



FROM THE FATHERS

“IT IS GOOD for a man to confess his failings, rather than harden his heart.”

HOLY HM. CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ROME, 1ST CENTURY

“IF THE SERPENT, the devil, bites someone secretly, he infects that person with the venom of sin. And if the one bitten keeps silence and does not repent, and does not want to confess his wound to his brother and to his master, then his brother and his master, who have the word that will cure him, cannot very well assist him. For if the sick man is ashamed to confess his wound to the physician, medicine will not cure that to which it is not applied.”

BLESSED JEROME, + 419 A.D.

“BY RESOLVING to make one’s confession, the soul is thereby held from sinning as by a bridle. For what we do not confess, that we do fearlessly as though in the dark.”

VEN. JOHN OF THE LADDER, SEVENTH CENTURY

“HE WHO is accustomed to give account of his life at confession will not fear to give an answer at the terrible judgment seat of Christ.”

RIGHTEOUS JOHN OF CRONSTADT, + 1908 A.D.

The Light of Orthodoxy and the Darkness of Ecumenism¹

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Continuation from February Issue

AT the beginning of the twentieth century, it so happened that in a Greek Orthodox monastery on an island in the Cyclades the Orthodox Metropolitan of the island was present together with the Roman Catholic bishop of that region. While they were sitting on a balcony in the monastery, they saw one of the brothers carrying a sack of manure on his shoulders for the monastery garden. When the Catholic bishop learned that the one carrying the sack was a Hieromonk of the monastery, he expressed his disgust and perplexity as to how it was possible, after such filthy work, for this Hieromonk to celebrate the Divine Mysteries. Although the Orthodox Hierarch assured him that this work did not cause the Hieromonk any defilement of soul or body, the Latin prelate persisted in his objections. The Orthodox Hierarch then asked the Latin prelate if he would be willing to test which man was well-pleasing in the sight of God: the Orthodox Hieromonk who engaged in arduous and grimy toil or the well-dressed Papist bishop. The latter agreed to this, and the Hierarch proposed that he summon the Hieromonk and, after he had washed himself well, that he celebrate the Small Blessing of the Waters. The Latin bishop would then also perform a Blessing of the Waters, and the water blessed by each man would be kept in sealed containers. After the passage of a year, they would be unsealed, so that it might be evident which quantity of water was blessed and therefore acceptable before God. And indeed, after the respective Blessings of the Waters had been performed, the flasks were placed, well-sealed, in a special box. After a year had elapsed, in the presence of the Orthodox Metropolitan, the Abbot and the Brothers of the monastery, and also of the Roman Catholic bishop and his retinue, the flasks were unsealed and opened, and all beheld quite clearly that the water blessed by the Orthodox Hieromonk

was very limpid and fragrant, whereas that blessed by the Latin bishop was turbid, murky, and smelled like stagnant water!⁴⁹

In another instance, a Priest explained, *inter alia*, to a young man who had gone to venerate the Relics of St. Gerasimos on Kephallenia and had seen awesome miracles wrought through demoniacs, which revealed the hidden sins of other pilgrims, that demoniacs cannot reveal anything to one who has repented of his sins and confessed them sincerely. In that case, they are “blocked.” However, in one case—the Priest continued—he had got to know two Italian Roman Catholics who admitted that a demoniac on Zakynthos revealed to them all that they had confessed to their own Catholic priest. And this was because they were in essence unconfessed. The demoniac was a Greek and did not know Italian, and yet he revealed to the Italians in flawless Italian sins which they had supposedly confessed.⁵⁰

In our estimation, these true testimonies corroborate the age-old view of the Orthodox that the Latins have fallen away from the Grace of God and that they are not, and do not constitute, the Church of God.

When, for example, in the twelfth century Patriarch Mark of Alexandria asked the eminent canonist Theodore Balsamon, the Patriarch of Antioch, whether an Orthodox clergyman could “without peril impart the Divine Gifts to them,” that is, to heretics, Balsamon responded in the negative. With specific regard to the Latins who, as prisoners of the Saracens, presented themselves in Orthodox Churches asking to commune, Balsamon affirmed that the Western Church had been in schism for many years from spiritual communion with the assembly of the four remaining Orthodox Patriarchs. Rome “was separated from the Catholic Church with respect to customs and dogmas and was estranged from the Orthodox,” and for this reason the Pope had been struck off the Dip-tychs, such that “the race of Latins ought not be sanctified at the hands of Priests through the Divine and Immaculate Mysteries, unless they agreed beforehand to abjure Latin doctrines and customs, they have been instructed in accordance with the Canons, and they have been assimilated to the Orthodox.”⁵¹

The Holy Archpriest John of Kronstadt in Russia wrote the following at the beginning of the twentieth century, expressing the Orthodox spiritual assessment of Papism:

The communion of the Western Church with the Heavenly Church is meagre and lukewarm, and is devoid of life. The Orthodox Church is quite different: here, the communion is living, wise, full, sincere, and reverent. There, the Pope is everything, everyone honours him and not the Saints. The Saints of the East and the West are devalued; they are hidden, they have fallen into oblivion; never are their Relics ever displayed to the faithful, but far more often for tourists.... There, the Pope determines the fate of the earthly and the heavenly Church and arbitrarily administers the 'surplus' of the works and graces of the Saints, sending people to Purgatory and freeing them therefrom by his own decision, and issuing indulgences. Laughable as these things are, they really would be laughable if they were not so harmful and distressing. And how is it that the Popes themselves, the cardinals, and others do not see this?... The faith of Catholics is superficial. There, everything is for sale and everything can be bought; there, the Pope possesses all authority and the salvation of Catholics is in his hands. This is why Catholics today do not have real, recognizable Saints; they have only 'contrived' saints, those whom the arbitrariness of the Pope has made saints, whereas the Orthodox Church is like the Garden of Eden, filled with Saints⁵²

