

LIGHT OF THE EAST

"GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS."

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

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1 JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 2011

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FROM THE EDITOR...

Dear Members and Friends, the first regular chapter meeting of 2011 will be Tuesday January 11, 7 P.M. at St. Maron Church, 1555 S. Meridian Road Youngstown, Ohio 44511. Our speaker will be the pastor, Chorbishop Michael Kail. His topic will be "A Review of Who the Maronites Are and of Current Maronite Liturgical Praxis."



War and Peace: An Orthodox- Catholic Conversation

March 25-26, 2011

LMU's Huffington Ecumenical Institute is delighted to announce its 2011 Huffington Ecumenical Symposium. With the support of the Luce Foundation, and in

collaboration with Fordham University's Orthodox Christian Studies Program, this two-day symposium will build on the success of the 2010 Women and Church, East and West symposium. Catholic and Orthodox speakers will discuss our shared heritage of attitudes and experiences of peace and war, and discuss the contemporary world situation in the light of those experiences. In the conviction that united voices are more likely to help build peace than disunited ones, *War and Peace* seeks to help the Orthodox and Catholic traditions work together to be peace-makers for the sake of all the world's inhabitants.

Check back often for details of the Symposium. To be placed on the conference mailing list, please contact Katherine Lash at klash@lmu.edu or at 310.338.1917. http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/ecumenical/Future_Events/War_and_Peace.htm

WHAT ARE THE EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES?

If you asked someone, "how many churches make up the Catholic Church?", more than likely you would get a blank stare or a confused look. The answer, however, is 23: there are actually almost two dozen particular churches that are united in the Catholic Church.

Twenty-two of those twenty-three churches are Eastern churches; in other words, they have their origin in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire. Even though they make up almost all the churches of the Catholic Church, their members are only 2% of the total membership of the Church: Latin, or Roman, Catholics make up the other 98%.



**PRAY FOR THE UNITY OF THE APOSTOLIC
CHURCHES!**

Christian unity must be based on shared apostolic faith, pope says

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- To promote Christian unity, Catholics and Orthodox must hold firm to the faith handed down by the apostles and witness together to the Gospel as the good news humanity is seeking, Pope Benedict XVI told Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

"By generously offering their lives in sacrifice for the Lord and for their brethren, the apostles proved the credibility of the good news that they proclaimed to the ends of the known world," the pope said in a written message delivered Nov. 30 to the patriarch in Istanbul. The pope's message was carried to Patriarch Bartholomew by Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, who led a Vatican delegation to a celebration of the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, the patriarchate's patron saint. The pope said marking an apostle's feast day should be a "strong summons" to all Christians "to renew their fidelity to apostolic teaching," a topic that has become increasingly important in ecumenical dialogue as disagreements increase over what are essential points of faith and what modern adaptations are permissible or even necessary.

In the modern world, the pope wrote, it is especially important for Christians to work more closely in sharing the Gospel and in presenting Christ "as the answer to the deepest questions and spiritual aspirations of the men and women of our day."

While Cardinal Koch joined the ecumenical patriarch's celebration in Istanbul, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state, celebrated the feast with Catholics and Orthodox in the Orthodox cathedral of Astana, Kazakhstan.

Cardinal Bertone gave the homily and then presented Kazakhstan's Christian leaders -- Catholic Archbishop Tomasz Peta and Orthodox Metropolitan Alexander -- with fragments of the relics of St. Andrew.

The cardinal said the church leaders had asked Pope Benedict for a part of the relics, which are housed in Amalfi, Italy, to "underline our common veneration of the apostles."

Cardinal Bertone was in Kazakhstan to represent the Vatican at a meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

ORTHODOX LEADER STRESSES UNITY IN TRUTH

Encourages Dialogue on the Dividing Issues

ISTANBUL, Turkey, DEC. 2, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople is underlining the value of unity with the Catholic Church, but is pointing out that truth must be its foundation.

"Unity in love is of no benefit if it is not as the same



time unity in faith and truth," the patriarch said Tuesday during the celebrations for the feast of St. Andrew, patron of that patriarchate.

The Orthodox leader gave an address to the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Kurt Koch, who took part, in representation of Benedict XVI at the head of a Holy See delegation, in the divine liturgy and other celebrations in Istanbul.

Quoting St. Paul, the patriarch pointed out that "'being sincere in love,' according to the Apostle's exhortation, we maintain this theological dialogue by the unanimous decision of all the autocephalous Orthodox Churches to examine, in love and sincerity, both the theological questions that unite as well as those that divide, 'until we all arrive at the unity of faith.'"

Bartholomew I explained that the ecumenical patriarchate follows "with growing interest the development of this theological dialogue."

"We pray for its success," he said, "especially during this present phase in which controversial topics are being debated that in the past were the cause of acute conflict between our Churches."

In this regard, the patriarch referred to the recent plenary session of the International Mixed Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church held in Vienna in September under the joint presidency of Cardinal Koch and Metropolitan Ioannis Zizioulas of Pergamum. The meeting participants discussed the role of the Bishop of Rome in the communion of the Church in the first millennium. **(Continue next page)**

Bartholomew I pointed out that this meeting "revealed the existence of difficulties but also the willingness and decision of the members of the commission to overcome those difficulties with love as well as with fidelity to the doctrine and to the life of the Church transmitted to us since the first millennium to advance in its resolution."

The Lord's prayer

The patriarch told Cardinal Koch, "We yearn for your cooperation with our ecumenical patriarchate for the future improvement of the fraternal relations between our Churches for the benefit of promoting unity, for which our Lord prayed to his Father immediately before his passion."

Bartholomew I noted the 50th anniversary that the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity is celebrating this year.

In this regard, he affirmed, "Our thought goes to the deceased Pope John XXIII, who founded this council in 1960 originally in the form of a secretariat."

The patriarch also expressed appreciation for the convocation of the Second Vatican Council and asserted that the "audacious historic decisions" of this Pontiff "prepared the way for the participation of the Roman Catholic Church in the effort for the reconciliation of Christian unity."

"Among the fruits of this historic initiative of the deceased Pope, the development of fraternal relations between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches occupies a preeminent place," he said.

The patriarch expressed his gratitude to the ecclesiastical leaders who worked in that task, concretely Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II, the ecumenical patriarchs Athenagoras and Dimitrios, the presidents of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Augustine Bea, Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, Cardinal Edward Cassidy and Cardinal Walter Kasper, and their collaborators, among them Bishop Pierre Duprey and Monsignor Eleuterio Fortino.

Through their work, the patriarch affirmed, "relations between our Churches were cultivated even more through mutual respect and fraternal love."

Brothers

Bartholomew I affirmed that the patron saints of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the brothers Peter and Andrew "not only were related by blood but especially by the infinitely more significant bond with Christ and communion in Christ."

"They kept this bond of communion in Christ irreproachable during a whole millennium, so that the Churches that derived from the preaching and martyrdom of those Apostles, called the Churches of Rome and Constantinople, are obliged once again to recover this bond of communion to show themselves worthy successors of its deposit," he said.

Quoting Saint John's Gospel, the patriarch added that "the Church of Christ shows herself 'apostolic' transmitting Christ from generation to generation and from place to place 'so that the world may believe' in him as Redeemer and Savior."

