

# LIGHT OF THE EAST

**"GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS."**

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

VOLUME 13, NUMBER 5, SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2014

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## FROM THE EDITOR...

Dear Members and Friends,  
our next regular meeting will  
be Wednesday, November 12,  
7pm at St. Maron Church  
1555 S. Meridian Road  
Youngstown, Ohio 44511.  
Our speaker will be the pastor  
of St. Maron's, Chorbishop  
Michael Kail. Our chapter  
will be celebrating the  
feastday of our patron, St.  
John Chrysostom (Nov. 13 in  
the Eastern Church).

Consequently, Chorbishop  
Michael's talk will be "**St. John Chrysostom  
and the Maronites.**"

Please make a special effort to attend our  
meetings thereby showing by your presence  
support for our goal of unity.

## Chapter Paid dues 2015

Demiduk, Fr. Conoboy, Fr. Rohan, Br. Calabro,  
Br. Scalise, Sleever, Tavorario, Billcheck,  
Sarantopoulos.

Chapter dues are \$20 (\$25 family, \$15 student)  
yearly. Make check payable to the Society of St.  
John Chrysostom and send to the address in the  
masthead at top of page. Thank you!

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



## WHO ARE WE?

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

Churches :

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

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

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

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

++++  
**MAY THE SOUL OF FATHER ANDREW  
KOLITSOS REST IN PEACE AND MAY  
PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HIM,  
FATHER ANDREW PASSED ON OCTOBER 7.  
ETERNAL MEMORY!**

## SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

<http://chrysostomsociety.org/>

Our patron saint was generally considered the greatest of the Greek Fathers of the Church—a preacher and public speaker of such eloquence that he was given the nickname *Chrysostomos*, or “Golden-Tongued.”

In A.D. 349 or thereabouts John was born in Antioch, second city in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. His father was in the Syrian army, a vigorous commander who met an early death. His wife Anthusa was twenty years old at the time and a Christian; she saw to the education of John and his elder sister Pulcheria at the best schools, both pagan and Christian. Wanting to become a rhetorician, John studied under Libanius, an easy-going pagan and the most eloquent orator of the day; the choice to succeed him at the school was his star pupil, “had not the Christians stolen him from us.” John went to the school for monks in Syria. There he lived as an anchorite for two years before his health caved in and he had to return to the city.

In 386 he was ordained priest by Bishop Flavian, who then appointed him to the post of episcopal preacher. During Lent the following year, he gave twenty-one homilies entitled “On the Statues.” They had something to do with the tax riots in Antioch during which the rampaging Christians just happened to topple the statues of the Emperor Theodosius, his father, his sons, and his consort.

To administer punishment the Emperor in Constantinople sent two muscular emissaries; but the bishop obtained clemency for the Antiochenes; and next Lent John preached a series of sermons that both mollified the imperial establishment and yet in the same breath managed to condemn the idolatrous statuary.

The next year John was pressured, against his will, to succeed the failing Archbishop of Constantinople. He was spirited into the

unfriendly capital, but he managed to arrive at the deathbed in time to be named head of that diocese.

According to Palladius, a contemporary historian, John began “sweeping the stairs from the top.” He cut expenditures and gave the money to the poor; he supported the hospitals and reformed his clergy. In other words, he pleased some and displeased others.



At that time, at least to those who strode its streets, Constantinople seemed to be the hub of the universe. It was a tumultuous time. Pagans, Manichaeans, and Gnostics rubbed shoulders with Arians, Apollinarians, and Jews. Christian factions also contended with one another.

John also found himself facing off against the Emperor Arcadius and his consort Eudoxia. For example, when a silver statue of Eudoxia was erected near his cathedral, John denounced the ceremonies in fiery language.

He could be mild, saying from the pulpit of God’s mercy: “If you’ve fallen a second time into sin, or even a thousand times, come to me and you’ll be healed.”

But he could also be prophetic and uncompromising. One Easter Sunday, he delivered a scorching sermon entitled *Against the Games and Shows of the Theater and Circus*; too many Christians, it seemed, had gone to the races on Good Friday and Holy Saturday instead of to church.

One of the most controversial aspects of his career centers around the sermons he gave that have been translated as *Against the Jews*.

Scholarly opinion remains divided on how to interpret these homilies. Some believe them to be egregious examples of inflammatory anti-Semitism. Others, such as the church historian Robert Wilken (*John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century*), have argued that John’s target was the tendency of some Christians to become overly engrossed in Judaizing practices.

This debate, of course, will remain unresolved, but this episode in John’s career raises serious, painful questions (Continue next page)

that require prayerful consideration.

One area where John's influence for good has been universally recognized lies in the realm of liturgy and prayer. To this day his "Divine Liturgy" serves as the basis of worship in Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches of the Byzantine Rite.

John had precious little time for writing, but he managed to produce 67 homilies on Old Testament subjects, 8 of them on Genesis alone; and 59 on the Psalms. On the New Testament, he composed 90 homilies on St. Matthew; 88 on John; 55 on Acts of the Apostles; 39 on Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. And he was a prolific correspondent, with 238 letters extant today. His clashes with the Emperor and Empress ended in his banishment to the wilds of the eastern empire. Accompanied by guards, he had to walk most of the way and, quite literally, he was walked to death in the year 407.

In 451, at the Council of Chalcedon, he was declared a Doctor of the Universal Church.

In 553 Pope Vigilius referred to him as *Chrysostom*, a tag that stuck.

In the Byzantine Church he's third of the Three Holy Hierarchs and Universal Teachers, the other two being Basil and Gregory Nazianzen; to them the Western Church has added Athanasius to make the four Greek Doctors of the Church. St. John Chrysostom is commemorated in Eucharistic liturgies, chiefly in the great intercession, of the Byzantine, Syrian, Chaldean, and Maronite rites.

In 1909 Pope Pius X declared him heavenly patron of preachers of the word of God.