Another revered clergyman, a professor of Orthodox dogmatic theology, avers that "Catholicism has not fully preserved either Apostolicity or life in Christ and holiness.... Catholic theology regards Grace as created, and thus it is not an Energy that flows from Christ" and that "in Catholicism only to an insignificant degree is the power of Divine Grace received."⁵³

In view of these considerations, one might ask what it was that impelled the Orthodox ecumenists to enter into contact with heterodoxy, not in order to lead it to repentance and conversion, but in order to confer on it distinctions and merits which it does not have, which do not belong to it, and which it could not even conceive or desire! We know that the ecumenists have a ready answer: They are impelled by love, for the union of Christians. However, if love is separated from Truth—and we will show in what follows that this happens, and has prevailed from the outset, in contemporary ecumenism—then we are face to face with an error and a distortion which have spread to a perilous degree among both the leaders and the largely indifferent flock of

the lukewarm faithful who constitute the overwhelming majority of so-called Christians today. This is why the false shepherds no longer have any inhibitions; for they are not afraid, as they were at one time,⁵⁴ that the true Flock, the Guardian of Orthodoxy, will rise up against them!

V

An upsurge in ecumenism

Unorthodox views concerning the boundaries of the Church of Christ have been articulated in Orthodox intellectual circles, especially from the beginning of the past (twentieth) century. Perhaps it was on account of the diversity concerning the reception of the heterodox exhibited by the local Orthodox Churches, which applied *oikonomia* in particular circumstances, that many of the Orthodox came up with the erroneous idea that, even though the heterodox had in the past been declared heretics with regard to the Apostolic Faith and Apostolic Tradition by Holy Synods, whether Œcumenical or Panorthodox, nonetheless since the heterodox demonstrably preserve “Apostolic succession,” that is, unbroken continuity vis-à-vis their episcopal consecrations, they possess true and valid Mysteries. Among the Orthodox ecumenists, some restrict the existence of Mysteries to Roman Catholics, others include every heterodox community that has maintained or formed an episcopate, and finally others extend sacramental validity to every Christian gathering, even to those who believe in a purely subjective way. The first group—at least in part—is of the opinion that the time has not yet come for communion with the Latins, though solely for “disciplinary” reasons; the second group is ready for communion with any heterodox community that maintains a hierarchy and simply awaits ecclesiastical approval for this; the final group is impatient for communion with all Christians!⁵⁵

The ecumenist notion that ecclesiality and Mysteries exist in heterodox communities of every description, both older and more recent, is based on the heretical Encyclical “To the Churches of Christ Everywhere” issued by the Church of Constantinople in 1920. This Encyclical, as is well known, was the primary catalyst and the moving force for the institutionalization of ecumenism by way of the World Council of Churches and, in general, for the participation of the Orthodox in various expressions and manifestations of ecumenism.

We will mention, here, by way of example, the meeting between Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople—this year being the fortieth anniversary of his repose (July 7, 1972 [n.s.])—and Pope Paul VI in Jerusalem, in 1964. That meeting in the Holy City, where—as we have ascertained from all that has been set forth—God expressed His aversion towards the heretical Latins, initiated the unfolding of a depressing series of events, with the lifting of the Anathemas in 1965 and the first steps down the slippery slope of ecumenism, especially regarding relations with the Latins.

For its part, Rome, through the Second Vatican Council, launched its “assault of love,” namely, Rome-centered ecumenism, for the purpose of achieving a new Uniate-style union with the Orthodox. The Papists decided on the meeting in Jerusalem in 1964 following the persistent entreaty and efforts of the Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV.⁵⁶ Prior to the meeting with Patriarch Athenagoras, Pope Paul VI had met with “the Catholic [i.e., Uniate] patriarchs and hierarchs of the Eastern [Uniate] Churches, to whom he delivered a momentous address, calling upon them to remain faithful to their ancient traditions and liturgical *typika*, by which the entire Church of Christ was made radiant.”⁵⁷ “Under such conditions did the Vatican inaugurate the Dialogue of Love in Jerusalem!”⁵⁸ The meeting with the Patriarch of Constantinople was conducted in a ecumenist framework, in which the bases and principles for what followed were established. Speaking in Bethlehem just two days after the meeting with Athenagoras, Pope Paul VI, sincere in his attitude, called upon the “separated brethren,” that is, the Orthodox, to return to the Roman Catholic flock!⁵⁹ The Pope presented himself as the “proprietor and interpreter of the patrimony of Christ,” emphasizing his primacy and infallibility over and above union.⁶⁰

In spite of this, those of an ecumenist bent characterize this meeting as an “historic” event,⁶¹ whereas many of the “official” Orthodox rose up at that time and vigorously expressed their opposition to it. A “Proclamation” by Athonite Abbots and Fathers of that time, for example, denounces pro-unionism, declares its adherence to Tradition, and rejects any union of the ecumenist stripe. Moreover, it calls all heretics who so desire to repentance and to return to Orthodoxy and contains a clear threat: “We appeal to our Œcumenical Patriarch to desist from pursuing his pro-unionist activities, for if he persists, we will disavow him also.”⁶²

Orthodox sensibilities functioned for some time, and, as we know, there were even Hierarchs, aside from the Abbots and monks, who broke off commemoration of the Patriarch for a certain period of time, only to return to “obedience,” since they thought, strangely enough, that after Athenagoras a new wind of Orthodoxy was ablow in Constantinople and in the local Churches in general, even though the heresy of ecumenism had waxed bold!

