remained, sadly, until our own time. The Congregation for Oriental Churches proposed some change in 2008, but with the objection of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to reversing the ban, exceptions were allowed only on a case-by-case basis. You started to see priests ordained back in the “traditional territory” being allowed to serve in the west. Under these “exceptional” situations, it was just this year that the U.S. saw its [first married Maronite priest](#) ordained there.

In 2010 the Synod on the Middle East again raised the issue.

Now, finally, we have the restoration of at least this one right to rites.



CATHOLIC PATRIARCHS GATHER DURING THE SYNOD ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The Congregation for Oriental Churches is issuing a precept, “*Pontificia Praecepta de clero Uxorato Orientali*” – signed back in June and with papal approval– which allows the Eastern Churches to ordain married men wherever the

Church is found, and to bring in already married priests to serve as needed, throughout the world. [\[6/106 Acta Apostolica Sedes, 496-99\]](#)

The Eastern Churches find themselves in three jurisdictional situations, basically, which have different practical consequences:

- First, where there is a regular hierarchy, it is up to the competent ecclesiastical authority – the metropolitan, eparch, or exarch – to ordain according to the traditions of their churches, without restriction from the Latin church.
- Second, where there is an Ordinariate without a bishop or heirarch, such ordinations would be carried out by the ordinary, but while informing the Latin hierarchy. (there are less than a half-dozen countries where this is the case)
- Third, where there are groups of the faithful of an Eastern Church under the pastoral care of a Latin ordinary – such as the Italo-Albanians here in Italy – it continues to be a case-by-case basis.

Still, one more reform on the long list of “[no-brainers](#)” that could have been done ages ago without actually challenging either doctrine or even its articulation. It is simply the correction of an historical mistake that ought never have happened in the first place – and certainly ought not to have taken 135 years. It is this kind of thing, no matter how small, that demonstrates real “concrete progress” that the ecumenically minded – both “at home and abroad” are looking for.

Thomas Merton described his ecumenical vocation in these words:

"If I can unite in myself the thought and the devotion of Eastern and Western Christendom, the Greek and the Latin Fathers, the Russians with the Spanish mystics, I can prepare in myself the reunion of divided Christians. From that secret and unspoken unity in myself can eventually come a visible and manifest unity of all Christians. If we want to bring together what is divided, we cannot do so by imposing one division upon the other or absorbing one division into the other. But if we do this, the union is not Christian. It is political, and doomed to further conflict. We must contain all divided worlds in ourselves and transcend them in Christ."

Ruthenian Renaissance Ukraine's Best-Kept Spiritual Secret

by Victor Gaetan, Register

Correspondent Tuesday, Oct 14, 2014

UZHGOROD, Ukraine — There are communities in Christendom that disappear from sight but flower again, like perennials from spring ground when the weather gets warmer. God's truth never dies in these places, just hides to survive.

In the southwestern corner of Ukraine, there's a wedge of beautiful, mountainous territory the size of Connecticut known as Transcarpathia, or Subcarpathian Rus.

Officially, it is Ukraine's Zakarpattia Oblast, geographically cut off from the rest of the country by the Carpathian Mountains.

A marvelous Catholic community is centered here, in Uzhhorod, the regional capital and site of a historic Church milestone: In 1646, the Union of Uzhhorod brought most of the region's Orthodox Church into communion with the Holy See, much as the Union of Brest did, further north, in 1596.

A Hive of Activity

The truest test of Church dynamism might be

Місто Ужгород. Хрестовоздвиженський кафедральний собор
15.08.2007 © Влад Беспалов



called the "Friday in August" challenge: What's going on in a parish community on a random hot summer afternoon at the end of a work week? Holy Cross Cathedral in Uzhhorod, locally known as the "Ruthenian Church," passes with flying colors.

Art students from Lviv sit high on wooden scaffolding, restoring paintings on walls by the altar, while faithful in the pews intone the Rosary.

A busy religious sister from the Order of St. Basil the Great fixes fresh flowers while directing workmen ferrying construction materials.

A helpful security guard offers to show foreign visitors the crypt where Blessed Theodore Romzha's remains were found. Blessed Theodore was a young Ruthenian bishop murdered by the communists. Beatified in 2001 by Pope St. John Paul II, he is now entombed in a side chapel.

Everyone apologizes that the bishop isn't available. Bishop Milan Sasik, who has led the Eparchy (Diocese) of Mukachevo since 2010, is a notoriously energetic leader.

But he's away, leading 400 pilgrims in a seven-bus caravan to see holy sites in Austria.

This dynamic community was thought to be on the proverbial "dustbin of history," but has surged back since the communist empire collapsed.

Faith held them together, supporting a transnational ethnic identity whose very existence was denied in some quarters: The Rusyn people, more commonly known as Ruthenians in the United States, have survived against significant odds.

History

When the Union of Uzhhorod was signed, the region was dominated by the Rusyns, a Slavic people living, typically, in small, rural villages on the slopes of the Carpathian Mountains. For centuries, Transcarpathia formed part of the Kingdom of Hungary.