» 10/08/2014 11:34

## **Pope: history has separated Christians, "but we're on the path to reconciliation and communion"**

"During the journey through history, the Church has been tempted by the devil who tries to divide it, and unfortunately has been marred by serious and painful separations". "Behind these tears are always the pride and selfishness, which are the cause of all disagreement and make us intolerant, unable to listen and accept those who have a different vision or position from ours."

Vatican City (AsiaNews) - History has separated Christians, "but we're on the way to reconciliation and communion".



Pope Francis dedicated his address to the 50 thousand people in St Peter's Square for the general audience to ecumenism. The audience began as is tradition with a long tour among the crowd in his white jeep, during which he surprisingly invited two excited boys to joining him onboard.

"During the journey through history - he said - the church has been tempted by the devil who tries to divide it, and unfortunately has been marred by serious and painful separations. These divisions have sometimes lasted for a long time, some until today, so much so, that it is now difficult to retrace all the reasons [for these divisions] and find possible solutions. The reasons that led to such fractures and separations can be varied and diverse: from differences in dogmatic and moral principles; differences in theological and pastoral conceptions; politically motivated reasons or those of convenience, even clashes due to personal dislikes and ambitions ... what is certain is that, in one way or another, behind pride and selfishness are always these tears which are the cause of all disagreement and make us intolerant, unable to listen and accept those who have a different vision or a position from ours".

"Many have resigned themselves to this division - even in our Catholic Church - which throughout history has often been a cause of conflict and suffering, even of wars. This is a shame! Even today, relationships are not always based on respect and cordiality ... But, I wonder: How do we react to all this? Are we also resigned, if not indifferent to this division? Or do we firmly believe that we can and we must walk in direction of reconciliation and full communion? ... the full communion that will allow us to participate together in the body and blood of Christ".

"The divisions between Christians injure the Church, wound Christ, and divided we wound Christ: the Church is in fact the body of which Christ is the head. (Continue next page)



We know only too well how dear it was to Jesus that his disciples remained together in his love. Just thinking about his words in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, his prayer addressed to the Father on the eve of the Passion: "**so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us**". "This unity was already threatened while Jesus was still among his disciples: in the Gospel, in fact, it should be noted that the Apostles were arguing among themselves about who was the greatest, the most important. The Lord, however, insisted so much on 'unity in the name of the Father, making us understand that our proclamation and our testimony will be more credible if we are able to live in communion and love each other'. Faced with the reality of the divisions that still exist today the Pope, said, "is there something that each of us, as members of Holy Mother Church, we can and should do? Prayer should never be lacking, in continuity and in communion with that of Jesus, prayer for the unity of Christians. And together with prayer, the Lord asks of us a renewed opening, He asks us not to be closed to dialogue and encounter, but to grasp all that is valid and positive that is offered by those who think differently from us or which arises out of different positions. He asks us not to fix our gaze on what divides us, but rather on what unites us, trying to better know and love Jesus and to share the richness of his love. This means concrete adherence to the truth, along with the ability to forgive, to feel part of the same Christian family, considering ourselves a gift for each other and doing many good things together, many works of charity". "It is painful but there are divisions, there are divided Christians, we are divided among ourselves. But we all have something in common: we all believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We all believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and thirdly, we all journey together, we are on a journey. Let's help each other! But you think this way, you feel that way ... But in every community there are good theologians: they discuss, they seek the theological truth because it is their duty, but we walk together, praying for each other and doing works of charity. And this is how we practice communion on our journey. This is called spiritual ecumenism: to walk the path of life together in

our faith in Jesus Christ the Lord. Some say we should not talk about personal things, but I cannot resist the temptation. ... we're talking about communion, communion among us. And today, I am so grateful to the Lord that 70 years ago today I made my first Communion. Making our First Holy Communion we all need to know that to enter into communion with others, in communion with our brothers and sisters of our Church, but also in communion with all who belong to different communities but believe in Jesus. Let us thank the Lord for our Baptism, let us thank the Lord for our fellowship, and communion so that in the end we may all be together".

"Dear friends - he concluded - onwards towards full unity! History has separated us, but we are on the path to reconciliation and communion! And this is true! And we have to defend it! We are all on the journey towards communion . And when the goal may seem too far away, almost unreachable, and we feel caught in despair, we must take heart at the idea that God cannot close His ears to the voice of His Son Jesus and not fulfill his and our prayer, so that all Christians may really be one".

### **Ecumenism takes time**



### **METROPOLITAN HILARION**

**The divisions between Orthodox send for long theological dialogue with the Catholic Church on the primacy. Nothing done to the session in Amman (Continue next page)**

**GIANNI VALENTE**

**ROMA** <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/>

Google translation from Italian

The theological dialogue between Catholics and Orthodox is lagging behind. Amman has been virtually empty the last plenary session of the Mixed Commission created to address the theological obstacles to full communion between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The members of the Commission - 23 Catholic delegates and two delegates from each of the 14 autocephalous Orthodox Churches - gathered in the Jordanian capital September 15 to 23 in order to discuss a working paper entitled "Synodical and Primacy." The intention, signing a joint document was supposed to represent a step forward in the work of the Commission, committed since 2006 to see if there is a definition and an exercise of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, which can also be accepted by the Orthodox. Instead, as stated in a press release issued in record time by the Moscow Patriarchate, the text has raised "a number of objections to the bottom." Attempts to elaborate on the spot another draft did not succeed. And in the end, "after lengthy discussions, which revealed serious disagreements on the issue of primacy in the Church", he instructed the Coordinating Committee of the Commission to redraft the text, in the next meeting scheduled in 2015.

In the press put online by Moscow - even before the official report, released by the Catholic by Vatican Radio - you feel a trace of ill-concealed satisfaction with how things went: the Moscow Patriarchate continues to manifest itself intolerant towards a theological dialogue where so far a prominent role for the orthodox party was held by the Metropolitan of Pergamon Ioannis Zizioulas, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, widely regarded as the greatest Christian theologian living. This time, however, other Orthodox Churches have expressed dissatisfaction with the text of the work, giving the impression that the "boycott" of the Moscow Theological Dialogue does not represent an isolated location.