In this connection he said that "also today, faced with many dead ends, the world seeks redemption and salvation."

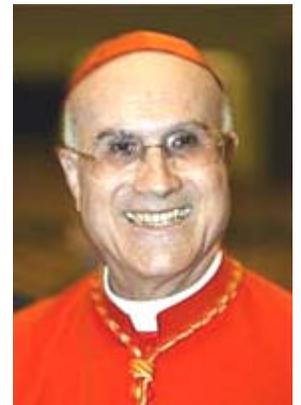
Bartholomew I warned that "those who preach Christ separated from one another cannot convince the world that 'we have found the Messiah' -- which means Christ."

He stressed that "faithful to the authentic and authoritative message of the Apostles, we are called to transmit this message to the contemporary world 'with one voice and one heart,' aware of the concerns and embracing the problems of the world."

Cardinal Koch delivered in return a message from Benedict XVI to Bartholomew I, in which the Pope also affirmed the need to continue progressing toward full communion between Catholics and Orthodox.

POPE FULFILLS REQUEST FROM ORTHODOX

Secretary of State Brings St. Andrew Relics to Kazakhstan
ASTANA, Kazakhstan,
NOV. 30, 2010 (Zenit.org).-
Benedict XVI's secretary of state is in Kazakhstan delivering relics of the Apostle St. Andrew to both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches there.



Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone is on a six-day trip to the nation, coinciding with the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) summit. The journey also coincides with today's feast of St. Andrew, making the delivery of the relics particularly timely.

In a homily at the Orthodox Cathedral of the Assumption in Astana, the cardinal spoke of Kazakhstan as "a country in which there are ample possibilities for a peaceful and profitable religious coexistence. In this context, for us Christians the duty of reciprocal love is all the more urgent: We are called, in fact, to give witness to all, with words and works, that God is Love. [...] Propitious occasions are not lacking, dear friends, of mutual support and of deepening of friendship." The Catholic Church is a tiny minority in Kazakhstan, which is some 47% Muslim and 44% Russian Orthodox. Cardinal Bertone noted how he was fulfilling a "lofty task" given him by Benedict XVI "of handing you a fragment of the **(Continue next page)**

distinguished relics of the Apostle St. Andrew, which are venerated in Italy, in the city of Amalfi."

He explained: "This assignment, which I am honored to effect in the hands of His Eminence Metropolitan Alexander, comes in response to the devout request that his predecessor, Metropolitan Mefodji, and Archbishop Tomasz Peta, Catholic Metropolitan, jointly addressed to Pope Benedict XVI. The Pontiff, gladly desiring to meet the ardent request, decided to send to the two respective Churches two fragments of the precious relics. This choice has a profound significance, in as much as it underlines the common veneration of the apostles."

First called

The Holy Father's secretary of state went on to reflect about the figure of St. Andrew, "the first of the apostles to be called to follow Jesus."

"Precisely on the basis of this fact," he recalled, "the Byzantine liturgy honors him with the name of Protoklitos, which means precisely, the first called." Cardinal Bertone noted how the apostles spread the "'good news' of salvation" and that faith comes from hearing the "Word of Christ, which still today the Church spreads to the ends of the earth."

Referring to the Pope's new postsynodal apostolic exhortation on sacred Scripture, the cardinal continued: "This Word is the indispensable food of the soul. It is said in the book of the prophet Amos that God will put hunger in the world, not hunger for bread, but to hear his word. This is a healthy hunger, because it makes us seek constantly and receive the Word of God, knowing that it must nourish us for the whole of life."

"Nothing in life can have consistency, nothing can really satisfy us if it is not nourished, penetrated, illumined, guided by the Word of the Lord. Moreover, an ever more profound commitment of radical adherence to this Word, together with the support of the Holy Spirit, constitute the strength to realize the aspiration of every Christian community and of every individual faithful to unity."

Forward in hope

Cardinal Bertone further reflected on an icon donated in 1964 to Pope Paul VI by Patriarch Athenagoras I, in which "the two Holy Apostles, Peter the Coryphaeus and Andrew the Protoklitos, embrace, in an eloquent language of love, beneath the glorious Christ."

"Andrew," he said, "was the first to follow the Lord, Peter was called to confirm his brothers in the faith."

Their embrace under the gaze of Christ is an invitation to continue the path undertaken, toward that goal of unity that we intend to reach together. Nothing must discourage us, but we must go forward with hope, supported by the intercession of the Apostles Peter and Andrew, as well as by the maternal protection of Mary Most Holy, Mother of Christ and our Mother.

"Let us ask God with particular intensity for the precious

gift of unity among all Christians, making our own the invocation that Jesus raised to the Father for his disciples."

Arab Christian theologian was celebrated

Dec. 4



Nov 28, 2010 / 07:01 am (CNA/EWTN News).- Catholics will remember and celebrate the life of the great Arab Church Father St. John of Damascus on Dec. 4.

Eastern Orthodox Christians and Eastern Catholics, whose tradition has been particularly shaped by his insights, will celebrate the saint's feast on the same day as the Roman Catholic Church.

Among Eastern Christians, St. John (676-749) is best known for his defense of Christian sacred art, particularly in the form of icons. While the churches of Rome and Constantinople were still united during St. John's life, the Byzantine Emperor Leo III broke radically from the ancient tradition of the church, charging that the veneration of Christian icons was a form of idolatry.

John had grown up under Muslim rule in Damascus, as the child of strongly Christian parents. His excellent education – particularly in theology – prepared him well to defend the tradition of sacred iconography, against the heresy of the "iconoclasts," so-called because they would enter churches and destroy the images therein.

During the 720s, the upstart theologian began publicly opposing the emperor's command against sacred images in a series of writings. The heart of his argument was twofold: first, that Christians did not actually worship images, rather through them, they worshiped God, and honored the memory of the saints. Second, he asserted that by taking an incarnate physical form, Christ had given warrant to the Church's depiction of him in images.

By 730, the young public official's persistent defense of Christian artwork had made him a permanent enemy of the emperor, who had a letter forged in John's name offering to betray the Muslim government of Damascus. The ruling caliph of the city, taken in by the forgery, is said to have cut off John's hand. The saint's sole surviving biography states that the Virgin Mary acted to restore it miraculously. John eventually managed to convince the Muslim ruler of his innocence, (Continue next page)

before making the decision to become a monk and later a priest.

Although a number of imperially-convened synods condemned John's advocacy of Christian iconography, the Roman church always regarded his position as a defense of apostolic tradition. Years after the priest and monk died, the Seventh Ecumenical Council vindicated his orthodoxy, and ensured the permanent place of holy images in both Eastern and Western Christian piety.

St. John of Damascus' other notable achievements include the "Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith," a work in which he systematized the earlier Greek Fathers' thinking about theological truths in light of philosophy. The work exerted a profound influence on St. Thomas Aquinas and subsequent scholastic theologians. Centuries later, St. John's sermons on the Virgin Mary's bodily assumption into heaven were cited in Pope Pius XII's dogmatic definition on the subject.

The saint also contributed as an author and editor, to some of the liturgical hymns and poetry that Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholics still use in their celebrations of the liturgy.

ARE WE GETTING ANYWHERE WITH ECUMENISM?