Twentieth-century turmoil upended the Rusyn people and these lands: After World War I, which Hungary lost, Rusyn-Americans advocated for Ruthenian independence. President Woodrow(Continue next page)

Wilson said national autonomy within a new state, Czechoslovakia, was the only option. As consolation, in 1920, a Carpathian-born Pittsburgh lawyer, Gregory Zhatkovich, was appointed governor of the province of Carpathian Ruthenia, controlled by Czechoslovakia and removed from Hungary. In 1945, the Soviet army swept in and occupied it, transferring the region to the Ukraine Soviet Socialist Republic. The Rusyn community wound up divided between numerous countries: Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Serbia and Romania. Many emigrated to the United States from 1880 to 1924, bringing their Church, which they renamed the Byzantine Catholic Church of America in 1956, to avoid confusion inspired by the term “Greek Catholic,” used in the homeland to refer to the Byzantine tradition, not the country of Greece. Even in the United States, the Greek-Catholic community suffered: Mainstream Catholics, unnerved by the presence of married priests (a tradition inherited from the Church’s Orthodox roots, approved by the Vatican in the 17th-century agreement) and a foreign-looking liturgy, pressured the Holy See to limit Ruthenian clergy in America to celibate and widowed priests. In anger, many parishes realigned themselves with the Orthodox. Back in Eastern Europe, a brutal Soviet campaign to eradicate the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church forced the faithful underground: The leadership was persecuted, churches closed, and property was transferred to the Russian Orthodox Church. Even after Ukraine became independent in 1991, bias against Ruthenians persisted. Ukraine, for example, still won’t acknowledge Rusyns as a national minority; thus, they aren’t counted separately in census data. The Greek Catholic Church estimates there are 350,000 in the Zakarpattia oblast. In contrast, in neighboring Slovakia, signs in towns on the Slovak-Ukraine border are written in Slovakian and Rusyn, which uses the Cyrillic alphabet. But attempts old and new to repress this community have largely failed, as a result of

identity with a Church that unifies people across national borders. For 200 years, Greek-Catholic priests have been the leading “national awakeners” and proponents of a unique Rusyn national identity. The Greek Catholic Church in Transcarpathia was preserved by four essential assets: Grandparents and parents who transmitted the culture at home, martyrs, capable leadership that inspired a crop of new priestly recruits and external supporters contributing financial and moral resources.

Ruthenian Cathedral

A standing-room-only Divine Liturgy in a Byzantine rite is a feast for the senses. At Holy Cross Cathedral, a sparkling chandelier sways above the congregation, illuminating a towering *iconostasis*, from which golden light cascades. Much of the liturgy is sung; young and



old seem to know the words. As a young priest wearing a glimmering blue-and-gold *phelonion* leads the congregation with the help of a deacon, a steady queue of believers line up to venerate an icon prominently displayed toward the front of the nave. At the very end, the 800 or so congregants sing *Bozhe Velykyi*, a Ukrainian independence anthem sung with emotion. Father Nazar Vynnytskyi, the 26-year-old celebrant, explained later to the Register that it’s a “prayer for Ukraine” sung every Sunday at the end of Mass since independence in 1991. According to the young priest, about 3,000 parishioners are at church on Sundays, attending one of six liturgies celebrated in Ukrainian, Hungarian and Slavonic.(Continue next page)

Weekdays, four Masses are offered each day. The diocese represents about 25% of the region's people.

Culture Preserved at Home

Father Vynnytskyi learned to speak Rusyn "with my wife and parents, at home. Everything about our culture was preserved in our homes, passed from our grandparents."

Father Vynnytskyi was ordained three years ago, in an Uzhhorod seminary that opened in 1995. "We have 70 students now. Five years ago, we had 120. In the Pittsburgh seminary, maybe six seminarians are being prepared," said the priest. Pittsburgh is the location of the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy, which traces its origin to 1924, when the Holy See created two Greek-Catholic exarchates (missionary dioceses) in the U.S. — one for Ukrainians and the other for people of Carpatho-Rusyn, Hungarian, Slovak and Croatian descent. The Byzantine Catholic Seminary, established in 1950, is also in Pittsburgh.

According to Father Vynnytskyi, the two main issues facing the Ruthenian community relate to property not popularity: "We have had a big problem with the Orthodox Church, which still occupies our churches, especially in villages. It is impossible to get them back."

The second problem has been the lengthy process of restoring the Baroque cathedral — built originally by a Jesuit community in 1646 — and the big complex around it, including offices and the bishop's residence.

During the Soviet period, the cathedral was used as an Orthodox church, and the bishop's residence was a state university library. Some books still remain in the residence, recovered from the state only in 2009.

Local Martyr

Scores of parishioners pray before a glass casket built into an altar, the place where Blessed Theodore Romzha has been laid to rest, delicately concealed under a burgundy stole. At age 33, he was ordained a bishop, as the Soviet army was approaching the Carpathian Mountains. A month later, the entire region was occupied.

According to Vatican documentation, because the bishop refused to cooperate with Soviet

authorities to liquidate the Greek Catholic Church and renounce Rome, they "decided to destroy him."