The working draft archived addressed the relationship between primacy and collegiality with a cut purely theological, putting aside the historical and patristic arguments on which there

was, in fact bogged down - always for objections to the orthodox party - in previous sessions of the Commission. In the proposed text, the relationship between primacy and collegiality between the 'primus' exercise of authority and the collegiality of the bishops in the Church was founded theologically in the light of the dynamics of the Trinity, where the unity of the divine nature is common to the three Persons . A parallelism perceived as too "rational" and deductive by the Orthodox representatives have proposed that the provision of the draft. Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Metropolitan Amman to present on behalf of the Patriarchate of Moscow, did not even have to do too much pressure to bear on his positions delegates from other Orthodox Churches slave. They dropped with courtesy calls from the Catholic side to find a consensus around the drafting of a new draft. In a statement released to provide an official budget session - co-chaired once again by John of Pergamon together with Cardinal Kurt Koch - the accent is dropped on the initiatives and the words of the days spent in Amman members of the Commission wanted express the shared closeness and solidarity with Christians in troubled areas of the Middle East. But in terms of ecumenical dialogue, the outcome of the summit in Amman thin and divisions surfaced again raise questions among the Orthodox, also in view of the impending "Great and Holy Council" of Orthodoxy in 2016, convened by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartolomeo to deal with the "new problems" that the mission and the presence of the Orthodox Churches are faced with at the present time. On that occasion, the leaders of the Orthodox able to find a common line on ecumenism and relations with the Catholic Church? Or the ecumenical question will be taken off the agenda of the Council, to prevent cracking?

To this day, even in the Amman Orthodox representatives have confirmed their intention to continue the dialogue on the primacy and collegiality. None required or moratoria announced dissociations and future lump sum. At the same time, Metropolitan Hilarion had the opportunity to reiterate the dissociation of the Moscow Patriarchate by the Ravenna Document, the text approved by the Commission in 2007, in the absence ((Continue next page)

of the Russian representatives, which defined the relationship between primacy and Conciliarity as "mutually interdependent" and recognized that in the first Christian millennium the Church of Rome "occupied the first place in the taxis (succession of locations in order of importance, ed)," and the bishop of Rome was recognized "as protos (first) among the bishops of the major sees, in consent of the bishops." Even the Orthodox Church of Georgia - so the statement of the Patriarchate of Moscow - has reiterated his dissent from the Ravenna Document. For the near future, the ecumenical path between Orthodox and Catholics should seek ways that are not rendered unfit for use by internal conflicts Orthodoxy. As always, to weigh the moves are mostly of the Moscow Patriarchate, whose objective preponderance "policy" is likely to turn into an element of embarrassment, which slows down every authentic apostolic dynamism and does not help to take advantage of new, possible occasions of communion with the Catholic. It is striking that, in the context of the red-hot crisis in Ukraine, the Moscow Patriarch Kirill has felt compelled to dismiss the allegations today that denigrate him as a mere tool of the Kremlin's policy. It does not appear that the surge in nationalist recorded in Russia will help the Orthodox hierarchy to gain the confidence and esteem spiritual among Russians today: a large survey carried out in recent weeks shows that 36% of his countrymen consider President Putin as "moral authority," while only 1% of Russians recognize the same noble status to the Patriarch of Moscow.



Monday, 06 October 2014

<http://vultus.stblogs.org/>

(edited by LOE)

## Praying in the Balkans

Last year, a dear friend of mine who is an Orthodox Christian — husband, father, and physician serving in the U.S. military in the Balkans — shared with me his powerful experience of the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin

Mary. Yes, some Orthodox Christians do pray a version of the Holy Rosary of the Mother of God. One form of the Holy Rosary, promoted by none other than Saint Seraphim of Sarov, incorporates fifteen mysteries; each mystery being meditated during ten Angelic Salutations. Father Zosima, a spiritual son of Saint Seraphim, is quoted as having said:

I forgot to give you a piece of advice vital for salvation. Say the *O Hail, Mother of God and Virgin* one hundred and fifty times, and this prayer will lead you on the way to salvation. This rule was given by the Mother of God herself in about the eighth century, and at one time all Christians fulfilled it. We Orthodox have forgotten about it, and St. Seraphim has reminded me of this Rule. In my hands I have a hand-written book from the cell of St. Seraphim, containing a description of the many miracles which took place through praying to the Mother of God and especially through saying one hundred and fifty times the *O Hail, Mother of God and Virgin*. If, being unaccustomed to it, it is difficult to master one hundred and fifty repetitions daily, say it fifty times at first. After every ten repetitions say the *Our Father* once and *Open unto us the doors of thy loving-kindness*. Whomever he spoke to about this miracle-working Rule remained grateful to him.

## A Daily Prayer for Christian Unity

By your power Lord,  
gather together your scattered flock  
under the one authority of your Son:  
that the design of your love may be  
accomplished  
and that the world may know, the one true  
God,  
and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Amen.  
*Prayer by Fr Paul Couturier*

## PRAYER OF SOUFANIEH

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



**BRING A FRIEND TO OUR MEETING!**

## East meets West in America's new Blessed

2014-10-04 Vatican Radio (Vatican Radio) "It's interesting that God has chosen to honour a contemplative



instead of an activist for the next American to be beatified," said Bishop Kurt Burnette of the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Eparchy of Passaic. He was speaking to Vatican Radio about Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, who was beatified on Saturday in New Jersey. Born in Bayonne, New Jersey, Sr. Miriam Teresa is the fourth American-born woman to be beatified. However, this is the first time that the Rite of Beatification will take place on U.S. soil. Cardinal Angelo Amato, the prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, presided the ceremony, which took place in Newark's Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

The process of investigation was opened in 1945 to investigate the sanctity of Sr. Miriam Teresa's life. She was raised in the Byzantine Ruthenian Church and taught for a brief period in Jersey City, before entering the convent of the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth in 1925.

Her spiritual director recognized her sanctity and asked her to write reflections on holiness.

