

LIGHT OF THE EAST

"GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS."

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

VOLUME 9, NUMBER 3 MAY-JUNE, 2010

VITO R. CARCHEDI, EDITOR, 35 SCHENLEY AVE. STRUTHERS, OH 44471

TELEPHONE: 330-755-5635 E-MAIL: ycarchedi@hotmail.com WEBSITE: www.bvzcath.org/stjohnchrysostom/

FROM THE EDITOR...

The next regular chapter meeting will be

Wednesday, May 12, at St. Mark's Antiochian Orthodox Church

located at 3506 Logan Way, Liberty. Our speaker will be the Very Rev.

Protopresbyter Kenneth Bachofsky Father is the pastor of St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church in Warren. Father teaches Scripture at Christ the Saviour Seminary in Johnstown. **As part of our evening, for those wishing to attend, Fr. Dan Rohan will celebrate a Vespertine Divine Liturgy for Thursday's Feast of the Ascension at 6:00 P.M. Following liturgy there will be refreshments and a brief business meeting, after which our speaker will present a talk on "Holy Scripture and He Descended into Hell."**

MATTIUSSI EARNS DOCTORATE IN THEOLOGY—HAS BOOK PUBLISHED

The Ratzinger Formula: A Catalyst for the Unfolding Dialogue Between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches on "Conciliarity and Primacy" by Richard A. Mattiussi. 373 pages. \$30.00.

The Formula itself was originally articulated in a lecture given by the then Fr. Joseph Ratzinger at an ecumenical gathering in Graz, Austria in 1976 ... In sum, he proposed that the Catholic Church must not require any more of an adherence to the Roman Primacy from the Orthodox Churches than had existed in the first millennium. On the other hand, the Orthodox must not

condemn as heretical the developments that took place within the Catholic Church during the second millennium... Hence, "the Ratzinger Formula" will hopefully provide a fundamentally dynamic starting point where sister churches from two distinct ecclesial worlds may seek common ground in search of a concrete model that will express full and complete Eucharistic Communion.—Richard A. Mattiussi, taken from the General Introduction

You can order copies by calling our office at 703-691-8862 or online in the New Titles section of the [Online Catalog](http://www.ecpubs.com) at www.ecpubs.com.

Three Romes concerts in Rome, Moscow, and Constantinople

Moscow, March 3 ([Interfax](http://www.interfax.com)) – (edited)The Three Romes international project will be carried out this spring by joint efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

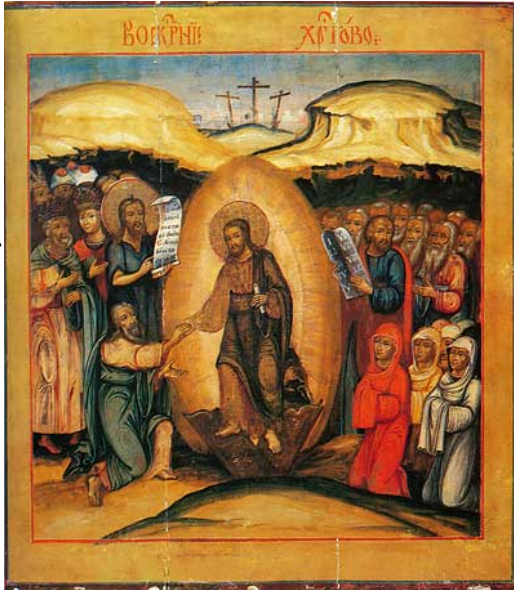
"The action involves three most important for Christian culture geographical centers – Moscow, Istanbul and Rome," director of the Moscow Synodal Choir and Russia's honored artist Alexey Puzakov.

The Russian National Orchestra led by Mikhail Pletnev and the Moscow Synodal Choir are the main participants in the project.

A concert of Russian music will take place on May 20 in the renowned Vatican Paul VI Audience Hall.. Music composed by Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, Rachmaninov, head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk will be performed. Pope Benedict XVI of Rome, hierarchs and representatives of the Catholic Church and other Christian confessions are expected to visit the event.

The Vatican evening will take place after concerts in Moscow and Istanbul In these cities, the Russian National Orchestra and the Moscow Synodal Choir will perform Metropolitan Hilarion's St. Mathew Passions oratorio. *****

PRAY FOR THE UNITY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCHES!