Council President Gives a Report of the "Harvest" (excerpt from longer article)

ROME, NOV. 23, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity just marked its 50th birthday. The council's president saw this as an opportune moment to look at what progress has been made in five decades of dialogue and prayer. Cardinal Kurt Koch presented a report last week at the council's plenary assembly



called "Harvesting the Fruits."

The first fruit, he said, is within the Church itself. Ecumenism "is no longer a foreign reality" in the life of parishes and dioceses, the cardinal affirmed. "This 'ecumenism of life' is of fundamental importance, as without it, all the theological efforts directed to reaching a lasting agreement on basic issues of faith between the different churches would be in vain."

Cardinal Koch admitted, however, that although the Catholic Church is irreversibly committed to the search for unity, in some respects the problem is still the same

as it was at "the point of departure," at the Second Vatican Council.

In this regard, he spoke of the crux of the issue being ecclesiology -- the concept of the nature of the Church. Intimately linked

Cardinal Koch noted how ecumenism and ecclesiology are intimately connected: "Ecumenism was an important theme of the renewal of the Catholic Church herself and of her self-understanding," he said.

He pointed to one of the key issues of the council: the relationship between the universal Church and the local Churches.

But in the realm of ecumenism, the prelate explained, the plural "churches" refers not to local Churches, but to the ecclesial communities not in communion with the Catholic Church.

The ecumenical problem "consists in pointing out how the Catholic Church can and must conduct herself in face of this plural 'churches,' which exist outside of her," he said. This issue arises both in the dialogue with the Orthodox Churches as well as, though in a different way, in the dialogue with the communities of the Reformation.

Orthodox

In regard to the Orthodox, Cardinal Koch explained: "The definition that is most adapted to Orthodox ecclesiology is 'Eucharistic ecclesiology,' a concept developed above all by exiled Russian theologians in Paris after World War I, in clear opposition to the centralism of the papacy of the Roman Catholic Church."

This concept "stresses that the Church of Jesus Christ is present and realized in each particular Church gathered around her bishop, in which the Eucharist is celebrated," he said.

Hence, the cardinal continued, for the Orthodox, with the exception of an ecumenical council "there can be no other visible principle of unity of the universal Church, to which are attributed juridical powers, such as those the Catholic Church recognizes in the Petrine ministry."

According to Catholic ecclesiology, however, the Church is fully present in the concrete Eucharistic communities, but one Eucharistic community alone "is not the Church in her fullness," he explained. "Because of this, the unity between each Eucharistic community united in turn with her own bishop and with the Bishop of Rome is not an external ingredient to Eucharistic ecclesiology, but its essential condition."

The heart of the ecumenical problem between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church lies in the fact that "an ecclesiology linked to the national culture and a Catholic ecclesiology oriented to the concept of universality find themselves one before the other, up to (Continue next page)

now, in disagreement," Cardinal Koch stated. Obstacle or opportunity?

Cardinal Koch noted that Pope Paul VI saw this issue as the "greatest obstacle" for reaching full communion with the Orthodox. However, the prelate said, Benedict XVI has also detected in this issue an opportunity for union.

According to the thought of the present Pope, he said, "without primacy, the Catholic Church would also have disintegrated a long time ago in national and sui iuris Churches, which would have confused and complicated the ecumenical landscape."

The council president affirmed that ecumenical dialogue between Catholic and Orthodox has given "encouraging steps," even if more work remains to be done.

Moscow Patriarchate, Vatican wage common fight against secular liberalism - Patriarch Kirill

Moscow, November 19, Interfax -Despite a difficult relationship between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches, they have been effectively cooperating along many avenues, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia told students and diplomats at the Russian Foreign Ministry Diplomatic Academy in Moscow.



"Together with the Roman Catholic Church we have been defending the traditional Christian concept of family and human values from aggressive secular liberalism. Our Churches are waging a common fight against medico-biological experiments incompatible with respect for human dignity," His Holiness said. Cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church has become possible thanks to Pope Benedict XVI and is proceeding simultaneously along several avenues. "Starting from 1980, we have been conducting a theological dialogue in the course of which and together with other Orthodox churches we were discussing problems that separate us such as the role of the Roman bishop, the Unia issue and others," the Patriarch said.

This has not been an easy dialogue as it is "impossible to find quick solutions to problems that have separated the Christian East and West for a whole millennium".

Nevertheless, "thorough theological analysis of all that has happened is being carried out, in particular, our understanding of history because many differences stem from the way we understand it", Patriarch Kirill said.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed concern over trends in some Protestant communities towards liberalizing theology and Christian morals. Thus, some Protestant communes have sanctioned mono-sex marriages and the ordaining of homosexuals.

At the same time, he pointed out that in the majority of Churches in the CIS and Eastern Europe - the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Churches - adhere to the traditional understanding of Christian values. For example, Protestants in Russia and the Baltic countries are closer to Orthodoxy than to their Western fellow Christians because "they are not striving to liberalize their doctrine", the Patriarch said.

Patriarch's meeting with Pope getting nearer - Metropolitan Hilarion

Moscow, November 26, Interfax - The meeting between the Moscow Patriarch and the Pope is getting nearer each day, the Russian Orthodox Church said.

"Each day brings us closer to this meeting between the Pope and Patriarch," head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, told journalists in Moscow.

"Right now we are not prepared to make known the date, nor are we engaged in any concrete preparations for the meeting, but we are certainly getting closer to it. It is a calendar and astronomical fact," he said.

The work carried out by the Russian Church with the Catholic Church is aimed "improving the general climate and achieving a higher level of mutual understanding," he added.

Serbian Orthodox saint was born in Indiana

November 10, 2010

<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=8230>

The Serbian Orthodox community in Gary, Indiana, is planning a service in honor of Bishop Varnava Nastic (1914-64), the first US-born saint of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Bishop Nastic's family moved to Yugoslavia in 1923. Consecrated a bishop in 1947, the prelate was imprisoned by the nation's Communist regime and may have died by poisoning.

Ecumenism is not compromise, Pope says

Pope Benedict XVI underlined the importance of ecumenical work, yet cautioned that ecumenism cannot be seen as a political effort, in a November 18 address to members of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. The Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, founded by Pope John XXIII in 1960, is marking its 50th anniversary. Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury, and Orthodox Metropolitan John Zizioulas of Pergamon, a top ecumenical representative for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, were in Rome this week to join in the anniversary celebrations.

The establishment of this Pontifical Council—originally known as the Secretariat for Christian Unity—was “a milestone on the ecumenical journey of the Catholic Church,” Pope Benedict said, and the group’s work has been vital to “overcoming the sediments of historical prejudice.”

Reflecting on the state of ecumenism today, the Holy Father said that there is a widespread belief that progress has stalled, and thus an “urgent need to revive ecumenical interest and give a fresh incisiveness to dialogue.”

For the Catholic Church, the Pontiff continued, the top priority in ecumenical work is dialogue with the “Orthodox churches and the ancient Eastern churches, with which bonds of the closest intimacy exist.” He reminded his audience that in talks with the Orthodox world, “we have reached a crucial point of confrontation and reflection: the role of the Bishop of Rome in the communion of the Church.”

Speaking more generally about the ecumenical process, the Holy Father warned that it is not “a commitment that falls into what could be called political categories, in which negotiating ability or greater capacity to reach compromise come into play.” Ecumenical talks should seek for the truth, he said, and cannot be satisfied with mediated solutions to controversial problems.