Patriarch Athenagoras preferred the “currency of love,” despite the reactions, and not that of Truth and stated that the purpose of dialogues and relations with the heterodox, and especially with the Roman Catholics, was “to prepare our peoples psychologically to understand that there is one Church and one religion.”⁶³

It is no surprise that in 1993 we ended up at Balamand, Lebanon, under Patriarch Bartholomew, the faithful lackey of Athenagoras, who proclaimed officially in the context of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue that both Churches are recognized as “Sister Churches” in the full sense of the term; it was, rather, to be expected. Papists and Orthodox ecumenists recognize that “profession of apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments, above all the one priesthood...the apostolic succession of bishops—cannot be considered the exclusive property of one of our Churches. In this context, it is evident that all rebaptism is excluded.”⁶⁴

Likewise, a condemnation of “the proselytism of Christians of other Christian traditions” was issued in the context of the World Council of Churches⁶⁵ while the Patriarchate of Constantinople signed at the Phanar in September 2004, together with the Evangelical Church in Germany, a rejection of “rebaptism,” since the baptisms of both Churches are equated and recognized.⁶⁶

All of the goings-on in contemporary ecumenism, a few of which we shall mention, demonstrate that, in essence, the distinction between Orthodoxy and heresy and the boundaries between truth and falsehood, between light and darkness, have been effaced. Its real aim is not the attainment of union, still less the putative conversion of those in error to Orthodoxy, as Patriarch Bartholomew sometimes hypocritically maintains before “conservative” audiences, since the ecumenists believe that union between them already exists, that “the parties engaged

in dialogue are Sister Churches and that they express this unity of theirs through sundry ecumenical displays.”⁶⁷

Just this past January (2012) there was an upsurge of ecumenical activities, particularly in the context of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

An ecumenical ceremony to welcome the New Year was held in a Roman Catholic church in Cologne, Germany, with, of course, the participation of Orthodox ecumenists. It had for its motto: “TOGETHER. Witnessing to Christ.”⁶⁸

In Dubrovnik, Croatia, Bishop Grigorije of Herzegovina (Patriarchate of Serbia), a spiritual son of Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić), took part, on January 17, in an ecumenical ceremony in a Roman Catholic church, together with the local Catholic bishop and his clergy, and, among other things, he asked forgiveness for the horrors of the recent war.

In Syros (an island in the Cyclades), the Roman Catholic bishop Frangiskos Papamanoles delivered an address in the Metropolitan Cathedral to Dorotheos, the local Bishop of the New Calendar Church of Greece, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his Episcopate on January 19, emphasizing, *inter alia*, the following:

The people of Syros have welcomed you united, without any dividing lines between them, united in the love of Christ, united in the joy that the bells of our Churches, Orthodox and Catholic, rang out to the heavens in a common melody, announcing your arrival.... Beloved Brother, ...we can work together, or rather, we can increase our coöperation in harmony, love, and peace, with mutual respect, not only for our persons, but also for our Churches, as our yardstick. We bear responsibility for the present and for the future of our Churches. We can contribute to the speedier arrival of the blessed day when we share the common Cup.

In Thessalonike, on Saturday, January 21, an ecumenical evening of common prayer was held in the Roman Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Theotokos. Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Armenians, Anglicans, and Evangelicals took part in this event. The keynote speaker was the Assistant Professor of New Testament at the Theological School of the University of Thessalonike, Charalambos Atmatzides, who

made the following revealing statements about the meeting on a television channel:

It is a custom observed almost every year by all of the Christians and all of the Christian communities of Thessalonike. All Christians who have a common credo in Jesus Christ, that is, we Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Armenians, and Evangelicals, gather together to pray together and offer entreaties to God.... The purpose of this joint prayer is for us to remember our roots and our common religious lineage, which used to unite all of us a very long time ago, although after a period of time it divided us for reasons which, in our view, are not so justified. This endeavour, however, is based, is founded on the common will of the leaders of the Orthodox Church, namely, our Œcumenical Patriarchate, of the Pope of Rome, and also of the episcopal Evangelical Churches and of the Armenians, as a joint effort to find common points of contact and communication.

Œcumenical ceremonies, joint prayers, and activities took place between January 19 and 25 in Rome (under the leadership of the Pope), in Budapest, in Brussels, in the Holy Land, in Moscow and Novosibirsk, in Bucharest and other cities in Romania, and in many other parts of the world, in a climate and a spirit of syncretism and relativism.

In Trier, Germany, an “International Œcumenical Forum” commenced on January 30 with joint prayer and speeches about the “seamless Robe of Christ.” Roman Catholics, Evangelicals, the World Council of Churches, the Metropolis of Germany (Œcumenical Patriarchate), Methodists, *et al.* were all represented among those taking part in this forum, in the context of which, interestingly enough, “the participants were symbolically weaving the Robe of Christ”!

While we are on the subject of such ecumenical lunacy, it is worth emphasizing the new “tradition” that the Patriarchate of Constantinople is establishing. It now enthrones its new Metropolitans, in foreign countries in which a large Cathedral of its own jurisdiction may not be available, in Roman Catholic churches. This occurred recently both at the enthronement in Budapest of the new Exarch of Hungary and Central Europe, Metropolitan Arsenios, and at the enthronement in Singapore of Metropolitan Constantine of Singapore, at which Hierarchs of the New Calendar Church of Greece were present.