Russian President visits Notre Dame

On March 2, 2010, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Ms. Medvedev venerated the Saviour's Crown of Thorns, the piece of the Lord's Cross and the Nail from the Lord's Cross kept in the Notre Dame Cathedral. These shrines were brought from Constantinople to Paris by Louis IX, the King of France, in 1239. The piece of the Cross happened to come to the French capital from Rome.

For the first time in the history of modern Russia, a head of the state prayed at this common Christian shrine. Emperor Nicholas II and his wife prayed at it in 1895. Like nearly a hundred years ago, the head of the Russian State was welcomed by the ringing of all the bells and a solemn procession of the cathedral's clergy. The main gates of the church were opened for the occasion.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, said a prayer at the Crown of Thorns. Praying together with him and the high guests were Archbishop Innokenty of Korsun, Hegumen Philip Riabykh, DECR vice-chairman, Hegumen Philaret Bulekov, Moscow Patriarchate representative to the Council of Europe, Archpriest Antony Ilyin, acting representative of the Moscow Patriarchate to European international organizations, Hegumen Nestor Sirotenko, rector of the Church Representation of the Three Hierarchs, Hieromonk Alexander Sinyakov, rector of Paris Orthodox Seminary, and clergy of the Korsun diocese. The singing was performed by the choir of Paris Orthodox Seminary.

The Catholic Church was represented by the Right Rev. Jérôme Beau, auxiliary bishop of Paris, Msgr. Patrick Jacquin, rector of the cathedral, local clergy and knights of the Order of Holy Sepulcher.

After the prayer and veneration of the Crown of Thorns, Mr. Medvedev thanked the congregation, saying, 'I would like to express sincere gratitude for the opportunity to visit the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris and venerate the shrines found here. For me as President of the Russian Federation, it is a great honour. For me as a man of Christian faith, it is an opportunity to touch some specially venerated shrines. I very much hope that the meetings of this

kind will help us strengthen peace and mutual understanding and contribute to better relations between our countries and to contacts between Churches'.

Then the Russian President and his wife proceeded to the Icon of Our Lady of Vladimir. In 2007 this icon was given to the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris by the late Patriarch Alexy II during his historic visit to France.

In memory of his visit to the cathedral, Mr. Medvedev presented it with an ancient icon bearing an image of the Saviour in a crown of thorns.

On his way from the church the president came up to the Parisians who assembled in the cathedral square to greet him. *DECR Communication Service*

Communiqué of the meeting of representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church in Poland

1.03.2010 · Inter-Christian relations, New documents, The Far Abroad

On 26 February 2010, representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church in Poland met at the Secretariat of the Polish Episcopal Conference in Warsaw.

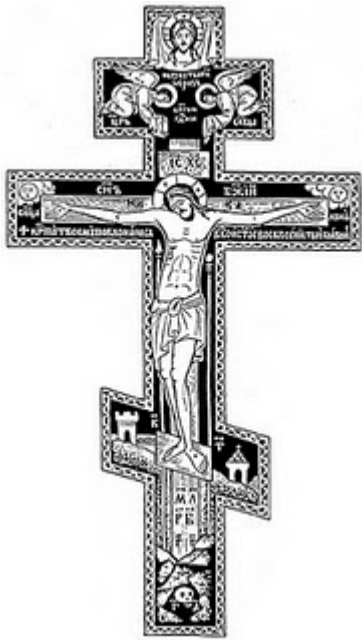
The Russian Orthodox Church was represented by hegumen Philipp (Ryabykh), deputy chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for external church relations, and Rev. Sergiy Zvonarev, the DECR secretary for far-abroad countries. The Polish Episcopal Conference was represented by the Primate of Poland Archbishop Henryk Muszyński, General Secretary of the Conference Bishop Stanisław Budzik, and President of the Bishops' Council for Ecumenism Bishop Tadeusz Pikuś.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for external church relations, was planning to come to Poland, but could not do it due to the circumstances beyond his control. Prior to the meeting, he had a telephone conversation with Archbishop Henryk Muszyński, co-chair on the Polish side, expressed his regret over his being unable to take part in the meeting, and asked to appoint hegumen Philipp to be a co-chair on the Russian side. (Continue next page)

Although these were preliminary conversations, touched upon during them were most important problems of mutual interest. It was agreed to compile a draft of the joint document on the contribution of our Churches to the reconciliation among people of Russia and Poland. Themes of the future dialogue were discussed, and a bilateral commission was proposed to be set up. It was considered helpful to invite representatives of the Orthodox Church in Poland and the Catholic Church in Russia to work in the commission.