At the same time, the Pope continued, unity in prayer is always appropriate, and prayer will be an indispensable part of every successful ecumenical endeavor. He reminded the members of the Pontifical Council that “we do not know the time that the unity of all Christ's disciples will be achieved, and we cannot know it, because we do not 'make' unity, God 'makes' it.”

Therefore all Christians should join in asking God for that precious gift, the Pope concluded.

The Koulla!



From

<http://stnoufer.wordpress.com/2010/11/10/the-koulla/>

The basic habit of a Coptic monk is made up of a leather belt worn under a long, black gown, a black skull cap and a black hood. When a monk is also a priest and is taking a liturgical service he changes into similar garments, but in white.

The hood worn by Coptic monks is called a koulla (Coptic), but it is now commonly referred to as qalansuwa (Arabic).

There are various ideas and traditions within the Coptic Church about where the idea for the hood comes from. One thought places the origins of the hood back to the garments of late antiquity in Egypt. In the early centuries of the first millennium AD it was not uncommon for children’s tunics to have a hood. The tradition says that the monks took the idea of the hood as a symbol of (childish) innocence. Some tunics at this time also had deep splits at the sides, which are said to have developed into the monastic scapular (a length of cloth suspended both front and back from the shoulders of the wearer), which is worn by monks and priests in both Eastern and Western Christian Churches. In the Eastern Churches, the hood was detached from the scapular.

Another story relates how St Anthony gave Coptic monks their distinctive black hoods. According to this tradition an angel asked St Anthony to wear the hood, shaped like a baby’s bonnet, to remind him to be simple and pure like a child. The devil, however, tried to pull the head covering off. St Anthony caught it, ripping it down the middle. Today the head covering is stitched down the centre where the material was torn in two, symbolizing the conflict between good and bad, the devil and God, which still continues in the world.

Another symbolic meaning that has been given to the hood, is based on the texts read during the ritual when a novice becomes a professional monk. The Hood is said to represent the Helmet of Salvation from the Spiritual Armour of St. Paul: **(Continue next page)**

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:14-18).

These hoods are decorated with twelve small crosses placed in two groups of six, and one single cross. The grouped crosses represent the twelve disciples and reminding monks to follow their teachings. On the back of the hood is a single cross that symbolises Christ.

Again it is said to be symbolically placed to remind the monks that they must leave everything earthly behind and only look to God.

A monk receives his hood during the rites involved with his first degree of profession (mikroskema) and he should never take it off.

The present model of hood was re-introduced in 1971 by Pope Shenouda III, after it had fallen into disuse for some two to three centuries. It was based on the model worn by Syrian Orthodox monks. There is no reliable information about the exact model before the 18th century.

Coptic nuns also wear a similar hood. These hoods are not normally seen as they are hidden by the nun's veil. The history of the nun's version is not known, but it is likely that it was only introduced for nuns in 1971.

Church restitution: Orthodox send threatening response to Mgr. Pezzi

Nina Achmatova

The Catholic archbishop criticized the handing over of a former Catholic church to the Orthodox diocese of Kaliningrad. The response of the Orthodox: statements that could undermine our relationship.

Moscow (AsiaNews) -

The Orthodox Diocese of Kaliningrad responds to the Archbishop of Mother of God in Moscow, Mgr. Paolo Pezzi, who had objected to the [bill](#) for the restitution of religious property nationalized by the state. According to the draft, which could be approved by November, the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Kaliningrad would be given the former Catholic church of the Holy Family.

Denouncing the law as unjust drawn up without consulting the religious organizations other than the Patriarchate of Moscow, Mgr. Pezzi had noted that for



more than 20 years the Catholic community of Kaliningrad has been calling on the authorities to return confiscated property, without being heard.

"It seems very strange that Archbishop Pezzi should publicly accuse the Orthodox faithful of unreliability without trying to negotiate and discuss the situation - the diocese of Kaliningrad made known in a statement - such statements can actually harm cooperation and relations between our churches and perhaps not only in the region".

Archbishop Pezzi had also drawn attention to historical facts: Kaliningrad became part of the Soviet Union after the Second World War and it is hard to find Orthodox churches in its territory before that time. There were only Lutheran and Catholic.

"This emphasis - continues the note from the Orthodox diocese - surprises us. We must remember that the ethnic and religious composition of the region has changed greatly over the past 60 years. Today most of the population is considered orthodox and the service of the diocese is based on this reality. " For this reason the Orthodox claim new buildings for worship.

Finally, the statement reminded Msgr. Pezzi of a saying, that has threatening undertones: "People in glass houses should not throw stones." "The Kaliningrad region is a special area for Russia. - It concludes- its uniqueness should force us, representatives of different religions, to be a model of peace and coexistence for which the Russian Orthodox Church is ready. "

The tragedy of Iraq's Christians is that it does not interest anyone, Chaldean Catholic says

Nirmala Carvalho

Under Saddam Hussein, Christians in Iraq were around a million. Today, more than half have fled, living as refugees in other countries, in particular Syria and Jordan. Those who are left behind feel betrayed and abandoned by the government and the international community, with only one desire, to be able to live and worship in peace.

Birmingham (AsiaNews) - "There is now a real danger that Christians in the Middle East, and in Iraq in particular, of being exterminated, due to both persecution and large-scale emigration," this according to Dr Joseph Seferta, an Iraqi-born Chaldean Catholic living in Birmingham, Britain, where he is a member of the Commission for Inter-faith Dialogue of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. He gave an exclusive interview to AsiaNews about the difficult situation Christians face in Iraq and across the Middle East. Here it is.

"I belong to the Chaldean (Continue next page) Catholic Church, which makes up the majority of

Christians in Iraq. Others include Assyrians, as well Syrian, Armenian and Byzantine Christians, both Catholic and Orthodox. Christians under Saddam Hussein totalled some one million, but now only half that number remains in the country, the rest having fled and are living as refugees, particularly in Syria and Jordan.

The atrocity committed by Muslim fanatics, which resulted in dozens of Syrian Catholics dead and dozens of others wounded, was a big blow to the struggling Christian minority. It has been followed by other assassinations of Christians in their homes and shops. All these fanatics (known by various names) in the Middle East and other Muslim-majority countries, are bent on imposing Shari'a and running Islamic states that have no place for Christians in them.

Christians in the Middle East, of course, predate Muslims by hundreds of years and go back to Apostolic Times. Since the 7th Century Islamic conquest, they have been made second-class citizens with hardly any rights at all. They have undergone many waves of persecution, which have greatly reduced their numbers and influence. They suffer prejudice and discrimination on a daily basis, while Muslim minorities here in the West enjoy full rights and have built hundreds of mosques.

Tragically, Iraq's Christians had nothing to do with the American invasion, but they always wrongly get accused of siding with the "Christian" West. Now they feel both isolated and betrayed by their own government as well as the international community. They have always been model citizens, serving their country in every field, and their only desire is to be left alone to live and worship in peace. But they have become a soft target for extremists. There is now a real danger that Christians in the Middle East and in Iraq in particular, of being exterminated, due to both persecution and large-scale emigration, unless something is done urgently to stem the tide and save them. Too many cannot bear their suffering any longer and are sick and tired of waiting for someone to come to their aid. People either do not know or do not seem to care about them. Even the recent Middle East Synod convoked by the Holy Father was a disappointment, due to lack of both unity and courage. It is now high time that the United Nations seriously tackle this huge problem, for otherwise we will end up with the catastrophe of an Iraq and even a Middle East devoid of any Christians.