Although she fell ill and died two years after professing her final vows, Sr. Miriam Teresa's writings still remain as a source of inspiration to this day. The collection of her writings, entitled "Greater Perfection", was published shortly after her death.

Bishop Burnette reflected on the impact of her legacy on Eastern and Western spirituality.

"One of the remarkable things about her writings, I believe, is that she brings an Eastern Christian spirit of unity into the Western analysis. The Western theology tends to be analytical. For example, when she talks about prayer, in the West they had divided prayer up into three stages. What they called the purgative,

the illuminative and the unitive. But Sr. Miriam Teresa claims that prayer always includes all three parts."

Pope Francis approved a miracle attributed to Sr. Miriam Therese when a young boy who lost his eyesight due to macular degeneration was cured after prayers through her intercession. For Bishop Burnette, this miracle along with her profound humility, spirituality and insight are clear signs of God's confirmation of her sanctity. "I don't believe we really choose who is going to be canonized, God does," he concluded.

## Pope Francis to Assyrian Patriarch: we are close in faith, persecution

2014-10-02 Vatican Radio (Vatican Radio) "No religious, political or economic motives can justify what is happening to hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women and children:" that's what Pope Francis said



Thursday, calling what is happening to Christians and other minorities in Iraq and Syria "daily persecution."

Pope Francis was speaking in a Vatican audience to Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Mar Dinkha IV. The Patriarch is head of one of the oldest Christian churches – tracing its roots back to the first century in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. Though theological discussions are on-going, the Assyrian Church of the East is not in communion with Rome.

In his remarks, Pope Francis noted the suffering "that we share from the wars that are crossing different regions in the Middle East, and in particular, from the violence that Christians and the faithful of other religious minorities are subjected to, especially in Iraq and in Syria."

He added we feel "profoundly united in (Continue next page)



prayer” and “in charitable action towards these suffering members of Christ’s body.”

### Steps towards communion

Pope Francis welcomed the Patriarch’s visit as “another step on the way towards a growing closeness and spiritual communion...after the bitter misunderstandings of the past centuries.” Noting the “milestone” common Christological Declaration signed 20 years ago by the two churches under the leadership of Pope John Paul II, the Pope said both churches recognize they profess the same faith of the apostles and believe in the divinity and humanity of Christ united in one person.

He assured the Patriarch of his “personal commitment” to continuing to deepen the dialogue of friendship and communion between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East and prayed that their mixed theological commission would bring closer the day in which both will be able to celebrate the Eucharist at the same altar.

### A LOOK BACK



Pope St John XXIII celebrating the episcopal consecration of Bishop Gabriel Coussa. The episcopal consecration of Gabriel Coussa, was celebrated by Pope John in the Byzantine Rite in the Sistine Chapel on April 16, 1961, Good Shepherd Sunday of that year in the Roman Rite.

(Bishop Coussa was shortly thereafter appointed Pro-Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches; the following year he was made a Cardinal, and Secretary of the same Congregation, but died only four months later.) The photographs make it clear that, unlike the normal Papal Mass in the Roman Rite, the Pope wears the tiara throughout the ceremony, as the equivalent of the crown normally used by bishops in the Byzantine Rite. He is also wearing a sticharion, the normal vestment of a Byzantine bishop when celebrating the Divine Liturgy, but with the phanon and pallium over it.

## Byzantium & the Christian East

[http://www.oca.ox.ac.uk/sect\\_byz.shtml](http://www.oca.ox.ac.uk/sect_byz.shtml)

Christ and St Menas  
on an icon from Egypt



Within a century of Constantine’s re-foundation of the ancient city of Byzantium, his ‘New Rome’ of Constantinople had become a great imperial capital, creating a new focus for political, cultural and economic activity in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond. Fifth-century emperors presided from Constantinople over a ‘Greek Roman Empire’ which enjoyed prosperity, cultural cohesion and security against external attack; in the sixth century the emperor Justinian even launched a programme of reconquest of several of the western provinces. In the seventh century, however, the empire underwent a severe crisis, with the loss of its southern provinces, first to Sasanian Persia, and then to Muslim Arabs.

Late Antiquity saw the development of a new style of imperial authority in Byzantium, now expressed in explicitly Christian terms; this was part of a broader transformation of the role of Christianity in (Continue next page)



culture and society, affecting everything from literary production to patterns of civic life. Distinctive Christian cultures also flourished in the southern and eastern provinces of the empire, and beyond, both in independent states (like Armenia) and under Sasanian or Arab rule. These communities worshipped and wrote in indigenous languages, such as Syriac, Armenian and Coptic. Increased interest in recent decades in the politics, society, economy and culture of the Byzantine and east-Christian worlds, and vigorous dialogue between historians, archaeologists, and literary and theological scholars, has led to recognition of the creativity and dynamism with which this complex society responded to challenges and change.

## THE LOCAL CHURCH

Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine is Dedicated as Minor Basilica

This title is in recognition of the importance of the Shrine in the liturgical and pastoral life of the Eparchy and the Maronite Faithful in the United States.



SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2014 from:

<http://orbiscatholicussecundus.blogspot.com/>

[Great Pilgrimage Destination in the United States: Our Lady of Lebanon National Shrine](#)

In college my roommate was Maronite.

It was then that I learned how awesome they are.

If you have never been to a Maronite Liturgy, then start going.

In their rites, you hear prayed the very spoken language of Christ, Syriac. It will send chills down your spine.

Make a pilgrimage to this fine place of prayer, healing, and reconciliation:

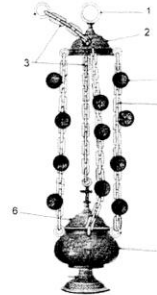
<http://www.ourladyoflebanonshrine.com/Home.aspx>.

The rector I met once in Italy, a very fine man. Ciao, Abouna!

## Explanation of the Censer

The censer refers to the Virgin Mary where the fire of God was placed in her womb without being burned and was revealed to the world as fine perfume that dispelled the smell of sin, and gave the souls the opportunity to smell life and the scent of holiness and the goodness of heaven (Rev. 3:8).