Both sides noted an historical importance of the initiative and the conversations, which are the first and very important step on the way to the rapprochement of our Local Churches and reconciliation between our nations. The two Churches hope for the help of God's Providence and intercession of the Most Holy Mother of God.

An Explanation of the Orthodox Three-Bar Cross...



By Fr. Theodore Jurewicz

The Top Bar - The Explanation:

The top bar is the title-board, which Pilate ordered to be hung in mockery over Christ's head on the Cross. On this board was inscribed: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (abbreviated to the Greek initials 'INBI' or the Latin initials 'INRI' in the Western tradition). This is replaced with the Christian inscription: "King of Glory" – below the knees of the angels. On the title-board is inscribed the initials 'IC XC',

being the first and last letters of Christ's name in Greek. In addition, just above Christ's arms we see the inscription: 'NIKA', which in Greek means: "He conquers" or "He is victorious." Frequently, we see these last two inscriptions together: 'IC XC NIKA', meaning: "Jesus Christ is victorious" (over death and sin).

The Middle Bar - The Explanation:

The middle bar is that on which the Lord's hands were nailed. On either top corner we see the depiction of the sun (left) and the moon (right), for "The sun hid its light, and the moon turned to blood." (Joel 2:31) The inscription: "Son of God" is placed on both sides of Christ's head, and below His arms we read the inscription: "Before Thy Cross we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify". The halo of Christ is inscribed with three Greek letters meaning "The Being" or "He Who Is", to remind us that Christ is the same God Who identified Himself with those words to Moses in the Old Law.

The Bottom Bar - The Explanation:

The slanted bottom bar is the footrest. There is some question of whether it was actually on the Cross of Christ, but it is acknowledged to be a necessary attribute of the Cross, worthy of veneration and prophetically alluded to in the words [Let us] worship the footstool of His feet... (Ps. 98:5). In prayers for the Ninth Hour, the Church likens the Cross to a type of balance of righteousness: "Between two thieves Thy Cross did prove to be a balance of righteousness: wherefore one of them was dragged down to Hades by the weight of his blasphemy whereas the other was lightened of his transgressions unto the comprehension of theology. O Christ God, glory to Thee." The meaning of this prayer is as follows: the Cross of Christ stood for a scale of justice between the two thieves: for one of them sank in to hell, dragged down by his blasphemous words; and the other, the wise thief, ascended into heaven, because of his repentance. The church fathers attempted to render tangible the thought of the unfaithful thief going to hell for his blasphemy through the just judgment of God (the lower end of the bar), and of the wise thief going to heaven for his repentance and his praise of God (the upper end). (Continue next page)

The Images - The Explanation:

On the Cross is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Note that He does not wear a crown of thorns, and that His feet are nailed with two nails. Behind the body of Christ, on either side, are a lance (which pierced Him) and a sponge (which was soaked with gall and offered to Christ to drink) on a pole made of reed or cane. On the body of Christ is depicted blood and water flowing forth from His side. Below the feet of Christ is four Slavonic letters meaning: "The place of the skull became Paradise". Hidden in a cave under the earth is 'the skull of Adam'. We are thus reminded that Adam our forefather lost Paradise through the tree from which he wrongly partook; Christ is the new Adam, bringing us Salvation and Paradise through the tree of the Cross. The city of Jerusalem is depicted in the background, for He was crucified outside the city wall. POSTED BY MAT.

Cargese-The Greek Village of Corsica



In 1673, 800 residents of the town of Itilos of the Mani district of the Peloponese, in order to save their lives, decided to leave their motherland after an unsuccessful revolt against the Ottomans who ruled Greece during that period. The Genoa administration offered to give them land in Corsica, under the condition they would accept the full recognition of the power of the Pope of Rome but keep their Orthodox traditions. The committee headed by the Stefanopoulos family clan approved the conditions and in 1675. The 800 Maniots boarded the ship «Sotiras» started the voyage. It took them two months to reach their final destination and of the 800 emigrants 120 died

during the trip! Thus the Maniots settled in Paomia, Corsica. In a year the Greeks founded several small villages and due to the diligence of the Maniots very soon Paomia turned into one of the richest and best agriculturally developed areas of Corsica. For the first time in 50 years Greeks were on good and peaceful terms with the local population. In 1729, the Corsicans revolted against the Genoans, but the Greeks refused to take arms up against their benefactors and refused to support the Corsicans. As a result the Corsicans began to destroy and plunder the property of the Maniots. Soon after the Corsicans attacked them and even though the Greeks showed heroic resistance for one year, at the end they decided to leave their lands, since they had no support or assistance. Once again, they became refugees, and for the next 44 years the Greeks stayed in Aiaccio (the capital of Corsica). In 1768, the French took over Corsica, and in compensation for the Greeks, who helped by arranging one regiment and joining the French army against the Corsicans. In 1804 a new village was built for them by the government of France called Cargese. In 1852 the Maniots launched to construct a large Greek church dedicated to St. Spiridonas in their new village. The church was finished in 20 years and was sanctified in 1872.