In October 2007, 138 Muslim leaders issued 'A Common Word between Us and You', a substantive invitation to Christians to dialogue based on the commandments to love God and love one another, found in the Bible and the Qur'an. The problem is that no such thing exists in the Qur'an.

While love is central in Christianity, it is hardly relevant in Islam. The few Qur'anic verses that mention love mean something that is totally different from the New Testament. In the Qur'an, Allah's love is conditional upon man's blind obedience to his laws. Thus, we read in verse 4:107, for example, "Allah loveth not the impious and the guilty."

Love in the Qur'an is just an attribute rather than a part of God's very essence (as in "God is love", *1 John* 4:8). The concept of love of neighbour does not exist either. There is only love for fellow Muslims, who, for example, are told in 5:59, "Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends", and in 9:29, "Fight those who believe not in Allah or his Apostle, even if they are the People of the Book [Christians and Jews] until they submit".

New Western Rite Communities

His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of New York is in the process of receiving ten new parishes and eighteen new clergy into the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, blessed to belong to the Western Rite.

They have existed for some years under the name of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church of America (HOCACA), an independent group yet studying and seeking to live the Orthodox Faith under the headship of Mr Anthony Bondi, who has served as the group's archbishop. He and his assistant bishop will be received, ordained, and elevated to the rank of archimandrite. The ordinations of all of the clergy are hoped to be completed over the next few weeks, by the invocation of the Holy Spirit and at the hands of Metropolitan Hilarion of New York and Bishop Jerome of Manhattan. As is generally the case with these unions, the joy of union is the focus rather than the separation of the past and it seems that, as it right and proper, there will be no pressure for these new clergy and faithful to relinquish their previous understanding of their situation.

This group has been no stranger to the world of mainstream Orthodoxy and has had close relations for some time with a number of people in the Church Abroad and other Orthodox jurisdictions. I, for one, am glad to see these come to fruition as full sacramental unity and communion in the Holy Orthodox Faith. I welcome them, and hope that their witness may encourage more people teetering on the edge of Orthodoxy to find a home in the bosom of the Church through any of the rites blessed for use.

Pastoral Message from the Ukrainian Catholic and the Ukrainian Orthodox Hierarchs of United States of America and Canada

A CALL TO PRAYER AND FOR LIVING VOICES FOR JUSTICE!

Ukrainians throughout the world will commemorate the 77th anniversary of the genocidal famine, the “**HOLODOMOR**”, which was perpetuated by Joseph Stalin and the Soviet regime against the people of Ukraine in 1932-33. We will pray together for the souls of the over seven million victims of this man-made famine. We will raise our collective voice against such oppressive measures and suffering being used in the name of any ideology.

It is important that we remember the more than 7 million victims comprised of innocent men, women and children of a proud nation who simply attempted to defend itself from the forced collectivization policy of Soviet Russia. Borders were closed. Food and crops were confiscated. People who were defiant were shot. Their souls cry out to be remembered. Let us gather in our holy churches to pray for their souls. We unite ourselves with them in our collective holy prayer.

St. Paul reminds us that “you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone”. (Ephesians 2:14-22) We, your hierarchs, remind you to fulfill your obligation as a member of the household of God by remembering the victims of the famine in collective prayer.

We are also called to be a living voice for justice for the millions of victims of the “Holodomor”. We are called to continually bring to mind, to ourselves and to the world around us, that this famine occurred as a result of the policies of a repressive and evil regime. Much of the world deluded itself of it happening at the time. Voices for justice and democracy were silenced, largely by the media who perpetuated the oppressive regime’s denial of the existence of the man-made famine. Our living voice is needed to ensure that such acts of genocide are remembered and prevented from re-occurring. Efforts to erase or minimize the horrific impact of this man-made famine continue to this day.

Our strong and assertive collective voice is needed to ensure that the sacrifice of the over 7 million victims is not forgotten and not repeated. Your hierarchs urge you to choose to be a part of the living conscience of those who have suffered. Their memory and sacrifice cannot be forgotten or minimized. The victims of the genocide in Ukraine need to be remembered and given justice and dignity by our speaking up in remembrance of them, and for other such victims of genocide throughout the world.

We, the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches in the United States of America and Canada pray that this united pastoral message to our faithful will serve as a source of inspiration for Ukrainians to unite in prayerful observance and as a collective voice in remembering the more than seven million victims of the “Holodomor” genocide of 1932-33 in Ukraine.

May the memory of the victims of the “Holodomor” genocide be eternal.

Given November, 2010.

+Constantine

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA

+Yurij

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada

+Archbishop Antony

+Bishop Ilarion

+Bishop Andriy

+Bishop Daniel

+Stefan

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USA

+Lawrence

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada

+Bishop Richard

+Bishop Stephen

+Bishop Paul

+Bishop David

+Bishop Kenneth

+Bishop Bryan

+Bishop John

Lebanese Bishops Meet to Discuss the Recent Catholic Synod for the Middle East

The Arabic original, by Hala Himsi in an-Nahar can be found [here](#).

from

<http://araborthodoxy.blogspot.com/2010/11/lebanese-bishops-meet-to-discuss-recent.html>

Patriarch IV and the Metropolitans of Lebanon Discuss the Suggestions of the Synod

Khodr: Our Hope is that the Pope will accept what the Arab Bishops said

On Thursday Rum Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and all the East Ignatius IV met with his metropolitans in Lebanon, at the patriarchal residence in Balamand. The recommendations of the special synod of the Catholic Church for the Middle East was the topic of discussion.



"The basic purpose of the meeting was to discuss the synod," Met. Georges Khodr, who represented the Antiochian Orthodox Church at the synod, told an-Nahar, explaining that, "the fathers at the meeting examined the synod and discussed some of its recommendations."

He said, "What has been understood and decided upon since the end of the Second Vatican Council during the time of Pope Paul VI is that the Catholic Church does not have councils which make decisions and instead have consultative councils. For this reason, the attitude that people take towards the synod has to be modest, in the sense that they cannot take its recommendations as final and Pope Benedict XVI will publish what he considers to be essential with regard to the Catholic Church in the Middle East during the coming year. From the very beginning, it must be said that this synod is a Catholic discussion of the Middle East, based to a certain degree on Western theology. However, at the primary level it is a reading of the reality in this part of the world."

Within these limits, the fathers who were gathered discussed the topic. "We have the recommendations that

were sent by the fathers of the council to their parishes in the Middle East," he said. In this he saw "something new which shows that the fathers of the synod have something to say to their parishes. And this is a good thing." This leads him to say that, "it was not clearly understood what those who attended and took part in the synod know, that the council was a consultative meeting for the Pope. In my opinion, this is the right thing." For Met. Khodr, the expression "Catholic synod" means "the rest of the Christians in the region were not consulted about anything at all. However, the synod greeted them and called them brothers and said that the Orthodox are almost in complete communion with the Papal See, and also greeted the Protestants with a few words. They largely focused on the Jews and the Muslims." The synod's cooperation with the latter two "was outstanding," as he described it. "They gave organized lectures, while no lecture was requested from the rest of the Christians."