- The hook symbolizes God
- The dome symbolizes heaven
- The middle chain symbolizes Christ's concession and his descent to earth to become a man
- The bells symbolize the angels
- The three outer chains symbolize the Holy Trinity
- The cavity where the fiery embers are placed symbolizes the Virgin's womb that carried God and did not burn
- The incense symbolizes the pure prayers ascending to heaven
- The deacon that carries the censer symbolizes Archangel Gabriel
- The path of the deacon who carries the censer from east to west symbolizes Christ' life on earth and His return to heaven
- The ember symbolizes God's ember "because our God is a raging fire" (Hebrews 11:29)
- The coal symbolizes the body which is our human nature, the humanity of Christ
- Igniting the coal with fire symbolizes the complete unity of humanity with divinity in one body since "He made Him one with His divinity without being mixed, blended or changed." □



(from the Maronite Voice Sept. 2014)

**Historic Armenian Liturgy held at the Akdamar Church unites Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Christians: Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Participates for the first time together with Syriac and Armenian Orthodox Prelates by Prakash Varghese (OCP News Service) – 8/9/14**  
**Turkey: The fifth annual Armenian Orthodox Liturgy was held at the historic at the Cathedral of Holy Cross located on the Akdamar Island on 7th September 2014.**  
**This year it was a very special and historic due the presence of His All Holiness Bartholomew I- Ecumenical Patriarch and His Eminence Mor Filiksinos Yusuf Çetin – Patriarchal Vicar of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Istanbul and Ankara.**  
 (edited by LOE)

## Israeli Christians' New Nationality: Aramaean, not Arab

Many of Israel's 160,000 Christians, hitherto registered as Arabs, eligible to re-register as Aramaeans; their leaders are ecstatic.

By Ido Ben Porat <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/>  
First Publish: 9/17/2014, 2:36 PM

**Father Gabriel Nadaf -  
flash90**

Interior Minister  
Gideon Saar has  
instructed the  
Population,  
Immigration and

Border Authority (PIBA) to allow the  
registration of a new nationality – Aramaean –  
in the identity cards of Christian citizens who  
were registered as Arabs until now.

In a letter to PIBA Director Amnon Ben-Ami,  
Saar wrote that he has “received three opinions  
according to which the existence of the  
Aramaean nationality is clear and obvious,” as  
required by the Supreme Court's ruling.”

“The conditions required by the ruling for  
proving the existence of the nationality are  
present – including historical heritage, religion,  
culture, descent and language,” he determined.  
Saar wrote that “the registration clerks must be  
instructed in accordance with the Population  
Registry Law that a resident who first registers  
in the Population Registry, and who requests to  
be registered as an Aramaean in the nationality  
detail, will be able to register thus.”

Saar's decision ultimately applies to those  
Christians currently living in Israel who identify  
as Aramaean, can speak Aramaic, and are either  
from the Maronite, Orthodox Aramaic, Greek  
Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Syriac Catholic  
denominations. Some of them, wishing for a  
change of status, applied as a group to the  
Interior Ministry as far back as 2010 and will  
now finally be allowed to register as Aramaeans.  
A Facebook page representing supporters of  
Father Gabriel Nadaf, a leader of the Aramaean  
minority, was ecstatic over the decision.

The decision “corrects a historic injustice that



wrongly defined Israel's citizens of eastern-Christian descent as 'Christian Arabs,' although other than their spoken language, they have absolutely no connection to the Arab nationality,” he wrote.

In an emotional letter to Saar, Nadaf thanked him for Israeli society's “pluralism and its openness to absorbing religious and ethnic minorities out of love and acceptance, without any discrimination, according to the principles of democracy, individual freedom, freedom of conscience and freedom of worship.”

Father Nadaf said that the Christians wish to become “an inseparable part” of Israeli society make their voices heard “in the social, economic, academic and political sphere in the state of Israel.”

He went further and said that the decision is even more meaningful in a regional and historic perspective.

“This is the first time that a Middle Eastern state recognizes the Aramaean-Christian minority as a legitimate nationality and acts to preserve it, the teaching of its language and its absorption in society,” he wrote.

“In contrast with the region's countries, in which Christians and other minorities are systematically murdered, churches are destroyed and people are forced to hide their identities just because they are defined as Christians – while with every decade that the world progresses, the Arab countries go a decade backward – the state of Israel has made a giant lead forward.”

Nadaf is unique among Orthodox Christian leaders in that [he advocates a strong connection](#) between his community and the state – and for that he has been sanctioned by the official Greek Orthodox church, which has sought to have him defrocked.

Arab MKs have also condemned him, calling him “an agent of Zionism who seeks to divide Arabs.” Nadaf has also been threatened with violence, and even death, he told Israeli reporters. But he insists that he represents a sizable portion of the Christian Israeli community.

“We feel secure in the state of Israel,” Nadaf has said, “and we see ourselves as citizens of the state with all the attendant rights as well as obligations.”

## **METROPOLITAN HILARION OF VOLOKOLAMSK BEGINS HIS VISIT TO ROME**

[Inter-Christian relations, News, DECR Chairman](#)

(edited by LOE)

In the evening of October 14, 2014, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Department for External Church Relations, arrived in Rome for an official visit, which will last till October 18.

With the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, the DECR chairman, acting as a representative of the Russian Orthodox Church, will attend the plenary session of the Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Catholic Bishops on Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization and address the meeting. During his visit, Metropolitan Hilarion will meet with Pope Francis, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Vatican's Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity Cardinal Kurt Koch, and will deliver a lecture at the opening of academic year at the Southern Italy Faculty of Theology in Naples.

## **Russia: Books for the Orthodox seminary in Smolensk**

Posted by [Project of the Week](#) on 13/10/2014  
(edited by LOE)

In order to equip these future priests with a truly broad horizon, the seminarians are all encouraged, during their training, to acquaint themselves with the works of Western theology too. For this reason the Rector wishes to supplement the seminary library, for example with the works of Joseph Ratzinger / Pope Benedict XVI and other noted Catholic theologians. The Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need will be supporting this project with a grant of \$7,000.