CARGESE TODAY

Cargese is a Maniot village that everywhere, on Corsica, in France, in the whole world is always called Greek Cargese! Every publication of local tourist company, of any local office and society bears a sign: "Cargese la Grecque"! The main occupation of the villagers, local Corsicans as well as Maniot descendants, is tourism. They try hard to increase not only the number of tourists, but to reach the highest possible level of tourism. They try to achieve this by a good technical support, a well organised sanitary service, politeness, hospitality and restrained but sincere smiles. The names of hotels and restaurants are characteristically Greek: Residence Ellada, Motel Ta Kladia, Residence D'Itylon, Hotel-Motel Helios, Residence Maina, Hotel-Restaurant Thalassa, etc. Just imagine, 800 people and their descendants who now live in a far away place in a hostile surrounding could manage to keep their Greek spirit and strongly impose their presence everywhere around. The present Greek tourists who visit Cargese with big excitement and pride (Continue next page)

walk along the streets that bear Greek names: Greece (Rue de Grece), Mani (Rue de Magne), Itylos (Rue de Vitylon)! The descendants of the first colonists stick to their Maniot names: Stefanopoulos, Trimigokis, Tzanetakis, Drakakis, Volimakis, Koritis, Vlahodimakis, Koronas, Kotsifakis, Papadakis, Mavroidakis, etc. Quite a number of Maniots try to study and speak Greek.

Unfortunately only few old women still remember and use the Maniot idioms that they have learned from their great-grandfathers. Without close and constant contacts with Greece in general and Mani in particular gradually these idioms would be completely forgotten. It is very remarkable that the descendants of the first Maniot colonists managed to keep their Greek spirit, to stay proud of their Greek origin and to believe that Greek blood flows in their veins. Isn't it exciting that the services in the local cathedral of St. Spiridonas are held in Greek!! The religious holidays follow the Orthodox-Byzantine ceremonies including those of baptizing, wedding and burial. Greek Cargese occupies a steady position and sticks to the traditions of its ancestors. It is especially important nowadays when impersonal Western culture threatens to equalize everything and everyone in this world. We who live in Greece should strengthen our contacts with this remote Greek place for the sake of preserving our Greek consciousness and presence, and our Greek nation in general.

COMMUNION AND SOLITUDE

“Many bless the solitary life, others the common life ... From my part, I do not dare to prefer either of these modes of life, nor can I declare the one worthy of praise and the other of blame, but in every condition, whatever work or activity one does, what is worthy of the greatest beatitude is a life lived for God and according to God” (Symeon the New Theologian)

XVIII International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox spirituality
Bose, Wednesday 8 - Saturday 11 September 2010
in collaboration with the Orthodox Churches
Among the speakers at the conference:

✦ KALLISTOS OF DIOKLEIAS, ✦ HILARION OF VOLOKOLAMSK, ✦ SERAPHIM OF GERMANY

KRITON CHRYSOCHOIDIS, Athens, ANDREJ ČILERDŽIĆ, Belgrade, ATHANASIOS PPATHANASSIOU, Athens, KONSTANTIN SIGOV, Kiev, MICHEL VAN PARIS, Chevetogne, PETROS VASSILIADIS, Thessaloniki, GEORGIJ ZAPALSKIJ, Moscow, SABINO CHIALÀ, Bose, ADALBERTO MAINARDI, Bose.

“If we, who all form a single body in Christ, do not come together in concord in the Holy Spirit, but everyone prefers to live alone, how will we be able, so divided and separated, preserve communion and service one towards another?”

The great father of the undivided Church, Basil of Caesarea, places at the center of Christian life the experience of communion in Christ: only in the daily sharing of life is it possible to experience and carry out the evangelical commandments. At the same time, nevertheless, the very personal experience of God in prayer requires an indefeasible space of solitude and truth with oneself: “When you pray, enter your room and, having closed the door, pray to your Father in secret” (Mt 6:6).