Because of this, Met. Khodr finds "they have started to see their partners in cooperation as being the Jews and Muslims. There is no sentiment, given this absence in the text, that the Christian view of Jews in Palestine and Muslims was undertaken in brotherhood and with the study and analysis of Christians gathered together. Just the Catholics. We must rectify this."

Does this cause the Orthodox any disappointment? He responds, "No. From the beginning, we were not consulted about anything. In the tradition of the Catholic Church, for hundreds of years they have held meetings where the Orthodox were concerned, and they did not confer with them about anything and so the Orthodox look on from outside as matters are finalized. However, the Orthodox fathers who were gathered yesterday were pleased that a part of the Christians here in the East-- and it is the part that is smallest numerically if we look at the Copts-- studied the affairs of the region."

"Something completely new"

Met. Khodr talks about "something completely new" that are noticed one who follows going on in the Vatican, which is that "the statement about Judaism and the Jews which was prominent in the basic statement which was presented to those gathered was greatly diminished in the synod's final communique while the portions dedicated to the Muslims were increased in terms of the number and amount of pages." He also notices that "The role of the Arab Catholics, especially the Maronites, was important in making this correction."

In his opinion, the most important thing is that "it appears that the Arab Catholics do not feel that great importance that Western theology gives to the Jews. It was clear that they are loyal to the heritage of the Fathers which does away with Judaism completely. A propos of this, (Continue next page)

it is also remarkable that some of the Arab Catholics rejected the violence of the Jewish god and the idea of a promised land."

With regard to the Orthodox Church, "Prudence requires that we wait for what the Pope will say and what he will publish in what might be called an apostolic directive. We are following with love what goes on in the thought about the Catholic about this region," says Khodr. When asked what are its hopes in this matter, he says, "I do not believe that they will meet to define their position. It is not a subject defined by the synod. It is the Catholic Church that wanted to directly engage the Arab people in general and her parishes in specific. If the Catholic parishes return the synod's engagement, then they will have come into an active role."

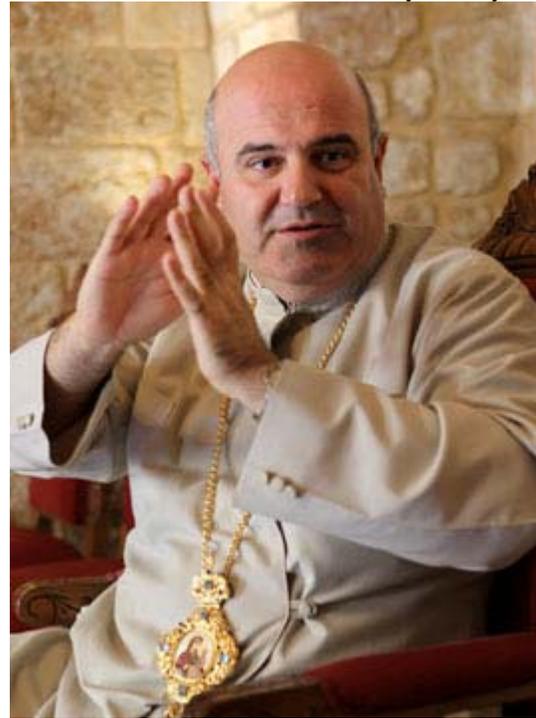
With regard to putting the suggestions into effect, "we must look at the text, at each individual suggestion," he said. "The text is not a mountain, but there are many useful and constructive words." During Thursday's meeting, Patriarch Ignatius IV and the metropolitan "went over the suggestions in detail... and naturally we were pleased, especially that the fathers of the synod did not pay much attention to Judaism and the Jews, as they had in the original report. This is something very important."

After the meeting, the Patriarch will discuss various matters with the Orthodox metropolitans in Syria, especially about the texts coming from the Vatican about the synod and "during our annual meeting after Easter we must look at what was said." In this regard, what attracted Met. Khodr's attention the most was "the statement of the Catholics' synod that you must from now on look after politics and society, after your freedom and the rights which you have in your countries and your safety in carrying out your mission and living your life. Indeed, you must look after the rights of all citizens together, Muslims and Christians, and after your freedoms. These are new words coming from the Catholics."

Met. Khodr's reading of this matter leads him to believe that "the Papacy wanted to get Catholics out of their great interest in themselves and to cast them into the national field in every society in which they live." With regard to this, it can be said that, "The Pope will pay special attention to this synod... after he heard that his Arab flocks are more concerned about Islam (than about the Jews), it was no longer possible for him to escape this framework. I believe that he will introduce the Catholics into Arab life." He realizes that "the time has come for the Catholics to realize that they are part of the Christian world and that they are talking with all the Christians and the other, non-Christian world. Our hope is that the Pope will accept much of what his brothers, the Arab patriarchs and metropolitans said."

A Lebanese archbishop's practical argument for married priests

Posted on November 7, 2010 by Cindy Wooden



Archbishop George Bakhouni of Tyre. (Nancy Wiechec/CNS)

TYRE, Lebanon — Heading a southern Lebanese diocese that goes from the sea then east two-thirds of the way along the border with Israel, the one problem Melkite Archbishop George Bakhouni of Tyre says he doesn't have is finding priests. In fact, the archbishop said, he's surprised bishops and other leaders of the Latin-rite church aren't more interested in the Eastern Catholic churches' experience with ordaining married men.

"Christianity survived in the Middle East because of the married priests," the bishop said. Because they are married with families and homes, they tend to stay even when conflicts and hardship send many celibate priests fleeing to safety.

The archbishop met Saturday with a small group of Catholic journalists visiting Lebanon with the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, a North American agency supporting Christians in the region.

For the archdiocese's 10 parishes, "I have 12 priests. Eight of them are married and four are single, but two of the singles are serving in Italy," the archbishop said. "We always propose this to the Latin church because (Continue next page)

you are Catholic and we are Catholic, but we always feel a lot of reticence when we mention this issue to the Roman Catholic Church. I don't know, but I think it could be helpful to allow a married person to be a priest."



A cross at the Melkite church in Yaroun, less than a mile from the Israeli border. (Nancy Wiechec/CNS) The celibacy rule for priests in the Latin-rite church has always been defined as a church discipline, not a theologically or scripturally based dogma that is unchangeable.

The archbishop knows all the arguments against relaxing the celibacy requirement in the Latin church, but in his experience, ordaining married men is the most naturally pastoral response to every Catholic's need for regular access to the sacraments. In little villages where there may be only 20 or 30 families, he said, it would be hard to find a single, celibate priest who would be happy to live and minister there. And that handful of families would not be able to support him.

The Eastern tradition, he said, is "to choose someone who has his own work in the particular village, a good man, a faithful man, a Christian man. He will study a little bit, some theology and philosophy, and he will be ordained."

The archbishop said it doesn't matter that it's impractical to send a married man to the seminary for six years. "We don't want all of them to be doctors or theologians," but witnesses. Priests don't all have to be well spoken orators; they could even

be fishermen, like the Apostles, he said.

The important thing, he said, is that they live exemplary lives among their fellow villagers, know a bit of theology and the Bible and that they are available to celebrate the sacraments.