Since the Soviets had confiscated his car, the bishop used a horse and buggy to visit villages and offer the Divine Liturgy. Returning from one of those trips, in November 1947, a military vehicle ran into his carriage.

The Vatican report continues, "When the soldiers saw that he didn't die in the accident, they beat him and his companions into unconsciousness. [W]hen Bishop Theodore was beginning to recover, he was poisoned in the Mukachevo hospital by workers cooperating with the security services."

The bishop was buried in Holy Cross Cathedral's crypt. The tombs were desecrated when the Orthodox had to give the cathedral back to the Greek Catholics, and his body was lost.

Based on the vestments he wore, his body was identified in 1998 and sent to Budapest, Hungary, for an autopsy that concluded he had been poisoned to death.

In June 2001, Pope St. John Paul II presided over an outdoor Byzantine-rite Divine Liturgy in Lviv, Ukraine, to beatify 28 martyrs, including Bishop Romzha.

American Scholar

An American authority on the Ruthenian community is Byzantine-Catholic Father Christopher Zugger, whose book *Finding a Hidden Church* traces the suppression, then revival, of the Transcarpathian faith community. He spoke to the Register by phone from his home in New Mexico.

"The fact that this Church exists is really a miracle," he said. "It was looked down on by so many, as a peasant Church, and was persecuted."

According to Father Zugger, there are about 1 million Byzantine-Ruthenian Catholics in the world and approximately 300,000 in the United States.

"Our Church, known as Greek Catholic in Europe and Byzantine Catholic here, has no single, worldwide hierarchical structure. We aren't a patriarchal Church. We feel unified to each other as sons and daughters of the 1646 union, so we have more(Continue next page)

of a self-unity. It is pretty impressive. Whenever there is a major event, there are usually bishops and priests from several different countries,” he said.

“We report to the Oriental Congregation in the Holy See, led by Cardinal [Leonardo] Sandri,” he added.

Father Zugger has visited Transcarpathia several times, witnessing — and documenting — the revival of the Church.

“Bishop Milan is really dedicated to the eparchy and the revival of the Church. Americans who go over there call him the ‘Energizer Bunny.’” Even after Ukraine achieved independence, explained Father Zugger, the Greek-Catholic faithful faced challenges.

For example, for a few years, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church thought the Ruthenian Church should become part of its hierarchical structure.

“Of course, our clergy and people didn’t want that. It was settled in a big meeting in Rome, in 1993,” Father Zugger said.

“The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, certainly under Major Archbishop Sviatoslav, doesn’t seem to be pushing that anymore.” Father Zugger confirmed that the Byzantine Catholic Church has been financially supportive of the Transcarpathian Church’s needs — from donations to supporting seminarians and new church construction to renovation of the bishop’s residence — through organizations such as the Mission Society of the Mother of God of Boronyavo.

“A lot of seminarians come from poor families, and many came to faith alone — their parents were atheists, although they might have had grandparents who were faithful. But a large number of those men had mystical experiences of God, and they must be educated,” explained the priest.

Father Zugger says that Ruthenian-Greek Catholics worry about the current Ukrainian crisis. Transcarpathia has a large Hungarian community with a “strong desire for an autonomous district within the oblast,” but the Church is not involved in that.

He added, “The situation is very sensitive, but the Ruthenian-Greek Catholic community is solid. After all, it is through God’s help that it is still there.”

Catholic-Orthodox Pastoral Consultation in England

Monday, 13 October 2014 from:

<http://www.orientalelumen.org.uk/>

After almost two years of careful preparation, the first meeting of a new pastoral consultation between Orthodox and Catholics in England took place in Oxford in February 2014. It is jointly sponsored by the [Fellowship of St Alban & St Sergius](#) and the [Society of St John Chrysostom](#), the sister societies for East-West unity founded within a year of each other in the 1920s. The initiative has the blessing of the chairman of the Department for Dialogue and Unity of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England & Wales, Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham, and of Archbishop Gregorios of the Greek Orthodox archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, and Archbishop Elisey of the Russian Orthodox diocese of Sourozh. Consultation will involve common pastoral concerns, and promote mutual understanding, contact and exchange, including theological dialogue that can contribute to greater unity among the two Churches in the setting of contemporary society in the UK and also disseminate in this country the work of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church.

At the first meeting, the Consultation looked at the place and education of Orthodox children in Roman Catholic schools, as well as present developments in the international dialogue. The second meeting in London on 29 September 2014 reviewed these discussions, and also began to examine questions of marriage and family life with a view to the forthcoming Synod of Bishops of the Catholic Church.

The lifetime of the Consultation is five years in the first instance and will conclude with a final report. Reports and statements may also be issued along the way.