If for the fathers “a sole Christian” means “no Christian” (Unus christianus, nullus christianus), only in the unrepeatability and uniqueness of every man is a free response to God’s gift possible. Christianity is an art of communion, not an ideology of the masses, it is a search for the unity of many and the reconciliation of differences, not a one-dimensional religion.

Perhaps never as much as on today’s horizon, marked by the disintegration of the traditional structures of common life, by the need of new forms of communication and association, but crossed by withdrawal into individualism, by isolation and forgetfulness of the other — of the poor, the immigrant, the outcast — man risks not knowing any more what to do with his own solitude and losing the sense of living one with another.

The 18th international ecumenical conference, dedicated to “Communion and solitude” in the Orthodox spiritual tradition (8–11 September 2010), desires to be invitation to rediscover communion and solitude as dimensions of the spiritual life that interpellate every authentic search of sense.

In interrogating the Scriptures and the teachings of the fathers (from Basil to Isaac, from the fathers of the desert to the fathers of Byzantine and Russian monasticism), but also the experience of solitude fertile in communion (Continue next page)

of great spiritual figures in today's Orthodox world, the symposium wishes to trace an itinerary of learning these essential coordinates of human life.

The general theme of the conference, thus, will be treated in a deeper look at specific questions of communion in the Church, at the idea of person in Orthodox thought, at the value and at the same time the risks connected with solitude and with common life, in a comparison between the legacy of the fathers and the perspectives of human sciences. The experience of Christian monks in history has always indicated a path from solitude to communion, from the hermitage to the cenobium, and vice-versa: an itinerary of exiting from self-sufficiency and of opening oneself to the other. For this reason a particular space will be reserved to the exchange of experiences of monastic life between East and West, in a comparison opened towards a spiritual and human balance between "living in solitude and living in communion".

It hopes to be an occasion of fraternal getting to know one another and of sharing the gift of life. Started in 1993, the Conference on Orthodox spirituality are intended as a service to all Eastern and Western churches, as an occasion for joint study and mutual encounters, for investigating the spiritual wealth of the different Christian traditions. XVIII International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox spirituality

Thursday, April 1, 2010

Orthodox & Catholics united for Palm Sunday in Lebanon

SIDON/BEIRUT ([The Daily Star](#)) - Christians all over Lebanon marked the religious celebration of Palm Sunday over the weekend, which this year united the Orthodox and Catholic sects.

On Sunday, Christians attended mass celebrations and marched in processions to commemorate the triumphant entrance of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem. They held candles, palm leaves and olive leaves to declare their joy as they prepared for the Easter celebrations next week.

In the southern coastal city of Sidon, believers from the Orthodox Church as well as from the Catholic Church marched together down the streets of the old city. Sidon Archbishop for the Greek Catholic Elie Haddad

praised the reunion between the two churches, saying it was the first in about 60 years. "This celebration is mainly for children and a child doesn't believe in separation. Let us be like children and solve our problems," he added.

In Bkirki, Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir presided over a Palm Sunday Mass, after which he led a religious procession and held a meeting with several religious figures.

In Beirut, Greek-Catholic Melkite Archbishop Youssef Kallas held a mass celebration and criticized the lack of discipline in Lebanon, especially referring to implementing traffic laws, and said it was giving Lebanese a bad name abroad.

In Zghorta in the north, processions filled the streets and a Mass was held at the Saint Joseph Cathedral. Rima Suleiman Franjeh, wife of Marada Movement leader Suleiman Franjeh, and her daughter Vera attended the celebration.

Children were the main participants in the processions, as Christians believe that children were the first to greet Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. They also believe this occasion is a time to celebrate peace and love for one another.

Also in the north, Tripoli Maronite Archbishop George Bou Jaoude held a Mass to mark Palm Sunday. He urged the Lebanese during his sermon to learn from the Bible and its story and to be true in their love for their country. "We all pretend to love our country and to work toward a better society but our actions speak differently," he said with regret.

In Batroun, Archbishop Boulos Emile Saade presided over a Mass to mark the occasion and he stressed the importance of humbleness, a value also remembered on this occasion. In Akkar and in the Koura, flowers decorated churches and streets as believers marched chanting and praying. Mass celebrations were also held, during which religious leaders emphasized the need to seek peace and wished peace and prosperity for Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Greek Orthodox Metropolitan George Khoder held a celebration at the Saint George Church in Jdeideh. He asked during his sermon to prepare for Easter next week by repenting their sins. "This week we continue to cleanse ourselves by fasting."