We should also advert to the ecumenist dimension of the charitable ministry of the Apostle society of the New Calendar Archdiocese of Athens. Apostle recently began to cooperate officially, for the successful accomplishment of its goals, with both Anglicans and Roman Catholics, and in particular with their counterpart organization, Caritas.

VI

The responsibility of the Orthodox

In the face of this distressing and discouraging reality, which is unfolding in the context of eschatological “apostasy,”⁶⁹ for the purpose of bringing about a world religion and the coming of the man of sin, that is, the Antichrist, for the final tribulation of humanity, we cannot but express our grief and sorrow, not so much over the terrible economic crisis and social degradation of our homeland—which is also extremely disquieting—as over the downfall of Orthodox Churches and the continuing captivity of souls, on account of those who champion the heresy of ecumenism, as St. Basil the Great wrote in connection with the events of his era: “For we are lamenting not the demolition of earthly buildings, but the overthrow of Churches; what we behold is not bodily enslavement, but a captivity of souls that is effected daily by the champions of heresy.”⁷⁰

In our opinion, our prime concern today is that we preserve at all costs our Orthodox identity, which is being grievously assaulted amid the tempest of confusion that surrounds us, and that we correspondingly heighten the awareness in every way of as many of our brothers and sisters as possible, so that they might act in a correct and God-pleasing manner.

For those enmeshed in reprehensible communion with our ecumenist brethren there is always the possibility of shaking off this “yoke” through Orthodox confession and walling-off and through incorporation into the realm of Truth, far removed from the darkness and falsehood of error. Few of them, however, do we see being drawn by the Light of Truth; few walk in the Truth, far away from the wickedness of sin and apostasy. A variety of erroneous assessments or misguided commitments and dependences, it seems, darken their souls and drive salutary reproofs away from their consciences. And not only this, but they also muster artful excuses in sins, so as to appease their consciences and lull

themselves into a Uniate-style communion with ecumenists. The harsh words of our Lord Jesus Christ befit those in our day who defend innovation and insult the Truth and correct confession: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.”⁷¹

St. Basil the Great, for example, believed — as did all of the Holy Fathers—that the issue of communion with heretics is of direct soteriological significance, and for this reason he prayed that he not fall away from communion with that segment of the Church which abides on the basis of “sound and undistorted doctrine,”⁷² since communion in Orthodoxy places one with the “lot” of the righteous; conversely, communion with those who distort the Orthodox confession of faith either as a whole or in part places such communicants outside the communion of the Church.⁷³ For this reason, St. Basil the Great, even as a Deacon, “walled himself off” in 361 from Bishop Dianios of Cæsarea, who had ordained him, because, out of weakness of character, he had signed the un-Orthodox confession of faith of the semi-Arian Synod of Constantinople (360).⁷⁴

The hopeful thing is that a few sensitive and elect servants of God, disregarding insidious threats, marginalization, and the bootless “assurances” of this world, are being drawn to the Light of Truth, walling themselves off, in accordance with the example of the Fathers and with Synodal and canonical injunctions, from the so-called official Churches, thereby eschewing communion with the heresy of ecumenism.

Some, like our spiritual ancestors in the Faith, did this much longer ago, on account of the ecumenist imposition of the calendar innovation (1924–). Others, like our spiritual progenitors in the Lord, did this later, by reason of the increasingly audacious ventures and excesses of the ecumenists. Others are doing so today, while quite a few are vacillant about this salvific course of action, remaining in reprehensible communion with the ecumenists. At any rate, the upsurge in anti-ecumenism, which perturbs the heresiarchs of ecumenism and their sundry apologists or colleagues, is a comforting fact and one which confirms that the struggles and even the ordeals of many decades have not been in vain.

May the Lord of the Church strengthen the plenitude who confess the Faith, to the end that Divine Truth might prevail!

May we be numbered with the faithful and wise servants of God in the Kingdom of the Light of Divine Love, if nothing else for the sake of our patient endurance and our good intention for the welfare of the Church. May the majestic vision of the Divine Kingdom, which the Holy Evangelist John the Theologian describes for us in the Apocalypse, console us in whatever sacrifices we make for Faith and virtue: “And there shall be no night there; and they [the saved] need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”⁷⁵ Amen!

48 “The Orthodox Views of His Grace, Bishop Daniel of Budapest,” *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. xv, Nos. 2-3 (1998), p. 13.

49 Archimandrite Gabriel Dionysiates, *The Witness of the Holy Mountain* (Thessalonike: Ekdoseis “Orthodoxos Kypsele,” n.d.), pp. 185-186.

50 See the article: *St. Gerasimos of Kephallenia and Demoniacs* on the website “Ορθόδοξος Κόσμος” (accessed April 5, 2008). This text is also available elsewhere on the Internet.

51 “Canonical Questions from Patriarch Mark of Alexandria and Responses Thereto by Patriarch Theodore Balsamon of Antioch,” Nos. 14-15, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. cxxxviii, cols. 965c-968b.

52 *Spiritual Counsels and Canon of Supplication* (Thessalonike: Ekdoseis “Orthodoxos Kypsele,” 2008), pp. 157-158.

53 Views expressed by Protopresbyter Dumitru Staniloae (†1993) in Hieromonk Ioanichie Balan, *Spiritual Dialogues with Romanian Fathers* (Thessalonike: Ekdoseis “Orthodoxos Kypsele,” 1986), pp. 205, 206, 208.