At the end of their September meeting, the Consultation issued a [message of solidarity and support for the Christians and their Churches in Iraq and Syria](#) at the present moment of their suffering, dispersal and witness for the sake of faithfulness to Christ.(Continue next page)

The members are:

For the Fellowship of St Alban & St Sergius
Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia (Orthodox
Co-Chairman and Patron of the Fellowship)
Archpriest Stephen Platt (Orthodox Co-
Secretary and General Secretary of the
Fellowship)

Protopresbyter Ian Graham, rector of the Parish
of the Holy Trinity, Oxford
Dr Julia Konstantinovskiy, University of Oxford
(Sister Seraphima, Monastery of St John Baptist,
Tolleshunt Knights)
Dr Brandon Gallaher (Lecturer in Theology,
University of Exeter)

For the Society of St John Chrysostom
Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham
(Catholic Co-Chairman and Patron of the
Society)
Father Mark Woodruff (Catholic Co-Secretary
and Vice-Chairman of the Society)
Bishop Robert Byrne CO (Auxiliary Bishop of
Birmingham)
Sister Benedict Gaughan OSB (Convenor of the
East-West Monastic Meetings at St Mildred's
Priory, Minster Abbey) Anthony O'Mahony
(Director of the Centre for Eastern
Christianity, Heythrop College University of
London)
Archpriest Stephen Platt Fr Mark Woodruff
Co-Secretaries

Russian Orthodox spokesman comments on Pope's wish for meeting with patriarch

[Catholic World News](#) - December 03, 2014

Responding to Pope Francis's stated desire to meet with Patriarch Kirill whenever the Russian prelate is ready, a spokesman for the Moscow patriarchate criticized the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the largest of the Eastern Catholic churches in full communion with the Holy See.

Referring to the 2013-14 Ukrainian crisis, which has witnessed the ouster of a pro-Russian president and subsequent pro-Russian unrest in eastern Ukraine and Russian military

intervention, Deacon Alexander Volkov told the Interfax news agency that "we have to acknowledge once again that the line pursued by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is a significant factor thwarting normal development of the relations between the churches."

"We would like to hope that the voice of our church will be heard and the involvement of the Greek Catholics in the political conflict in Ukraine will decrease, thereby creating favorable conditions for maintaining a proper dialogue between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, including on the subject of a possible meeting between the Patriarch and the Pope," he added.

Dr. Meyendorff Meets with St. Irenaeus Orthodox-Catholic Working Group

<http://www.svots.edu/>

On November 5-9, 2014, Professor Paul Meyendorff traveled to Malta to participate in the 11th meeting of the St. Irenaeus Orthodox-Catholic Working Group. The group, an informal gathering of Orthodox and Catholic theologians, has been in existence since 2004, at a time when the official international Orthodox-Catholic dialogue was at a standstill. The group has met annually since, alternating between Orthodox and Catholic venues. "Because this is an unofficial dialogue, participants are able to share their views more freely, unhindered by various ecclesial and political factors that at times derail the official dialogue," notes Dr. Meyendorff.

At this meeting, members discussed issues of primacy and synodality as reflected both during the first millennium and in the recent statements by the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. "Given current difficulties in the official dialogue, it is vitally important to continue the conversation, even if only informally," concludes Prof. Meyendorff. In planning for the future, members of the Working Group agreed that the questions of primacy need to be addressed both separately, by each Church, but also together, so as to develop a church structure that will be acceptable to both sides and will meet the needs of a world that needs a united Christian witness.

ECUMENISM AND RUSSIAN STATE POWER

BY GEORGE WEIGEL, 11-12-14,
<http://www.firstthings.com/>

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Russian Orthodox Church's department of external relations and a frequent visitor to the West, is a young man of parts: a widely-published author, a composer, a gifted linguist. He can be charming and witty, as I discovered during two hours of conversation at the Library of Congress in 2011; and in the intervening years he's positioned himself and his Church as defenders of traditional Christian values in a world threatened by Western decadence. There's a serious problem, however: Metropolitan Hilarion does not always speak the truth.

In the year since the Maidan "revolution of dignity" broke out in Ukraine, Hilarion has gone out of his way to attack the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine, charging that this largest of the Eastern Catholic Churches has been a partisan political actor; that its priests have fomented violence; and that Ukrainian Greek Catholics have been working to keep Ukrainian Orthodoxy divided. These are calumnies, for the charges are demonstrably false: The Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine has been a voice for national moral renewal and reconciliation; its priests have risked their lives to aid men and women of all confessions; and the Greek Catholic leadership has worked within the country's established ecumenical structures to forge a united religious voice for a Ukraine that is free and prosperous, rid of the corruptions that have bedeviled it for decades. In our Washington conversation, Metropolitan Hilarion would not even concede that the forced liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1946 was an act of thuggery perpetrated by Stalin's secret police. Rather, he defended the bogus "L'viv Sobor [Council]" in the name of Orthodox prerogatives he evidently believes are threatened by Eastern-Rite Churches in full communion with Rome. That visceral disdain for the very existence of the

Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine has also been on public display this past year.

So what happens? Hilarion is invited to the recent Synod in Rome, where he used part of his time addressing the representatives of global Catholicism to repeat his lies about the activity of the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine and his contempt for that martyr-Church.