Posted by Josephus Flavius at [3:40 PM 1 comments](#)
[Links to this post](#)

PRAYER OF SOUFANIEH:

UNITY OF CHRISTIANS!

UNITY OF HEARTS!

UNITY OF THE FEAST OF EASTER!

The Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and the Claim of Rome to Preeminence



March 4, 2010 by [Irenaeus](#)

From the March 2010 issue of The Word (magazine of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America)

The Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul is very ancient, and at the same time, the last historically to be preceded by preparation with a lengthy fast. The Feast is described, in the Byzantine tradition, technically as a “third class/ Vigil rank commemoration” — and in the West as the “Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul.” Though it does not rank with Pascha, Nativity, Theophany or Pentecost, it is still very important, as it is the patronal feast of the Patriarchate of Antioch. Most Christians, however, identify Saints Peter and Paul with the city — Rome — where they were martyred, according to tradition. Why Rome? And why does the city and its bishop, and the memory of the two Apostles, matter?

The Akathist Hymn to the Holy Apostles gives us an important clue, incorporating what we find in the Scriptures as well: Saint Peter is given the place of honor. The Hymn addresses the Head of the Church first — Christ, the Good Shepherd, who “said unto thee, O first-enthroned Peter: If thou lovest Me, feed My sheep.” The same Christ admonishes the other apostles about the suitability of the former persecutor Saul of Tarsus (quoting here Acts 9:15); Christ confirmed “thee, O preeminent Apostle Paul: He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear my name before the gentiles.” But Christ then addresses the entire college of the apostles with the universal commission of the Gospel of Matthew — to preach to all the nations.

These themes — the primacy of Peter, Paul as the last-called but Peter’s equal before God, and the collegial nature of the apostles’ approach to difficulties — is reflected in the opening of the Akathist Hymn. The Hymn recognizes the primacy of Peter, the linkage of the

Church of the Circumcised and the Uncircumcised in the two apostles’ dual ministries, and the collegial obligation of all the apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Church, to spread the Gospel, at the risk of martyrdom, if necessary. The hymn’s scriptural teaching is confirmed in the theology of some of the early fathers, including Saint Irenaeus of Lyon and the Montanist theologian Tertullian. Taken together, they provide us with a proper view of a Petrine ministry, Rome, and the role of a primacy among the bishops for Orthodox Christians in the 21st century.

The commemoration of the apostles’ deaths began around the year 258 during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Valerius. Oral tradition held that the apostles had perished under the emperor Nero sometime in the 60s. Given his Roman citizenship, Paul was granted the privilege of execution by beheading, but Peter, as a Jewish Christian deemed an enemy to the cult of imperial worship was crucified first, according to tradition. The site on the Vatican Hill was, from before the time of Constantine, believed to be the place where Peter’s relics had been hidden. Over an earlier structure whose ruins were excavated in the 1940s beneath the present Renaissance building, the emperor Constantine had constructed that first basilica. The Basilica of Saint Peter is not the cathedral church of the bishop of Rome, but a memorial church where the apostle’s relics have been revered since the fourth century. In 258 the remains of the two apostles had been moved to prevent the persecutors from desecrating them, and a common date chosen to honor them both. By ancient oral tradition, it was Peter who suffered death first, and Paul perhaps a day later. According to Farmer and Kereszty’s *Peter and Paul in the Church of Rome*, that tradition has left traces in “graffiti on the walls of San Sebastiano near the via Appia [that] show that the cult of Peter and Paul was firmly established there in the first half of the third century,” (that is, by the early 200s).

That cult of veneration sprang from the connection between the two men revealed in Holy Scripture. The two knew of each other before Saul’s conversion on the road to Damascus. The account in Acts does not remember Paul after his conversion journeying to talk to Peter (as Paul in the Letter to the Galatians reveals he did). After being sent to Antioch by the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), Paul’s argument with Barnabas (vs. 39) “became so sharp that they parted from one another,” a reminder that the apostles didn’t always get along swimmingly, as indeed Peter and Paul did not. In his own confession made to the Galatians about his conversion, (Continue next pg.)