54 The following historical incident is very telling: When the Synod under Patriarch Germanos II of Constantinople (1222-1240) wanted to appear compliant for the time being and to permit the Hierarchy and clergy in Cyprus, who were under the harsh yoke of the Latins, to conform “by *oikonomia*” to the terms put forward by the Papists, yielding to the demands [of the Latins] for submission in order to serve the faithful and to avert impending calamities, they provoked a great uproar: “As soon as they learned that such a decision had been taken, enraged crowds of clergy, monks, and faithful rushed into the chamber in which the Synod was in session. After declaring to the members of the Synod that they regarded this submission as a veritable denial of the ancestral Faith, they demanded that the Patriarch alter the Synodal resolution, which is in fact what happened” (Archimandrite Hieronymos I. Kotsones, *Intercommunion with the Heterodox from the Canonical Standpoint* [Athens: Ekdoseis “He Damaskos,” 1957], p. 75).

55 See the discussion in the article from some fifty years ago by the Serbian theologian Father Danilo Krstić, later Bishop of Budapest (†2002), “The Divine Fire and Man-made Stream,” in *The Faithful Steward*, No. 14 (2003), p. 8. In this interesting text, the author makes mention also of the “strictly Traditionalist” Orthodox, who equate the “boundaries” of the Church with the charismatic boundaries of the Divine Eucharist. There is no Divine Eucharist outside the Orthodox Catholic Church. The Traditionalists maintain two different practices in receiving the heterodox. The strictest, following St. Cyprian of

Carthage, baptize converts (it is primarily the Greeks, including those on the Holy Mountain, who do this), whereas others are content to anoint them with Holy Chrism, reckoning that in this way their baptism outside the Church becomes valid and efficacious (this is done chiefly by the Slavs).

- For an historical perspective on the difference in practice in dealing with the reception of the heterodox on the part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and of the Church of Russia, see Kotsones, (Greek Title not reproducible here, see within <www.synodinresistance.org/.../E20120306bKyrOrth-2012-Omilia.pdf>) pp. 121-122.

- For statements and activities of the ringleaders among the Orthodox ecumenists, who laid the foundations for the further development of such heretical ecumenist “theologies” as “Baptismal theology” and the “theology of the Broad Church,” see “Ecumenism as an Ecclesiological Heresy,” <http://hsir.org/p/rd>.

56 Archimandrite Spyridon Bilales, *Orthodoxy and Papism* (Athens: Ekdoseis “Orthodoxou Typou,” 1969), Vol. ii, p. 343.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 344. 58 *Ibid.* 59 *Ibid.*, p. 345. 60 *Ibid.*, p. 346.

61 See the article *Athenagoras I, Ecumenical Patriarch*, in *Great Orthodox Christian Encyclopedia* (Athens: Strategikes Ekdoseis, [2010]), Vol. i, p. 388.

62 Archimandrite Gabriel, ‘Αγιορειτική Μαρτυρία, p. 161.

63 “Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople (1886-1972): His Statements, Messages, and Activities,” *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. xviii, No. 1 (2001), p. 10.

64 “The Balamand Statement,” §13, *Eastern Churches Journal*, Vol. i, No. 1 (Winter 1993-1994), p. 19. We have corrected the wording of the final sentence on the basis of the French original of the Balamand Statement (see http://www.prounione.urbe.it/dia-int/o-rc/doc/i_o-rc_07_balamand_fr.html).

65 E.g., “Within the ecumenical movement and the World Council of Churches the concern for common witness and the unity of the churches has always been a priority, and proselytism has been recognized as a scandal and counterwitness”; “[One] of the characteristics which clearly distinguish[es] proselytism from authentic Christian witness [is] [p]resenting one’s church or confession as ‘the true church’ and its teachings as ‘the right faith’ and the only way to salvation, rejecting baptism in other churches as invalid and persuading people to be rebaptized”; “Proselytism is a perversion of authentic Christian witness and thus a counterwitness. It does not build up but destroys. It brings about tensions, scandal and division, and is thus a destabilizing factor for the witness of the church of Christ in the world. It is always a wounding of koinonia, creating not fellowship but antagonistic parties” (“Towards Common Witness: A Call to Adopt Responsible Relationships in Mission and to Renounce Proselytism,” <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-and-evangelism/towards-common-witness.html>).

66 “Although ecclesiastical communion does not yet exist between our Churches [Orthodox and Protestant], we each regard the other’s members as baptized, and in the case of a change in confession, we refuse to undertake a new baptism. The participants in the dialogue salute the efforts of the Churches in Germany (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen) to reach agreement regarding a mutual recognition of baptism” (Joint Communiqué, Phanar, 2004), in “Participation in the ‘World Council of Churches’ as an Ecclesiological Heresy: ‘Invisible Unity’ and ‘Baptismal Theology,’” <http://hsir.org/p/ac>.

67 Archimandrite Cyprian and Hieromonk Klemes Hagiokyprianitai, *The Ecumenical Movement and Orthodox Anti-Ecumenism: The Crucial Confrontation of a Century*

(Vol. vii in Συμβολή στην Ἀντι-οικουμενιστική Θεολογία; Athens: Ekdoseis Hieras Synodou ton Enistamenon, 2001), p. 53.

68 See the presentations of this and the other ecumenical events mentioned subsequently, together with audio-visual material, according to the date of their posting, at the extremely informative website “Aktines” (<http://aktines.blogspot.com>).

69 ii Thessalonians 2:3. 70 “Epistle lxx,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 436b.