## **Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic North American Dialogue** (edited by LOE)

Members of the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches convened with their Roman Catholic counterparts last week on Thursday October 2 and Friday October 3 at the

Stella Maris Retreat Center in Long Branch, New Jersey to discuss issues pertaining to the Holy Mystery of Marriage.

## **BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS**

**Bose, 3–6 September 2014**

**in collaboration with the Orthodox Churches**  
(edited by LOE)

“For the peace of the whole world, for the peace of God’s holy Churches, and for the well-being of all, we pray to the Lord”. The invocation of peace as God’s gift recurs continually in the Orthodox Liturgy.

These words, which have become inappropriate, almost scandalous in the dramatic times of crisis in which we live, sounded at the opening and at the conclusion of the XXII International Ecumenical Conference of Orthodox Spirituality, dedicated to the theme Blessed are the peacemakers (Mt 5,9), held at the monastery of Bose on 3–6 September 2014. For four days about two hundred participants from all over the world and representing all the Orthodox Churches, those of the Reform, and the Catholic Church, prayed and reflected together on the Gospel of peace, which asks Christians to be leaven of reconciliation and peace among today’s men and women.

## **A Venetian priest of the Armenians named archbishop in Istanbul**

(edited by LOE)

The Holy Father has appointed the priest Don Boghos Levon Zekiyan, the diocese lagoon since 1987, the Bishop of Istanbul and All Turkey in the Armenian rite for Catholics.

## **Patriarch of Georgia Receives Vatican Minister** (edited by LOE)

Tbilisi, Georgia, Sept.15 By Nana Kirtzkhalia – Trend:Catholicos-Patriarch of all Georgia Ilia II received the Vatican foreign minister Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See Archbishop Dominique Mamberti in his residence. This visit continues the age-old ties between Georgia and the Holy See, the patriarch said.



## **Divorce and Second Marriages. The compliant “Oikonomia” of the Orthodox Churches**

Compliant toward the bullying of the civil tribunals, from the times of the Byzantine empire. The past and present of the matrimonial practice of the Orthodox according to the reconstruction of an authority in the field, Archbishop Cyril Vasil, secretary of the congregation for the Oriental Churches

by Sandro Magister

ROME, September 26, 2014 – The example of the Orthodox Churches that allow second marriages is an argument enlisted by those who want the Catholic Church to set aside the ban on communion for the divorced and remarried, with Cardinal Walter Kasper in the lead.

Pope Francis gave them a big nudge with the sibylline “parenthesis” that he opened and closed in a conversation with journalists on the return flight from Rio de Janeiro on July 28, 2013:

“But also – a parenthesis – the Orthodox have a different practice. They follow the theology of what they call *oikonomia*, and they give a second chance, they allow it. But I believe that this problem – and here I close the parenthesis – must be studied within the context of the pastoral care of marriage.”

The commonly held idea is that second and even third marriages are celebrated sacramentally in the Orthodox Churches, and communion is given to the divorced and remarried. And this in continuity with the “merciful” practice of the Church in the early centuries.

But the reality is very far from these fantasies. Second marriages entered into the practice of the Eastern Churches in a later era, toward the end of the first millennium. They entered under the invasive influence of civil legislation, of which the Church was the executrix.

In any case, second and third marriages were never considered a sacrament. They were allowed under various more or less expansive



forms in this or that area of Orthodoxy. The dissolution of first marriages was almost always for these Churches the simple transcription of a sentence of divorce issued by the civil authority. The Orthodox Churches themselves do not help to specify this practice of theirs in a theologically and juridically clear form. The proof of this is the serious difficulty in which pastors in the Catholic Church find themselves in coming to grips with mixed marriages in which the Orthodox party comes from a marriage that has been dissolved on both the civil and religious level.

This knowledge gap is filled in, in the text reproduced further below, by an authority in this field, Archbishop Cyril Vasil (in the photo), a 49-year-old Slovak Jesuit, secretary of the Vatican congregation for the Oriental Churches and a former dean of the faculty of canon law at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome.

The text is an extract from the extensive and well-documented article that Vasil dedicated to the theme in this multi-author book to be released in early October in the United States and Italy:

["Remaining in the Truth of Christ. Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church", Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2014.](#)

["Permanere nella verità di Cristo. Matrimonio e Comunione nella Chiesa cattolica", Cantagalli, Sienne, 2014.](#)

The book, conceived of as a contribution to the upcoming synod on the family, has ignited lively reactions on account of the presence among its authors of cardinals Gerhard L. Müller, prefect of the congregation for the doctrine of the faith, Walter Brandmüller, Raymond L. Burke, Velasio De Paolis, and Carlo Caffarra, all of them severely critical of the ideas of their colleague Kasper. Who has counterattacked by asserting that Francis had “agreed” with him on his proposals and therefore “the target of the polemics is not me, but the pope.”

But while the five cardinals had already presented their positions in previous statements - presented again in the book with their explicit cooperation, unlike the inventions that the media chimes in (Continue next page)

with Kasper's remonstrations - Vasil's article on divorce and second marriages in the Eastern Churches is an absolute novelty, on a matter among the least known and most misunderstood, and yet of extraordinary significance and relevance.

Here are the salient passages.

### **SEPARATION, DIVORCE, DISSOLUTION OF THE BOND, AND REMARRIAGE: THEOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL APPROACHES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES**

by Cyril Vasil, S.J.

#### **Influence of Roman and Byzantine Civil Law on Divorce and Second Marriages**

In the pre-Christian era Roman law permitted divorce in general for two sets of motives: upon agreement of the parties (dissidium), or on the basis of a fault by one of the parties (repudium). [...]

The greatest reformer of Roman law, the emperor Justinian (527–565), personally desired that his reform of marriage law be applied also within the Church. [...] Novella 117 of Justinian was a compromise between the tradition of the Eastern Church, which permitted separation for reasons of adultery or in order to enter a monastery, and Roman law, which permitted divorce for many more reasons.