Paul revealed that he did not go to Jerusalem immediately, but spent time in Arabia. After three years in Damascus, however, when he did arrive in Jerusalem, he visited Peter, not James, the head of the Christian community in the city (Galatians 1:17–18). His choice reflected what he had been taught, since he reminded the Church at Corinth that when Christ arose from the dead “he appeared to Cephas [that is, Peter]; then to the twelve; then he appeared to about five hundred brethren at the same time ...; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles” and finally, “last of all, as to one born out of due time, he appeared also to me” (1 Corinthians 15:3–7). In Galatians Paul names those among the “pillars of the church in Jerusalem” who decided that Paul and Barnabas should “go unto the Gentiles, and they [that is, James, Cephas and John] unto the circumcision” (Galatians 2:7–9).

The Scriptures make no attempt to disguise the disagreements between the first and the last of the Apostles that reflected deep division within the broader Church. In Acts Chapters 10 and 11, Luke records Peter’s vision prior to the arrival of Cornelius in which he was instructed not to call unclean anything God has made clean. Tensions and disagreements about the relationship of the Church of the Circumcised to the Uncircumcised persisted, and had to be resolved by conciliar meetings, quite obviously tense and probably unpleasant. Paul says bluntly that he opposed Peter “to his face” (Galatians 2:11) on the question of converted Gentiles being circumcised and observing the Mosaic Law. That this former Pharisee who confessed that he was “zealous for the traditions of my fathers” (Galatians 1:14) should become the defender of the Gentiles as equal heirs of the promises made to ancient Israel figures as one of the more astonishing reminders that God acts in strange ways. The Scriptures point to Paul’s acknowledgment of Peter’s primacy among the apostles, do not hide disagreements between them, and note the important consensus among the “pillars” of the Church in Jerusalem, and the resolution of conflict in the college of the apostles.

It is not this scriptural relationship, however, that actually attracted the attention of the Church fathers. As Farmer and Kereszty note, “the most important early patristic texts which speak of the martyrdom of Peter, and his role in the foundation of the church of Rome (1 Clement, the Letter of Ignatius of Antioch to the Romans and the Letter of Bishop Dionysius of Corinth to the Bishop of Rome) do not speak about Peter alone. Paul is always joined with Peter. The two are associated as apostles, martyrs, and the founders of the

church of Rome. The two most prominent theologians of the second century, Irenaeus and Tertullian, continue this early tradition.”

Were the Church fathers trying hard to get beyond the obvious disagreements by insisting on pairing these two giant personalities as martyr-founders? It would seem so. Having been in Rome himself in 177 AD, Irenaeus informs us in his *Against Heresies* that it would take too long to “enumerate the successions of all the churches,” but he emphasizes instead the tradition – that which was handed down – about “that very great, oldest, and well-known church, founded and established at Rome by those two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul, received from the apostles, and the faith she has announced to men, which comes down to us through the successions of bishops”

Irenaeus and the other fathers knew their Scriptures, and they did not mean to imply that Peter and Paul “literally” founded the many house churches that may have sprang from the synagogues in pagan Rome. Paul’s Letter to the Romans addresses no particular bishop or elder in the imperial capital and that fact was as well known to Saint Irenaeus as it is to us. Instead, as the Montanist writer Tertullian of North Africa, like Irenaeus, concluded, what everyone remembered was their common witness – that the two apostles “poured their whole teaching along with their blood” into what gradually became a unified church in that city under one overseer or episkopos, his deacons and presbyters. As Allen Brent in his *Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order* observes, what Irenaeus, along with St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Cyprian and other early writers emphasized, was a connection of bishops “in communion with all other father bishops ... [and] the See of Rome ... as a focus of unity. The Catholic Church thus became an alternative imperium, presided over by bishops in communion with each other, which now stands in stark contrast to pagan Imperial Order.”

The post-apostolic writers were not, therefore, much interested in the historical founding of Christianity in Rome. Rather, theirs is a theological meditation about the importance of martyrdom – the witness of the faith – and it is this apostolic faith that is the key to the two apostles’ importance: they shed their blood along with countless others in the very heart of the pagan empire. That point, recognized by Tertullian in the 200s, informs a sermon delivered in the early 400s by another North African, St. Augustine of Hippo (Sermon 295). St. Augustine notes that the Apostles share the same feast even though they suffered on different days: “Peter went first, and Paul followed. (Cont. next pg.)

And so we celebrate this day made holy for us by the apostles' blood. Let us embrace what they believed, their life, their labors, their sufferings, their preaching, and their confession of faith."