ECUMENISM 13TH CENTURY STYLE

From

<http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/02/on-orthodox-liturgical-courtesy-to.html>

Here follows an extract from the "Answers" of Demetrius Chromatenus, Archbishop of Bulgaria (A.D. 1203), to Constantine Cabasilas, Archbishop of Dyrrachium:

Question: Is it any harm for a Bishop to enter the churches of the Latins, and to worship in them, on any occasion when he may be invited by them? And should he give them the kataklaston [that is, the antidoron or blessed bread,] when they are present at the Liturgy in the Holy and Catholic [Orthodox] Church?

Answer: There are some of the Latins who do not at all differ from our customs either doctrinal or ecclesiastical, but are, as one may say, in this respect double-sided or neutral. As then it is our duty, and agreeable to piety, stiffly to oppose them that essentially differ from us, especially in the point of the doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit, so on the other hand to use condescendence towards them that are not such, and to go with them into their churches, will be no fault in the Bishop who is charged with, and aims after, such economy as befits a steward of souls. Wherefore he will both go, when invited, to their churches without scruple, (for they too, no less than we ourselves, are venerators of the Holy Icons, and set them up in their churches) and will give them freely the Antidoron when they are present in the Catholic Church and come up to receive it. For this custom may have the effect of gradually drawing them over altogether to our holy usages and doctrines. Italy itself is thickly studded with churches of the Holy Apostles and Martyrs, the chief of which is the celebrated Church of Peter the Chief of the Apostles at Rome. Into these churches our people go freely, priests and laymen alike, and make their prayers to God, and render to the Saints who are honoured in them their due relative (**Continue next page**)

veneration and honour. And by doing this they incur no manner of blame, the churches in question being all under the Latins.

We remember that there were some Questions asked a good many years ago by Mark Patriarch of Alexandria, of blessed memory, and Answers written to the same by Theodore Balsamon, late Patriarch of Antioch. Among these there was one Question relating to Latin captives, namely, whether such ought to be admitted, when they come to the Catholic churches and seek to partake of the divine Mysteries? and subjoined to this an Answer altogether forbidding that the aforesaid Latins should be admitted to receive the divine Communion at the hands of our priests. The Answer professed to ground itself upon the Holy Scripture, and quoted that saying of the Lord: "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth".

This Answer however was disapproved of by many of the most eminent men who were living at that time, as showing too great harshness and bitterness, and an unjustifiable tone, in blaming the Latin forms and customs; *because all this, they said, has never been read or decreed synodically, nor have they ever been publicly rejected as heretics; but both eat with us, and pray with us. And any one, they said, may readily prove the justness of this reasoning from Canon XV of the Holy Synod which is called the First and Second of Constantinople. And again because this very fact of the Latins coming to us, and seeking to communicate at our hands of the Holy Oblation which is made with leavened bread, shows plainly that they cannot think much of their Azymes, nor make any great point of sticking to them: else they would not come to our celebration of the Divine Mysteries. These too, in order to support their own view from the Gospel, alleged what was said by St. John to the Lord. "We saw," he said, "'one casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, 'Forbid him not, for whosoever is not against us is for us.'"*

They urged also in addition that the words "He that is not with Me is against Me" are plainly and exclusively intended by our Saviour for the devil, as the context of the Gospel in the same place shows. For as Satan is an enemy from the beginning, and abides unchangeable in his malice, and is absolutely

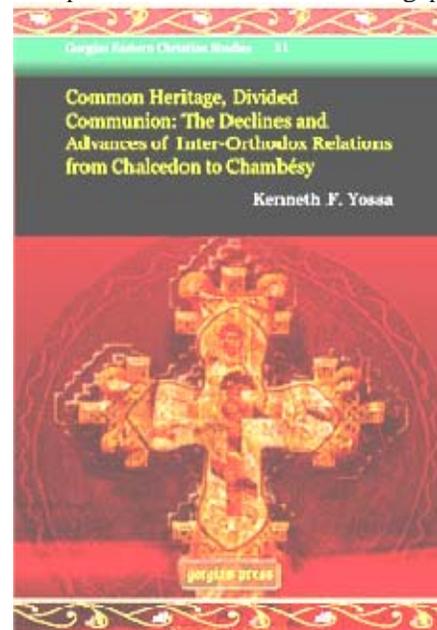
incapable of repentance, in this sense he, not being with the Lord, is against Him, and from so being has his name Satan, or adversary: inasmuch as the Lord loveth His own creation and gathereth it to Himself, but Satan hateth it and scattereth. But the words "He who is not against us is for us" are spoken in reference to a man who, though he follows not Jesus, yet emulates them that do follow Him, and in His name casts out devils, and so from walking apart may easily change to following. For mere human infirmity there is a remedy, namely, conversion and repentance, and to change from what is worse to what is better.

They appealed also to the judgment on this same subject of Theophylact, the most wise Archbishop of Bulgaria, . . . which discourses of condescension and economy in a manner worthy both of admiration and of praise. And so they who argued against the opinion of Balsamon, as has been related, were judged to have insisted piously and reasonably for giving the preference over inflexible harshness to economy, in order that so, instead of casting down, we may gently and gradually win our brethren, for whom our common Saviour and Lord shed His own most precious blood.

As quoted in William Palmer's *Dissertations on Subjects Relating to the 'Orthodox' or 'Eastern Catholic' Communion*(1853)

Overcoming the Chalcedonian Divide

posted here:<http://easternchristianbooks.blogspot.com/>



Kenneth F. Yossa, *Common Heritage, Divided Communion: Advances of Inter-Orthodox Relations from Chalcedon to Chambésy* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009), x+272pp. (Continue next page)

[Rev. **Kenneth F. Yossa**, Ph.D. lectures in religion at Excelsior College. He received his M.A. in Theology (church history) from Seton Hall University, and his doctorate in religious studies (systematic theology) from Marquette University. He has lectured at Marquette, Franciscan University, Dickinson College and the Catholic University of Louvain. His ongoing research interests include ecclesiology, liturgy, ecumenism, and the interface of science and religion.]

Many people today, so ill educated in even recent history and having no knowledge of doctrinal history, seem to imagine the creeds fell from heaven during luncheon one Friday afternoon. These innocents continue to be slack-jawed when they hear of the debates and divisions in the aftermath of Chalcedon, and even more astonished when they hear that those divisions are still not healed. Many, perhaps most, Orthodox faithful in particular are unaware that things have advanced to such a point today that neither side of the Chalcedonian divide can justly or correctly be condemned as "heterodox." But many misunderstandings continue to abound about Chalcedon and its aftermath. I noted earlier a recent book about all this, but thought I would post my longer review (from [*Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*](#)) of a superb new book by the Romanian Catholic priest Kenneth Yossa because he helps us to see precisely where we are, and what we must do to heal the Oriental-Byzantine divide.

Yossa's first two chapters synthesize the history of doctrinal definitions and divisions in the early Church, centering, of course, on Chalcedon. This part of the book would function very well on its own as an introduction to the ecumenical councils. He is able to describe an enormous terrain of considerable complexity, but do so in a way that never loses its focus or overwhelms the reader in a mass of tangents or distractions.