This is unacceptable. For the past year, Metropolitan Hilarion and his master, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, have functioned as agents of Russian state power in matters having to do with Ukraine. Which is to say, they have functioned as agents of Vladimir Putin. I take it as axiomatic that serious ecumenical dialogue is impossible when the dialogue-partner operates under ambiguous or false pretenses and uses the dialogue to advance political interests. Yet that is the charade that is allowed to continue when Hilarion is welcomed in Rome. Indeed, the charade is reinforced.

Major-Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has suggested that Hilarion's aggressive and offensive intervention at the Synod damaged the Russian Orthodox Church. That may be. But inviting Hilarion to participate in the Synod, after a year of lies about the courageous efforts of the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine to support a moral revolution in that hard-pressed land, was a self-inflicted wound on the part of the Holy See. It is now past time to reexamine the default positions in the Vatican Secretariat of State, and at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity that permitted Hilarion to lie in the Synod hall and to call into question the integrity of the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine as an ecclesial community.

No "dialogue" is worth the appeasement of aggression abetted by falsehood. Nothing is accomplished in terms of moderating Russian Orthodoxy's historic deference to Russian state power (be that tsarist power, communist power, or the "managed democracy" of Mr. Putin) by giving Hilarion a platform like the Synod. And despite the fantasies(Continue next page)

of some Western pro-life and pro-family activists, there is nothing to be gained for those great causes in tandem with the current leadership of Russia, or of Russian Orthodoxy. Stemming and then reversing the tide of Western decadence cannot be done by compromises with the truth.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

WHY VLADIMIR PUTIN AND THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE WILL DESTROY RUSSIAN CHRISTIANITY

12/11/2014 · by [Lateran649](#)

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In a recent article published on the website of [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty](#), we were given a glimpse at Russia's political landscape under Putin, and told in conclusion that, when Putin ultimately goes the way of all flesh, he will leave behind him an inevitable legacy of upheaval and national strife. The article is convincing; indeed, in light of Putin's devastating political machinations over the years, it points to the only possible outcome. In spite of this, many otherwise rational Westerners – especially those of a conservative bent – remain willing to give the Russian president the benefit of the doubt, or even laud

him for his apparently clear moral perspective, his plain speech, and his support for traditional Russian religion as embodied in the Orthodox Church of Patriarch Kirill and Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev. This clear moral perspective and support for the Church, however, must be generously defined if it is to accommodate the Western admirer's enthusiasm, as it has no problem at all eliminating those who would criticise it, and running roughshod over the very liberties that make it possible for comfortable Westerners to admire Putin's construct in the first place.

Worse than Putin from one perspective, however, is the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) itself which, at least since the rise of the current Patriarch and probably since the fall of the Soviet Union, has colluded every step of the way with the state. I say 'worse' because, while collusion may appear to be a judicious path to those that think it could entail not just approval for the Church, but active encouragement, and so represent a worthy exchange, it necessarily requires compromises that can only serve to undermine the Church's integrity. And compromise is precisely what the MP has done.

So, for example, reports have circulated for years about Patriarch Kirill's personal wealth, as well as that of some of his priests, and it is an open question as to where it all came from. This in itself could be seen as scandalous, but the denials of his office that such signs of wealth were ever in existence and the manipulation of facts in order to conceal the truth brings shame upon the Patriarchate and all who conspire with it. There is more, though. Indeed, a single article like this is not enough to chronicle the manifold abuses of history, contempt for whole peoples and nations, and betrayals of fellow Christians not of the Russian Fold, that have been perpetrated by a few members of the Moscow Patriarchate in concert – consciously or unconsciously – with the regime of Vladimir Putin.

What is frightening in the midst of all this, however, is not that the lie represented by this two-headed hydra will (Continue next page)

prevail. After all, countries such as Canada and Australia, Poland and the Baltic States, have put paid to the political nonsense being spouted by the Kremlin, while the words of religious leaders such as the bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church have drawn attention to the questionable behaviour of the leadership of the MP. Rather, what is actually frightening is the fact that one day Putin will die, and as the political edifice he has built crumbles (as surely it must), the whole Orthodox Church in Russia will suffer for the actions of certain figures within the Patriarchate.

That this should be the case seems so manifestly obvious that it should not have needed writing. Yet, it is astounding just how taken certain quarters remain with representatives of the regime, such as the Metropolitan Archbishop of Volokolamsk. It is as if his (as yet un-critiqued) musical compositions and overestimated theological assessments have earned him an unassailable place in the heart of every Western convert to Orthodoxy. And that is to say nothing of traditionally-minded Roman Catholics who have been seduced by his apparently cosmopolitan air and the fact that he seems to stand so confidently as a representative of that ancient faith so appealingly rendered by the likes of Dostoyevsky. Yet this failure on the part of Westerners to engage more seriously with the actual content of his testimony in recent years might itself be counted as a type of collusion. After all, he continues belligerently and maliciously to denounce Ukrainian Greek Catholics at every opportunity; and while slights against 'Uniates' may not be so problematic to some Orthodox, [the aggressive statement of the MP on the nature of primacy in the Church](#) released in December 2013 remains the basis for [the Metropolitan's public comments on the issue](#), and should raise alarm bells among all the Orthodox for its not-too-subtle move toward asserting Moscow's natural place as the successor to Constantinople and so Orthodoxy's new primatial abode.

