

The Gradual Transmission of Ideas

Katholikos means "universal" in Greek. From the Greek καθολικός, romanized as *katholikos*, the word literally means "universal." The term reflects an idea of universality that later became associated with the Roman Catholic Church.

Catholicism was birthed from a set of religious, philosophical, and political teachings within the Roman Empire with strong Greek influences and heritage. Many Greeks and Romans converted to what we can understand as the religious, philosophical, and political teachings of this empire. The development of Catholicism took place over centuries as Christianity became "mainstream" throughout the Roman world.

Prior to Christianization and the formation of the Catholic councils, the historical timeline moved through several major arcs. These arcs include Ancient Egypt, Classical Greece, the Roman Republic, and then Early Christianity. Each period contributed ideas, philosophies, and traditions that influenced those that followed.

Because the Union of Saints accepts a fuller view of nature, science, history, heritage, and ancestry, we trace our understanding of spirituality through the many cultures that helped build our current world. We choose to ascribe to a certain wavelength of ideas and philosophies from many cultures rather than limiting ourselves to only one historical tradition. We believe that understanding these historical arcs helps us better understand ourselves and our shared human story.

While we "throw off the chains" of slavery and suppression, we do not "throw off" the ideas and philosophies of cultures that have been erased, suppressed, or rendered nonessential by later speakers, systems, or institutions. We believe there is wisdom to be found throughout history, even where cultures have experienced conquest, displacement, or loss. For us, remembering these traditions is part of honoring both the human journey and our ancestors.

For example, the Union of Saints relates to both the ancestry of Roman Catholics and the Greeks, and we recognize that belief systems have been important within both traditions. Similarly, we believe there is much to learn from many other ancient cultures as well. Wisdom can be found within many cultures and civilizations.

We are truly interpath for this reason, and we feel much more open and free because of it. Human beings today are not born of one bloodline but of many, and within each branch of our family lineages we can discover rich cultures with much beauty to learn from and appreciate. We believe these multicultural inheritances help form a more complete understanding of ourselves.

We also recognize that cultural and religious divisions remain very real obstacles today. Sadly, much of history, heritage, and culture has been suppressed, especially as it regards religion and the preservation of ancestral traditions. Understanding this reality encourages US to approach history with humility, curiosity, and respect.

We are very appreciative of American liberties and freedoms for this reason. We give ode to our American ancestors who fought very hard to ensure that we have the liberty to worship freely and to explore our beliefs according to our own conscience. Their sacrifices continue to provide opportunities for people of many backgrounds to live together in peace.

As a veteran and military-friendly chaplaincy, we especially honor our great military for giving us the opportunity to explore many faiths and remain open to different cultures during our early explorations of America as young men and women in service. Military service often brings people together from many backgrounds, traditions, and beliefs. We are grateful for those experiences and the friendships they fostered.

We truly live in a beautiful multicultural society. As the Union of Saints was founded by a Native Acadian, with a very silenced history, there have been many missing puzzle pieces that we have worked tirelessly to put back together throughout our journey. This search has led us toward a greater appreciation of our heritage and the traditions that our ancestors passed down to US.

Much of this heritage was erased and remains suppressed today, including the history of the Acadian diaspora and, due in large part to this suffering, the now comparatively small Acadian population. We believe these histories deserve greater recognition and preservation as they help preserve the cultural memory of a resilient Native people. Honoring this legacy strengthens our understanding of ancestry, culture, identity, and the enduring contributions of the Acadian people.

For this reason, we believe it is important to honor Acadian heritage and preserve its memory for future generations. We also believe the lessons from this journey are far too meaningful and spiritually profound to ignore. Through remembrance, we seek to recover the past but also to better understand ourselves, our families, and the many paths of our shared spiritual story.

In honoring the legacy of the Acadians, of Native America, and in tracing the journey back through Ancient Mesopotamia, Greece and Ancient Egypt, we seek a greater understanding of humanity's shared story. We reflect upon the grace of God, of Spirit, of both the Mother and the Father, as revealed through history, culture, and ancestry.

Their story through time, and their continuing presence through future generations, becomes our bridge to self, to the earth, to the human spirit, to God, to the Goddess, and to Heaven. This is the Santa journey. It is a journey of remembrance, reconciliation, and discovery through history, ancestry, and faith. It is a journey towards union, that seeks individual conscience, while honoring the many paths that have evolved the beautiful human family we share our earth timeline with today.

~Union of Saints, Cowdrey