The third chapter focuses on the beginning of Orthodox ecumenical dialogue in 1960s. The first (unofficial) 1964 Aarhus (Denmark) consultation, followed by the 1967 consultation in Bristol, England, both, in a matter of days, produced an agreement on the part of theologians and bishops on both sides stating that neither side was guilty of "the heresy suspected of it by the other" (100). The Bristol consultation also produced the (to my mind) astonishing statement that "dogmatic formulae can be transcended by the experience of the Church, which can complete them and extend them...safeguarded by the holy limits of Revelation." If that is not an endorsement of the concept of "development of doctrine" that some Orthodox theologians sneeringly dismiss whenever Catholics raise the notion, then I do not know what is. After continued unofficial and official meetings over the next two decades, progress was made to such a point that, in 1990 in Chambésy, both affirmed that "we have

now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they have used Christological terms in different ways" (124). They went on to call for the lifting of "all anathemas and condemnations" and a consequent restoration of full eucharistic communion. As things have turned out, the greater difficulty has proven to be not the Christological debate, but the anathemas and condemnations each side hurled at the other. To retract these now would seem to suggest that the canonical and liturgical texts were somehow in error, a mind-boggling notion for many.

Since 1993, no formal meeting of all representatives of Churches on both sides has taken place, and no individual Church on either side of the divide has actually ratified the agreed statements. Worse, in the late 1990s, as the Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe continued to emerge from their communist pasts, some of them—the Georgian in particular—actually repudiated the earlier agreed statements, unhelpfully calling them "unacceptable." This sad development followed on shortly from the Georgian Church's withdrawal, in 1997, from the World Council of Churches.

The situation in the Middle East, however, is much more positive, as Eastern and Oriental Churches there have continued the work of drawing closer to one another. The Coptic and Greek patriarchs of Alexandria, and the Greek and Syriac patriarchs of Antioch, have produced very similar agreements on limited sacramental sharing, catechetical co-operation, and other pastoral matters. Here, as in Europe, the focus has "shifted from the 'what' of the Christology to the 'how' of ecclesiology" (148). Today both sides need to grapple with the role of councils and their reception, with anathemas of saints and fathers, and with jurisdictional questions ("one bishop to one city").

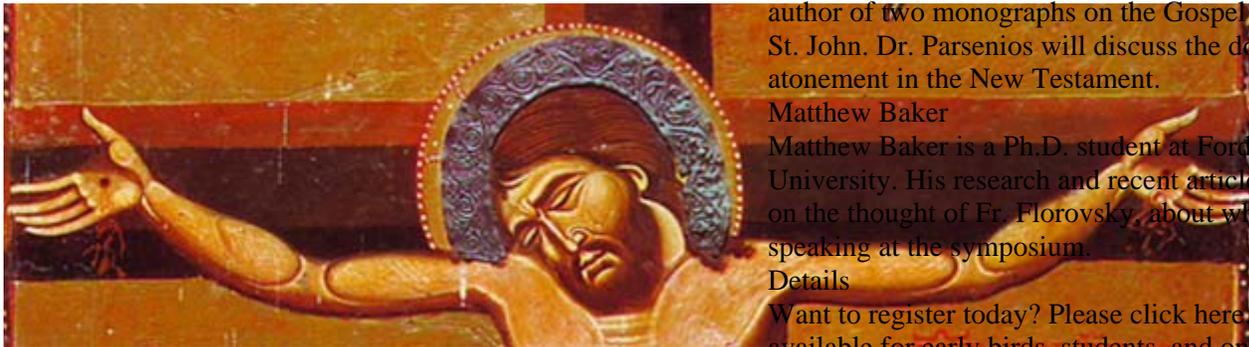
A further question has arisen in this dialogue as in the Eastern Orthodox-Catholic one: what is the real meaning and purpose of lifting an anathema or excommunication if it does not in fact lead to a shared sacramental life around one eucharistic table? If we are not excommunicated from one another, but yet not sharing one chalice, then what are we? Is there some kind of half-way house to unity?

Yossa recognizes that we need a widespread healing of memories, and much work must be done at the level of what he variously calls "local ecumenism" or "popular ecumenism." He notes that "very little, if anything, has changed in the *popular view* regarding 'Monophysites' in the West and in most Eastern Orthodox communities" (185). Both sides need to overcome the ancient mentality which continues today to **(Continue next page)**

condemn the other side as “heretical” and, tediously, to slander all laborers for unity as guilty of the “pan-heresy” of “ecumenism.” Difficult though ecumenical dialogue and progress may be, Christians of all traditions need to realize that the will of Christ for unity among His followers is not something we can chuck because it is laborious, or condemn because it does not fit into straitened and simplistic categories of our own devising. After sixteen centuries of division, when the Byzantine and Oriental Orthodox have already come so far and unity is so *agonizingly* close, can any of us afford to continue to try the Lord’s patience by failing to advance towards the full and complete unity He demands of us?

A Symposium in Honor of Fr. Florovsky On the Tree of the Cross: The Patristic Doctrine of Atonement

Saturday, February 12, 2011
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Taking our cue from Fr. Georges Florovsky, the eminent 20th century Orthodox Christian theologian who wrote with passion on this topic, we will examine the doctrine of atonement in some of the same authorities upon which Fr. Florovsky relied: the New Testament, St. Irenaeus of Lyon, St. Athanasius of Alexandria, St. Gregory the Theologian, and others. We will conclude with an analysis of Fr. Florovsky's own writings on atonement, followed by a panel discussion.

This symposium is co-sponsored by the Fr. Georges Florovsky Orthodox Christian Theological Society at Princeton University and the School of Christian Vocation and Mission at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Speakers Fr. George Dragas

Once a student of Fr. Georges Florovsky, Fr. George Dragas is the Professor of Patrology/Patristics at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Fr. George's many publications include several on the theology and writings of St. Athanasius the Great, about whom he will be speaking at the symposium.

Fr. John Behr

Fr. John Behr is the Dean of St Vladimir's Seminary and Professor of Patristics, as well as the Distinguished

Lecturer in Patristics at Fordham University. Fr. John's many publications include two books on St. Irenaeus of Lyon, about whom he will be speaking at the symposium.

Dr. Alexis Torrance

Dr. Alexis Torrance is Residential Fellow at the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study. His publications include articles on ascetic fathers in the Greek East, about whom he will be speaking at the symposium.

Fr. John McGuckin

Fr. John McGuckin is Professor in Late Antique and Byzantine Christian History at Union Theological Seminary, as well as a Professor of Byzantine Christian Studies at Columbia University. One of Fr. John's twenty books is an intellectual biography of St. Gregory the Theologian, about whom he will be speaking at the symposium.

Dr. George Parsenios

Dr. George Parsenios is Associate Professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary. He is the author of two monographs on the Gospel according to St. John. Dr. Parsenios will discuss the doctrine of atonement in the New Testament.

Matthew Baker

Matthew Baker is a Ph.D. student at Fordham University. His research and recent articles have focused on the thought of Fr. Florovsky, about whom he will be speaking at the symposium.

Details

Want to register today? Please click here. Discounts available for early birds, students, and online participants.

The symposium will be held on the campus of Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, NJ. All are welcome. More information about registration, the schedule of lectures, lodging, etc. is available near the top left of this page under "Symposium Quicklinks." Please e-mail us with questions.

PRAYER OF SOUFANIEH:

**UNITY OF HEARTS,
UNITY OF CHRISTIANS,
UNITY OF THE FEAST OF EASTER!**