Moscow's imperialism, whether secular or ecclesiastical, should alarm us all. It is aggressively antagonistic; it shows a profound disrespect for peoples and for history; it is

violent and vulgar. Most importantly in this context, though, it also poses great danger to the integrity of the Church. Who, after all, is going to be able to trust her when the current relationship between Church and State comes to an end? Who, when the Russian people experience their own political and intellectual awakening, will see in Orthodoxy a prophetic witness to truth as opposed to a political beast? What, when the current joint political and ecclesiastical regime lose the battle to hold back modern decadence and moral decline (even if the struggle to do so is born of sincere intention, which is in itself doubtful), will the people turn to for moral direction? Surely, the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, in its current incarnation, is too compromised.

In a hundred years, Putin's hold on the reins of power will not seem to have been either so impressive or long. He will, however, have left a legacy in need of emergency treatment, for it is impossible that such a figure should disappear and for anything but a vacuum to follow. This means in turn that, however expedient his patronage may seem at this juncture, it is inevitably toxic. And no matter how much a power like the Moscow Patriarchate might perceive itself to be acting autonomously, it most certainly is not. Every confrontational or contentious act the Patriarchate undertakes advances the cause of Putin and his quest for empire. Yet it does so at its own peril, for there is one despot in Russia already, and he does not share power.

PRAYER OF SOUFANIEH



**Unity of Hearts! Unity of Christians!
Unity of the Feast of Easter!**

BRING A FRIEND TO OUR MEETING!

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2014

The Traditional Mass and the liturgy of the Christian East



If the reformers in the West can't cope with Rood Screens (this one is by Pugin), how can they profess respect for the Eastern Iconostasis?

The objections they make to the former apply *a fortiori* to the latter.

Today I publish a Position Paper from the FIUV on the EF and the Eastern Churches:
<http://www.lmschairman.org/2014/11/the-traditional-mass-and-liturgy-of.html>

Consistently since the time of the great Pope Leo XIII, and of course frequently, if not completely consistently, before that, the Holy See has presented itself as a special friend of the Christians of the East, and of their liturgical traditions. Faced with a complex set of groups, some in communion with the Holy See and some not, with distinct liturgical, spiritual, and artistic traditions, Popes, and the Second Vatican Council, laboured to emphasise that they valued these traditions, and that no compromise of them would ever be necessary for dissident groups

which wished to be reconciled to the Holy See. Non-Latin Rite Catholics could help with this project by their own fidelity to their traditions, in many cases these being exactly the same traditions as those followed by churches not in communion. Were the Greek or Russian Catholics, for example, to 'Latinise' themselves, change their liturgical practices, their church architecture, their artistic traditions, their spirituality, to conform more closely with what is typical of the Latin Rite, this would be most regrettable, because it would create the impression that once you come under the authority of the Pope you will sooner or later bid farewell to the traditions of the Fathers.

In practice this policy has faced many difficulties. The apparent prestige of the Latin Rite, the Roman education of leaders of the Eastern Churches in communion with Rome and their exposure to Western ideas, the activities of Latin Rite religious orders, missionaries, and lay people in countries of Eastern heritage, and now the diaspora of Eastern Catholics among countries of Latin heritage, make the policy of absolute adherence to Eastern traditions difficult to maintain. The tendency towards Latinisation, at any rate, is something which those Churches have constantly to resist, and they are urged to resist it at the highest levels.

The policy of resistance to Latinisation was, to repeat, in place before the Second Vatican Council, it is affirmed powerfully in the Council's documents, and it remains the policy up to the present. And this is where it becomes interesting. Because any temptations towards Latinisation since the Council have naturally been towards the reformed liturgy. Latinisation today pulls the liturgy of Eastern Catholics away, not only from those Eastern Traditions which differ from Western Traditions, but away from aspects of the Eastern Tradition which are actually paralleled in the West: away, that is, from the *shared tradition of East and West*.

By the same token, the recognition of the value of Eastern traditions, affirmed notably by Pope St John Paul II, and in documents emanating from the Congregation (Continue next page)

for Oriental Churches, are not focused exclusively on Eastern traditions insofar as they differ from the West, but include traditions common to both East and West.

Thus we find the Congregation defending celebration *ad orientem*, singing by a choir while the priests says (different) prayers, and the distribution of Holy Communion exclusively by clerics. More profoundly, we find Pope St John Paul II giving a defence of a form of liturgical participation in which the word-by-word comprehension aimed at by the Novus Ordo is quite obviously impossible: where rites are carried on behind an icon-screen, for example, invisible, inaudible, and in any case in a language with the Faithful may not understand. He explains:

The lengthy duration of the celebrations, the repeated invocations, everything expresses gradual identification with the mystery celebrated with one's whole person.