71 St. Matthew 23:14. 72 “Epistle ccli,” §4, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 940a.

73 See “St. Basil and Resistance: Communion with Heretical Bishops is Inadmissible,” <http://hsir.org/p/2a>.

74 Ibid. (See St. Basil, “Epistle li,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, cols. 388c-392a.)

75 Revelation 22:5.

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Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

§ 15. **The Service Books** - the books that are used in the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church - are the following: The Priestly Service Book or Hieraticon, the Book of Hours, the Psalter, the Octoechos, the Menaion, the Lenten Triodion, the Pentecostarion, the Heirmologion, the Typicon and the Book of Needs.

1) The **Priestly Service Book** is, as the name suggests, the book used by the priests and deacons in officiating at Vespers, Mattins and the Liturgy.

2) The **Book of Hours** contains the order of service for Nocturns, Mattins, Vespers, Hours and Compline.

3) The **Psalter** contains the psalms in the same order as they are found in the Bible (Septuagint version) but divided into twenty sections or *kathismas*, each of which is subdivided into three *glories*. [Daily two *kathismas* are read at Mattins and one at Vespers, except on Sunday evening - in this way the whole Psalter

is read in church every week. During Great Lent, kathismas are also appointed on the Hours, so that then the Psalter is read through twice in every week]. Besides the simple Psalter, a Psalter with appendices also contains the Hours, and often Psalters are published with special prayers for the departed, because the Psalter is read over the departed when they are awaiting burial.

4) The **Octoechos** contains the verses, canons, troparia and kontakia and other hymns which are chanted during the various church services for each day of the week, and for each of the musical tones. [In this way, there is an eight week cycle of services for every day of the week corresponding to the eight tones].

5) The **Menaion** contains materials similar to the Octoechos (troparia, kontakia, canons and hymns), but in this case in the order that they are appointed for the festivals and saints' day for each day of the month. Thus this "book" is published in twelve separate volumes, one for each month of the year.

6) The **General Menaion** is a similar service book with services for various types of saints (Hierarchs, Martyrs, Monastic Saints), with no reference to particular days or dates. It can be used to chant a service for a Saint to whom no specific service has yet been composed.

7) The **Lenten Triodion** contains the changeable parts of the services for pre-lenten and lenten days, from the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee until the eve of Pascha itself, and the **Pentecostarion** (called rather romantically in Russian the Flowery Triodion) continues the same from the day of Pascha until the Sunday of All Saints (that immediately after Pentecost Sunday). The word Triodion, with reference to the Lenten Triodion, refers to the fact that the canons during that period have only three odes, as opposed to the usual eight.

8) The **Heirmologion** contains the heirmoses (the initial hymns on each ode of the canons) and other hymns pertaining to the chanting in church.

9) The **Typicon** or Rule for the most part contains the regulations for the ordering of the Divine services for the various days and times of the day, how the prayers and hymns found in the Service Book, Book of Hours, Octoechos and other books are ordered, how they are to be read or chanted.

10) The **Book of Needs** contains the services and prayers for the “needs” of the faithful, whether individuals or collectively. In it one finds the services for the various Mysteria (sacraments), the burial services, the blessing of water, the monastic tonsure, the consecration of churches and many other blessings and prayers.

[Here Fr Alexander does not mention the **Apostle Book** and the **Gospel Book**. The former includes the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. The latter contains the four Gospels. In the Greek version and the translations from it, the lections are set forth individually as they are read at the Divine services. In the Slavonic version and the translation from that, the text is set forth as in the New Testament, but with marked footnotes, indicating how individual sections are begun, and the days on which they are used. So the Slavonic version may be used for the Divine services or read straight through. The Apostle Book also contains the prokeimena and Alleluia verses for the Divine Liturgy.]

.... to be continued.



“IN the first place let us flee from sin. Yet, even if we are wounded by sin’s dart, let us not delay, allured by the sweet taste of its poison as by honey; nor let us, like a wounded bear, make the wound worse through our fingering it, but let us run immediately to our spiritual physician and vomit out the poison of sin by means of confession.”

VEN SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, + 1022 A.D.

THE COMING MONTH

MARCH this year takes us right up to **Palm Sunday**, the **Great Feast of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem** (31st March / 13th April). This feast introduces us to the holiest days in the Church Year, and, as we learn from the life of St Mary of Egypt which is read in church on the Wednesday of the fifth week of the fast, it serves as the fore-festival of Pascha itself. The feast itself, though, is not a mere prelude. Saint John Chrysostom teaches us that our Saviour's riding upon the colt of an ass, a simple detail that might be overlooked as merely picturesque, has, in fact, a threefold significance. Firstly, it fulfilled the prophecy of Zacharias (feast day: 8th/21st February) that the King would come riding upon an ass, and thus leads us to understand that He is the fulfilment of all prophecy. Secondly, our Saviour rode not on the donkey herself but upon her colt. The donkey, which had been ridden before, represents the Jewish people, who had been under the Law. The colt, which had never been ridden represents the gentiles, the nations, and that they now were to be called under the rule of the King. Thirdly, as St John points out, the Saviour rode not on a horse or stallion, but on a humble donkey, to instruct us always to follow the way of humility and to be satisfied with that which is sufficient for our needs and not always to seek that which is impressive, luxurious or superfluous. How beautifully this lesson comes at the end of Great Lent, during which we have been attempting, through fasting and praying, to curb our baser appetites and to look to a glory which is not of this world.