It is often asserted that the Eastern Church, in its desire to live in harmony with civil authorities, often made concessions at the cost of compromising the message of the gospel.

However, during the first millennium we can say that even in the East the Church adhered to the axiom of Saint Jerome: "aliae sunt leges Caesarum aliae Christi" (the laws of Caesar are one thing, the laws of Christ another). [...]

We first notice a real change in the Nomocanon in 14 titles compiled by Patriarch Photius of Constantinople in 883. This collection affirms the indissolubility of marriage while it also provides a list of causes for divorce introduced by Justinian's legislation. The successive development in the Byzantine Empire reinforced the role of the Church, while the Church accepted a new relationship to the State. [...]

Up until the end of the ninth century, it was still possible to contract a civil marriage, but by the year 895, on the basis of Emperor Leo VI's Novella 89, the Church was declared the only institution with legal competence for the celebration of matrimony. In this way, the priestly blessing became a necessary part of the legal act of marriage.

Thus, the Church became the guarantor of marriage as a social institution. Following this, ecclesiastical tribunals gradually, and then in 1086 definitively, received exclusive competence for the examination of marriage cases. As a consequence the Eastern Church had to conform its practices to State and civil legislation. Then once civil legislation began to allow divorce and successive remarriages, the Eastern Church was obligated to recognize these practices. [...]

The successive spread of Christianity from its center in Constantinople to other missionary territories and nations brought about the geographical extension of the judicial-disciplinary practices of this tradition as well as the diffusion of the theological principles that founded such practices.

In this context today, we see diverse Orthodox Churches, which, despite the fact that they are institutionally and hierarchically separate, nevertheless follow most of the same disciplinary and spiritual principles.

#### **Divorce in the Russian Orthodox Church**

Once Christianity arrived in Russia from ancient Byzantium, the provisions of Byzantine law regarding divorce were incorporated into its laws along with some modifications regarding the Russian situation. [...]

In the so-called synodal period (1721–1917), a fixed number of reasons for divorce was established and clarified by State authorities in collaboration with ecclesiastical authorities. [...]

In 1917–1918 the Pan-Russian Council (Vserossijskij Pomestnij Sobor) of the Russian Orthodox Church adopted new regulations concerning divorce, reacting to recent secular laws established by the Soviets. [...]

The Synod established on April 7 and 20, 1918, that marriage blessed by the Church is indissoluble. Divorce "is admitted by the Church only in condescension(Continue next page)

to human weakness and out of care for the salvation of man”, on the conditions that there has been a breakup of the marriage and that reconciliation is impossible. The decision to concede an ecclesiastical divorce falls under the competence of the ecclesiastical tribunals, which work at the request of the spouses, provided that the reason presented for divorce conforms to those approved by the Holy Synod. [...] The Russian Orthodox Church today admits fourteen valid reasons for permitting divorce. [...] However, from the study of actual divorce decrees or declarations issued by the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church, it seems that it is not possible to deduce any particular method for conducting a canonical investigation, or to understand clearly the reasoning behind the application of a given motive for granting divorce. Often one simply finds in this documentation an ecclesiastical divorce decree, together with the request presented by the interested party, a statement that the couple has not been living together, and an indication that a civil divorce has been granted. Following this, the dissolution of the religious marriage and permission to remarry is granted.

### **Divorce in the Greek Orthodox Church**

[...] Beginning in the twelfth century, divorce was received in canonical legislation and in practice by the Greek Church. Slowly, causes for divorce were introduced that were modeled on the morals and the situation of society. [...] Beginning in the seventeenth century, divorce was made more difficult. [...] At the end of the eighteenth century the compilation of laws known as the Pedalion allowed only one motive for divorce: adultery. [...] However, both husband and wife are excommunicated if they are divorced for reasons other than adultery and then take a new spouse. Such persons are subject to the canonical punishment of seven years' prohibition from the Eucharist. The Pedalion recalls that according to the Council of Carthage (407), spouses divorced for reasons other than adultery must reconcile or never remarry. The Pedalion was published with the consent of the patriarch and became above all the recognized text in the Greek Church. However, it did not have a strongly restrictive influence regarding the practice of divorce.

Greece obtained its independence in 1832; matrimonial affairs were regulated by a royal decree issued in 1835. [...] The Greek State recognized the sacramental character of marriage and entrusted marital affairs to the competence of the Greek Orthodox Church, except for questions of divorce, which remained an affair of the State. [...] If this tribunal decreed a divorce, the bishop was obliged by civil law to grant a “spiritual divorce”. [...] The divorced spouse (whose civil divorce was recognized by the ecclesiastical authority) who wished to contract a new marriage had first to perform an assigned penance (epitimia). Following this, the Church ritual for the second marriage had a penitential character. [...] A third marriage was conceded only to those previously divorced persons who were at least forty years old and without children. However, these individuals were prohibited from receiving the Eucharist for five years. [...] Fourth marriages were prohibited. [...] In 1982 a further reform of family law took place in Greece. This reform introduced an option between civil and religious marriage. [...] In the case of divorce, only the civil courts have competence, according to the actual Greek judicial structure. Only after the civil decree of divorce has been issued can the Church decide whether to grant a religious divorce. This canonical dissolution of matrimony pertains only to those who have celebrated a canonical marriage and wish to contract another. [...] Looking now at both the Russian Orthodox and Greek Orthodox Churches' policies and practices, we see that valid motives for divorce can be divided in three groups:

1. Adultery and other similar immoral acts;
2. Physical or legal situations similar to death (disappearance, attempted homicide, incurable illness, detention, separation for a long period, etc.);
3. Moral impossibility of a common life (encouragement of adultery).

### **Juridical Procedures in Countries with “Personal Statutes”**

[...] In Lebanon, as in other countries in the ex-Ottoman Empire, the life of these single, Christian communities is governed by so-called personal statutes. In (Continue next page)



these personal statutes, each Church defines itself and its relationship to the other ecclesial communities. [...]