That is to say, that this is a form of participation which is not merely, or even primarily, of the **intellect**. As a matter of fact this is perfectly consistent with what St John Paul II said about the ancient Latin tradition, when he wrote about Latin, for example, that '**through its dignified character[it] elicited a profound sense of the Eucharistic Mystery.**' (Apostolic Letter *Dominicae Cena*, 1980)

It is not consistent, however, with the common perception of 'why the Mass had to change': what you will be told by almost any well-meaning Latin priest or theologian. What we find in the Magisterium's defence of the Eastern traditions, is often a defence, by implication, of the Western traditions, and a critique of the Western liturgical reform, as it is normally explained and as it was actually carried out.

Closer to Communion

November 24, 2014 Issue

<http://americamagazine.org/>

John R. Quinn

What the patriarchates mean for today's church



A BROTHER'S EMBRACE. Pope Francis greets Metropolitan John of Pergamon, head of the Orthodox delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, at the Vatican on June 29. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

The fact that before the year A.D. 325, synods were held everywhere in the church demonstrates that the bishops realized, as the author Msgr. Michael Magee put it, that “no bishop was entitled to exercise his office in isolation from the common good of all the Churches, or from his brothers in the episcopacy.” Bishops understood that their judgments and acts were not the private acts of an autocrat. They were the judgments and acts of a bishop in communion. The monarchical episcopate—in the sense of a single bishop in each church—had become universal during the second century. And with this development, synods provided a counterweight to excesses in the exercise of episcopal authority by an individual bishop in his local church.

The Council of Nicaea, however, shows that there was still a further development underway. A structure that would include more than one metropolitan province was taking shape. And so we read in Canon 6 of Nicaea I, “The ancient customs of Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis shall be maintained, according to which the bishop of Alexandria has authority over all these places, since a similar custom exists with reference to the bishop of Rome. Similarly in Antioch and the other provinces the prerogatives of the churches are to be preserved.” Two things should be noted, however: The Council of Nicaea does not use the term *patriarch*, which was only to develop later. And the council did not create the patriarchal structure. Rather, it refers to this arrangement of several provinces under the authority of a *protos* as already an “ancient” custom. (Continue next page)

The position of most scholars is that Canon 6 is talking about what later was called a patriarchate and not just a large metropolitan province. The patriarchate consisted of several provinces with their metropolitan bishops. It was, therefore, the prerogative of the bishop of Alexandria to ordain the metropolitans of Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis. In this prerogative of ordaining the metropolitans lay the basis for the title patriarch: the bishop of Alexandria was the father of the other fathers, the first father.

The Council of Nicaea mentions four sees as having a certain pre-eminence: Rome, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, which in the canon is called Aelia. Alexandria is the only one mentioned that has a specific territory identified. Canon 7 makes it clear that the bishop of Jerusalem did not have “the dignity proper to the metropolitan,” but it is not clear that the authority of the bishops of Rome and Antioch extended at that time to a whole civil diocese. Nevertheless, the reality later known as the patriarchal office was making its appearance in the case of Alexandria. In the case of Rome, the bishop of Rome did exercise authority in central and southern Italy and the Italian islands. This was comparable to the authority exercised by the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch.

At this point (the early fourth century), what role did the *protos*, called the archbishop, play in these groupings comprising several provinces? He presided at the regional synods and ordained all the metropolitans. But what principle lay behind this structural development?

It was not a drive toward conformity within civil territorial boundaries. We know this because Alexandria, which had authority over several metropolitan provinces, belonged to the civil jurisdiction of Antioch. What lay behind this whole development was a movement toward ever-increasing unity, unifying the churches around a center. And the center was determined not so much by its civil prominence as by the fact that the center had been the origin of the other churches that shared its theology, spirituality and liturgy. Unity and communion lay behind the development of these larger groupings.

Canon 6 of the Council of Nicaea, then, is a recapitulation and a description of church order. The council did not create or originate that order. It affirms that what would later be called the “patriarchal” ordering of the church was an “ancient” tradition in regard to Alexandria. Msgr. Michael Magee maintains that it was the liturgical and spiritual traditions that gave rise to the patriarchates and that these, therefore, belong to the very definition of the patriarchate. However, other scholars see the origins of the patriarchates also in the recognition that, in larger territories, there had to be a *protos* (a

head or first bishop) to serve the needs of order and communion among the churches. In fact, the first prerogative of the *protos* mentioned in the Council of Nicaea is the administrative act of confirming the election of bishops in the province.

The patriarchal ordering of the church has endured in the Eastern Orthodox churches and in six of the Eastern Catholic churches, namely the Coptic, Melkite, Syrian, Maronite, Armenian and Chaldean churches. In the Latin Catholic Church, the only patriarchate has been Rome. There were, in the first-millennium West, great metropolitan churches, like Carthage in Africa or Arles in France. But the gathering of several metropolitan churches into a larger structure, a patriarchate, did not develop in the Western church. The only see functioning as a patriarchate was Rome. For many centuries, the pope had the title “Patriarch of the West.” But Pope Benedict suppressed that title in 2006. While it is not entirely clear why he did this, we do know that both Joseph Ratzinger, as a theology professor, and Yves Congar, O.P., had raised serious questions about whether the pope could function in any really effective way as patriarch of the West in the modern world.