In March we also have the **Great Feast of the Annunciation** (25th March / 7th April) and the day of the **Martyrdom of St Edward** (18th / 31st March) - important days for the two Synod in Resistance monastic communities in this country. **His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** will be visiting England

to lead the celebration at the Convent, and on the day before the feast itself (Sunday, 6th April) will celebrate at Brookwood. Because the martyrdom of St Edward falls in Lent, at Brookwood we keep as his principal feast the day of his Enshrinement here in 1984, which falls on 3rd / 16th September. However for the Spring feast, **His Grace Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** will be celebrating with us on Sunday, 30th March. On the day itself, the Monday, we will have the Presanctified Liturgy, but it seemed more fitting to have the Hierarchal Liturgy here on a Sunday, when a full Liturgy is appointed and more people will be able to come and receive the blessing of participating in a hierarchal Liturgy.

On 12th / 25th March, we celebrate **Saint Gregory the Great, the Pope of Rome**, who, because he initiated the mission of St Augustine to this country and fostered the growth of the Church here, is commemorated as the Apostle of the English. (He also, of course, gave us that priceless dictum: ***Not Angles but Angels!***). On the same day we have a much less well-known Saint, but one who played an important rôle in the development of the pre-schism Church in this country, **Saint Alphege the Elder**. Like his better known namesake, who went on to become Archbishop of Canterbury and die as a martyr, this Saint Alphege was a Bishop of Winchester. Little biographical information about his early life has survived, but he was known to have been a monk and perhaps even a hermit. In A.D. 935, he was consecrated as Bishop of Winchester, then a huge territory, which covered the parts we now live in at Brookwood. He was renowned for his spiritual gifts and particularly for the gift of prophecy. On one day, according to the Western usage, he ordained three men priests. Two of them were to become great saints and leaders of the monastic reformation in this country, St Dunstan and St Ethelwold. It is said that, when he had ordained them, he foretold the future ministry of each one of them. The two became great saints, but the third, Ethelstan, had a serious spiritual fall and ended his course in misery. St Alphege himself reposed in the Lord in the year 951.

POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

“I CAME ACROSS an article explaining that the Seventh Ecumenical Synod did not forbid the use of three-dimensional statues in our Church. Is that correct? If it does, why don’t we have such kind of religious statues in our churches?” - A. Q., Philippines.

I AM no theologian, and certainly not an expert on the Ecumenical Councils, so my answer will probably be deficient. However, the Councils did not gather and make rules for the Church to obey (like a parliament or municipal council nowadays), but, guided by the Holy Spirit, they expressed the mind of the Church. So just because they did not speak on certain matters does not mean that they approve them. It may simply not have been an issue at the time.

Furthermore, even if the Council expressed no condemnation of statues, that does not mean that we should necessarily use them in our churches. Three-dimensional images are by their very nature more materialistic and carnal than two-dimensional depictions, and this in itself is reason enough to avoid their use in our worship.

And again, widely and consistently, with literally one or two minor exceptions, for well over a thousand years, the Orthodox Church everywhere has refrained from using fully three-dimensional figures. That itself is reason enough for not doing so. We follow as our Fathers taught us. Tradition is passed from generation to generation.

I hope this inadequate reply will help you a little.



News Section

UNION TALKS CONTINUE

THE Dialogue between the Holy Synods of the **Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece** (under the presidency of **H.E. Archbishop Kallinikos**) and the **Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance** (under the presidency of **H.E. Metropolitan Cyprian II**) is progressing in Greece, and towards the end of February two communiqués, the Eleventh and the Twelfth, were posted on the Synod in Resistance website: <http://www.synodinresistance.org/Info_en/New.html>. The communiqués are posted under the dates, 25th and 26th February. If any readers do not have internet access and would like print-outs of these reports, we will gladly send them to you.

RELICS OF REVERED ELDER IN GEORGIA UNCOVERED

IN Mtskheta, the former capital of the early Georgian Kingdom of Iberia, the holy relics of the elder and wonder-worker, Blessed Father Gabriel (Urgebadze), a fool-for-Christ, were uncovered on 9th / 22nd February. On the following Monday the elder's relics were translated to the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Tbilisi. Archimandrite Gabriel (Urgebadze) (1929 - 1995) was glorified in 2012 by the Holy Synod of the Georgian Orthodox Church. The Elder Gabriel opposed the communist regime in Soviet Georgia (a former republic of the USSR) and was persecuted by the government for many years. Fr Gabriel was arrested by Soviet police in 1965, after he set fire to a huge portrait of Lenin during a parade. Tortured by the KGB for several months, he was eventually released from prison. He became a well-known spiritual guide and wonderworker in Georgia, with many spiritual gifts. During his last years he lived in Samtavro Convent in Mtskheta, within the King Mirian' Tower which was built in the fourth century. He was visited by hundreds of pilgrims daily, and was reputed to have the ability to answer his guests' questions before they could ask. The Elder was extraordinarily austere himself, but was kind and gentle toward others. He was laid to rest in the

courtyard of the Holy Transfiguration Church at Samtavro, from whence his incorrupt relics have now been taken up.

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SIR-UK NEWS

“ARK OF SALVATION” IN SERBIAN

PROTOPRESBYTER-STAVROPHORE **Milun Kostic**, who for many years was the rector of the **Serbian Orthodox Church of St Sava in London**, and has been a friend and supporter of our Brotherhood from its founding, has translated our book, **“The Ark of Salvation”** into Serbian. The Serbian version was published in Belgrade in an attractive hard-back edition. On Tuesday, 4th February, Fr Milun visited us and, as gifts, brought us two of his other published works and copies of the current translation, which was published with the blessing of **His Grace Bishop Dositej, the Serbian Orthodox Bishop of Scandinavia and Great Britain**. Later in the month, Fr Milun visited the Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden and kindly gave the sisters there a signed copy of the book.