In this way, each Church was “obligated” to define reasons and conditions for the declaration of nullity of a marriage, the dissolution of the marriage bond, the separation of the spouses while remaining in the bond of marriage, and divorce, as well as the possibility to contract a new marriage.

A look at these approaches to marriage questions in some Orthodox Churches leads us to conclude that, in concrete practice, the Orthodox Churches either endorse civil divorces or recognize them more or less covertly. [...]

In actual practice, long-term separation of spouses is considered the equivalent to divorce because in Orthodox theology, common life is the essential element of marriage, and the conception of separation “manente vinculo”, as it is applied in the Catholic Church, is unknown in the Orthodox Churches.

### **Indissolubility of Marriage: Does a Common Orthodox Doctrine Exist?**

In seeking a common Orthodox doctrine regarding the indissolubility of marriage, divorce, and the marriage of divorced persons, we confront the question of whether it is possible to speak of a common doctrine or of a “magisterium” of the Orthodox Churches. [...]

The first difficulty we encounter is the fact that in the past, few Orthodox authors attempted a profound theoretical reflection on the question of common Orthodox doctrine. [...]

In general, we can say that on the basis of the Gospel text, all the Orthodox authors at heart recognize the indissolubility of Christian marriage as one of its characteristics and teach this doctrine to all Christian spouses as an ideal toward which to aim. [...]

At any rate, even as Orthodox bishops acknowledge the possibility of divorce and remarriage, they admit this only as an exception that confirms the rule of the unity and indissolubility of marriage.

Among Orthodox authors and bishops, opponents to divorce are not lacking. Some of these authorities uphold the complete observance of the indissolubility of marriage and the impossibility of divorce for any reason.

For example, the Russian Archbishop Ignatius (in the Russian Orthodox Church, Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov, 1807-1867) did not permit divorce for any reason, not even for adultery. More moderate, but nevertheless appreciable opposition to divorce has also been evidenced both by Archbishop Iakovos (Coucouzis, 1911-2005), the Orthodox Metropolitan of North and South America (1959-1996), who insisted already in 1966 that concessions of divorce should be limited, and by the Coptic Patriarch Shenouda III (1923–2012), who following his enthronement in 1971 reduced the many reasons considered valid for granting divorce in the Coptic Church to one: adultery. [...]

### **Concluding Considerations**

[...] For the Catholic canonist accustomed to reasoning according to categories of matrimonial procedural law, it is often difficult to understand the fact that, in the Orthodox Church, there is no talk ever about procedural questions about marriage cases per se, that is, there are no roles for an advocate, a promoter of justice, a defender of the bond, and there are no instances of appeal, among other juridical structures. The Orthodox Churches have practically never elaborated a clear doctrine regarding the indissolubility of marriage that could bring the New Testament requirements to the judicial level. This fact is the key that allows us to understand why the Orthodox Churches, even through the expressions of their supreme authorities – oftentimes only passively – accept the sociological reality. [...]

### **The Position of the Catholic Church**

The Catholic Church does not recognize the procedures involved in the declaration of the dissolution of a marriage bond, or those applied in the case of a divorce on account of adultery, in the manner in which these procedures are employed by a number of Orthodox Churches, nor does it recognize the Orthodox application of the principle of *oikonomia* (which, in this case, is considered contrary to divine law), because these dissolutions presuppose the intervention of an ecclesiastical authority in the breakup of a valid marriage agreement. In the decisions in these matters reached by the authority of the (Continue next page)

Orthodox Churches, the distinction between a “declaration of nullity”, “annulment”, “dissolution”, or “divorce” is usually lacking or is practically unknown. [...]

Many Orthodox Churches do little more than simply ratify the divorce sentence issued by the civil court. In other Orthodox Churches, as, for example, in the Middle East, in which ecclesial authorities hold exclusive competence in matrimonial matters, declarations dissolving religious marriages are issued solely by applying the principle of *oikonomia*.

At the beginning of this essay we asked whether the Orthodox practice could represent “a way out” for the Catholic Church in the face of the growing instability of sacramental marriages, by providing a pastoral approach toward those Catholics who, after the failure of a sacramental marriage and a subsequent civil divorce, contract a second, civil marriage.

Before responding to this question, another question should be posed. Is it thinkable to resolve the difficulties that Christian marriages must confront in the contemporary world by lowering the demands of indissolubility? [...] Christ brought his new, revolutionary message, one that was “countercultural” to the pagan world. His disciples announced his good news, fearlessly presenting near impossible demands that contradicted the culture of that age. The world today is perhaps similarly marked by the neo-paganism of consumption, comfort, and egoism, full of new cruelties committed by methods ever more modern and ever more dehumanizing. Faith in supernatural principles is now more than ever subject to humiliation. All this brings us to consider whether “hardness of heart” is a convincing argument to muddle the clearness of the teaching of the Gospel on the indissolubility of Christian marriage.

But as a response to the many questions and doubts, and to the many temptations to find a “short cut” or to “lower the bar” for the existential leap that one makes in the great “contest” of married life, in all this confusion among so many contrasting and distracting voices, still today resound the words of the Lord: “What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mk 10:9).

## **EXCERPT FROM BENEDICT'S XVI LETTER ON 1600TH CENTENARY OF THE DEATH OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 2007.**

In view of the ecumenical progress made between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches since the Second Vatican Council and especially in recent years, we wish



to recall the outstanding efforts that St. John Chrysostom made in his day in promoting reconciliation and full communion between Eastern and Western Churches. Singular among these achievements was his contribution in ending the schism which separated the See of Antioch from the See of Rome and other western churches. At the time of his consecration as Archbishop of Constantinople, John sent a delegation to Pope Siricius at Rome. He also won in advance of this mission the crucial collaboration of the Archbishop of Alexandria in Egypt for his plan to end the schism. Pope Siricius responded favorably to John's diplomatic initiative, and the schism was peacefully resolved so that full communion between the churches was restored.

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