Exercising Papal Authority

As we have seen, the Council of Nicaea affirmed that the bishop of Rome did have authority extending beyond the limits of his province; and over the course of the first millennium, this authority of the pope came to be recognized as extending over the whole western half of the Roman Empire. But in the first millennium, there was a distinct difference between the way the popes exercised authority in the western half of the Empire and the way they exercised it in the eastern half. For instance, the popes appointed the bishops of Thessalonica as their vicars in the easternmost part of the western empire but never attempted anything like that in the eastern patriarchates. This fact is one of the reasons for describing the exercise of authority by the bishop of Rome as patriarchal in the western half of the empire, as distinguished from his exercise of truly papal authority in matters concerning the whole church, like essential questions of doctrine.

But after the separation between the East and the West—usually placed around the year 1054—the popes exercised authority only in the West. Consequently, there was no longer any basis for a distinction between the patriarchal and the papal exercise of authority. The result was that the exercise of papal authority in the whole Latin Catholic Church had the characteristics of patriarchal administration; in the second millennium, this developed into a centralized papal monarchy. (Continue next page)

With the discovery of the New World in the 15th century and the missionary expansion of the Latin Catholic Church in the 16th century and later, the patriarchal kind of papal government was gradually extended over the worldwide Catholic Church, bringing with it uniformity of liturgical language and practice, the choice and appointment of all bishops by the pope and the appointment of papal delegates in all countries where the Catholic Church had been planted. So in practice there was no longer any distinction between the patriarchal and the papal functions of the bishops of Rome.

While the separation between the East and the West, and the missionary expansion beyond Europe, increasingly blurred the distinction between patriarchal and papal roles of the pope, another development was taking place that served to underline the difference between these roles of the bishop of Rome. Since the 12th century, when a group of Eastern Christians called Maronites formally reconfirmed their communion with Rome, there have been communities of Eastern Catholics who have continued to use their traditional liturgy and language and have continued to have a certain autonomy in the election of their patriarchs.

The number and variety of such relatively autonomous churches in communion with the See of Peter increased as a result of the efforts of Latin Catholic missionaries to bring groups of Eastern Orthodox Christians into communion with Rome. Others, like the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, on their own initiative entered into visible communion with Rome. The presence of all these Eastern churches in the Catholic Church shows clearly that there is indeed a difference between the pope's exercise of patriarchal authority over the Latin Church, where he appoints all the bishops and exercises other administrative authority, and his exercise of papal authority over the Eastern Catholic churches in communion with Rome. This distinction has been made even more explicit by the promulgation of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, in which the relative autonomy of these churches is upheld.

It is not surprising, then, that Father Ratzinger would write, "Unity of faith is the pope's function; this does not prohibit independent administrative agencies like the ancient patriarchates." And he went on to say: "The extreme centralization of the Catholic Church is due not simply to the Petrine office but to its being confused with the patriarchal function which the bishop of Rome gradually assumed over the whole of Latin Christianity. Uniformity of church law and liturgy and the appointment of bishops by Rome arose from a close union of these two offices. In the future they should be more clearly distinguished." It is evident, then, that both Father Congar and Father

Ratzinger included the administrative dimension in their understanding of the patriarchal office. What is to be said, then, regarding their observations about the need for new patriarchates on the basis of the fact that the present Latin Catholic Church, which comprises such a large portion of the globe, is increasingly unmanageable as a single patriarchal division? Both these theologians saw the weaknesses of what Father Ratzinger called "extreme centralization" when such a vast and diverse territory is involved.

It is an administrative problem because it is self-evident that a central authority cannot, in fact, adequately know and understand such vast and diverse cultures and territories. Cardinal Stephen Fumio Hamao of Japan, who had studied in Rome and later (after being bishop of Yokohama) served for some years in the Roman Curia, pointed out in an interview that "most people in the Roman Curia are European- and American-minded. They cannot understand the mentality of East Asia and the Far East." Having had the experience of teaching Latin to the crown prince of Japan, the cardinal said, speaking of Rome's encouraging of the use of Latin, "It is impossible for Asians.... That is European-centered. It is too much!"

There is no principle or doctrine of Catholic faith, nor any canonical provision that prevents the establishment of new patriarchal structures in the Latin Catholic Church along the lines of the Eastern Catholic patriarchal churches. Creation of such structures could be a way of solving "extreme centralization." This would not only promote the inculturation of the Gospel but would, as well, open up a more effective way for evangelization. The bishops of Japan, for instance, have said for many decades that their inability to attract many converts is due to the fact that they are made to present Christ with a Western face.

The Second Vatican Council explicitly noted the link between the modern episcopal conference and the ancient patriarchates. How such structures might function in practice and what safeguards would be necessary to ensure Catholic unity not only with Rome but among such different countries and cultures themselves could fruitfully be the subject of a carefully prepared deliberative papal synod. This might include not only an examination of the history of patriarchal structures in the church, their strengths and weaknesses, but would necessarily envision how bishops would need to be prepared for such new structures in order to function effectively in them.

Most Rev. John R. Quinn, now retired, was archbishop of Oklahoma City and San Francisco. He served as president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.