REPOSE OF A PARISHIONER

MARTTA WATKINS of Tilgate, Crawley, died peacefully in her sleep on Tuesday, 12th / 25th February, aged 92. She had been one of our parishioners since our earliest days at Brookwood, although towards the end, when she had entered her nineties, she was less able to travel from Crawley to church frequently, and the Brotherhood clergy would take her the Holy Mysteries in her home. We did so a couple of weeks before her sudden repose, and after the service she then cooked us breakfast. She was still living alone and coping. Born in Karelia in 1921, she learned, as people did in those days in country areas, many skills, and over the years she has given

our church many of her embroideries and hand worked cloths. We ask the prayers of the faithful for her repose. May she find rest with the Saints, whom she so evidently loved, and *Memory Eternal*.

PASTORAL VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT

THE BROTHERHOOD CLERGY visited the Isle of Wight on Wednesday, 13th / 26th February to bless houses, a car, and to serve a pannikhida at the grave of one of the faithful, Anna, laid to rest there. During the visit, at their home we also read the naming prayers for **Zachary**, the new-born son of **Martin and Christine Smith**. Zachary is named after the Holy Prophet Zacharias, the father of the Forerunner. Our thanks are due to Melanie Swan for taking us round the island. In a message later, she quipped: “The tour was curtailed since the Island shrank during the storms, hence my concentration on a detailed viewing of Shanklin cemetery suburbs”!

NEW VESTMENTS

A beautiful set of green velvet hangings, altar covers and chalice veils, made at the workshop of **Panayiotis and Eleanora Koutsoliakos**, faithful members of our Church in Greece, have arrived at the Brotherhood. Panayiotis and Eleanora brought them on Sunday 10th / 23rd February. They also brought some lenten chalice veils and a hanging depicting the Extreme Humility. The green set will be completed when later the priestly and servers’ vestments arrive by post. The Koutsoliakoses were offered refreshments here and stayed with us through the afternoon, and thereafter enjoyed the hospitality of **Fr Stephen and Presbytera Joanna Fretwell**, who have stayed at their home in Greece, close to the Monastery at Fili.

NEW ICON CARDS

PRINTS of the icon of our **Venerable Mother Pelagia the Former Courtesan and Saint Nonnus of Heliopolis** have now been made. The icon was painted by the Sisters of the **Convent of Saint Elizabeth of Russia, at Etna, California**. The photography was undertaken by **MRM Studios in Aldershot**, who also arranged the printing for us. The prints have been made in memory of **Mother Pelagia of the Lesna Icon Convent in France**, who, as is stated on the reverse of the cards, was after the hierarchs the principal founder and benefactor of our Brotherhood. *May her Memory be Eternal.*

VISITORS

ON Sunday, 20th January / 2nd February, the feast day of the Venerable Evthymius the Great, **Hieromonk Serapion** of the **Sacred Monastery of Cucova in Romania** concelebrated with us at the Divine Liturgy. Fr Serapion arrived, completely unannounced, during our Mattins service. As it happened we had far fewer members of the Romanian faithful in church on that Sunday than usual, and unfortunately none of their chanters. Some later expressed regret at not being here to meet Fr Serapion, but then if you attend every Sunday you would not miss such opportunities, and, as one of the young Romanians remarked to me about a similar instance, at every Liturgy we have Someone present who is greater than any member of the visiting clergy - that is not to be missed! Fr Serapion serves within the Diocese of **His Grace, Bishop Antonie**, and is himself reported to be a most gifted singer of church music, although sadly, not sharing a common language with him, we did not discover that and have the opportunity to hear his chanting. After the Divine Liturgy Father Serapion heard the confessions of those members of the Romanian faithful who were with us.

ON the Great Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, 2nd / 15th

February, **Archimandrite Hieronymos** attended the Divine Liturgy at the **Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden**. Fr Hieronymos is a native Greek, but is a priest of the **Patriarchate of Jerusalem** and serves in Jordan. He thus speaks fluent Arabic and so was able to talk with **Mother Vikentia** and her sisters in their native language. During the Divine Liturgy, he prayed with us within the altar, and afterwards the sisters invited him to join us at the breakfast. He kindly gave our Brotherhood a mother of pearl pectoral cross, a framed depiction of the Tomb of our Saviour, the Patriarchal Yearbook and some icon prints.

FATHER Deacon Kristian Akselburg, who ministers at the **Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Kentish Town, London**, visited us on Thursday 20th February. He venerated the holy things in the church and then was offered hospitality in the Exhibition Room. We have known Fr Kristian, who has visited our community many times, for many years, but this was his first visit since his ordination to the diaconate.

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PRACTICAL TIP

THE FIRST WEEK in April on the church calendar (14th-20th April n.s.) this year is the **Great Week** of the Church Year, culminating in the greatest of all the feasts, **Pascha, Easter Day**. In other traditions, Great Week is called **Holy Week** or **Passion Week**, but all these names only betoken the importance of this week and its divine services. We should, therefore, make plans ahead of time to be able to participate in them as fully as we possibly can, by making whatever arrangements are necessary: taking time off work, arranging to stay overnight near a church, avoiding social contacts which would clash with the services, or, failing all else, by having the books at home so that at the very least we can read the services that are being chanted in church.