Placing the confession of faith first and last in his list – giving it, in classic Latin oratorical style, the place of honor – the Bishop of Hippo points to the central and important aspect of the feast. This same emphasis can be seen in a sermon by Pope Leo the Great, who reminded his listeners that "Rome owes its high position to these Apostles. The whole world, dearly beloved, does indeed take part in all holy anniversaries, and loyalty to the one Faith demands that whatever is recorded as one for all men's salvation should be everywhere celebrated with common rejoicings. But ... it is to be honored with special and peculiar exultation in our city, that there may be a predominance of gladness on the day of their martyrdom in the place where the chief of the Apostles met their glorious end ... through whom the light of Christ's gospel shone on thee, O Rome, and through whom thou, who wast the teacher of error, wast made the disciple of Truth." Leo concludes by insisting that "no distinction must be drawn between the merits of the two ... because they were equal in election, alike in their toils, undivided in their death."

Would this story be the same if the two apostles, before their later journeys to Rome, had been martyred in Antioch? Would that city, where the followers of Christ were first called Christian (Acts 11:26), not have assumed the kind of preeminence that the capital city of the Empire received instead? This may appear to be pointless speculation, but it is not. Important though Antioch was, its bishop never (as far as we know) was addressed by the term pope or papa (meaning "father"); however, this term of address to the bishop of Rome was also "from the third century ... of the titles of the bishop of Alexandria" (Andrew Louth, *Greek East and Latin West*). The understanding of Rome as the first among the bishoprics did not arise because of the political structure of the empire, that is, it was not defended because of "civil pre-eminence, [but] rather ... on its status as an unequivocally apostolic see." The term "'apostolic see' – *apostolica sedes* – was first used by Pope Damasus (366-84) (Louth). If apostolic presence alone explained Rome's primacy, however, Antioch surely might have had the prior claim? In truth, the reverence shown for the Church in Rome by the majority of Christians who lived in Asia Minor and Africa, not Europe, did not have anything to do with political considerations, or even just the fact that apostles had once been there.(1)

Instead, Rome, rather than Antioch, came to be revered for a more somber reason. Had the Christian community in Jerusalem, for example, been martyred for the faith, instead of being warned not to perish alongside their rebellious neighbors in the year 70, presumably Jerusalem, had it not been totally destroyed, could also have claimed a preeminently "apostolic" witness. The martyrdom of the Apostle James in that city already counted for much. Instead, as Christianity became first tolerated, and then gradually the official faith of the Empire, Rome acquired the preeminence that is reflected in all of the ecumenical councils' surviving documents and canons. The gradual displacement of Alexandria by New Rome between the first Council of Nicea in 325 and the reaffirmation of the new capital see's status of honor by Chalcedon in 451 never cast doubts on Rome's primacy and orthodoxy. Saint Athanasius the Great fled westward to the bishop of Rome's protection against his Arian enemies, and Rome continued to witness even at the risk of imperial displeasure, a fact acknowledged by no less an eastern saint than Maximus the Confessor. It was no accident that he made his way to the Lateran Synod of 649 to aid in the condemnation of heresies whose toleration was being promoted by the emperor. Though never personally present at any of the great councils held in the East, the bishops of Rome through their legates played a critical role in articulating the confession of faith – spelling out the implications of Peter's assertion of what flesh and blood had not revealed to him but the Father: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:17).

If we take seriously the primacy of Peter and his ministry, we are constantly reminded of Peter's frailty, and the brashness of his faith because of his loving relationship with Jesus. Warned that Satan desired to sift him like wheat, Peter must have reflected often later in life on Jesus' words that, nonetheless, "I have prayed for you so that when you return to me, you will strengthen your brethren." St. John's Gospel not only reaffirms that Christ appeared first to Peter after his resurrection – as Paul reminded his readers as well – but that Jesus predicted Peter's martyrdom: "When you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish" (John 21:18).

It is the degree to which Peter – and any bishop of the church anywhere in the world – is willing, like the Good Shepherd, to lay down his life for his sheep that explains the veneration in which the ancient church held both of the apostles, the place where they (Cont. next pg.)

witnessed, and those who came after them. The persecutions in Rome were, in the last half of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, particularly harrowing. Each of the bishops and their deacons was systematically hunted down and killed by imperial authorities. As a result, a kind of “succession crisis” in the wake of these deaths led the priest Novatian to expect election to the bishopric, only to be passed over. In the resulting conflicts that produced letters exchanged with Cyprian of Carthage in North Africa, one important point emerged: the honor in which Rome was held was an honor based on that Church’s history of heroic martyrdom. Both then and subsequently, regional councils pursued their own business and did not wait for Rome’s approval to deal with their own local disciplinary matters; furthermore, appeals to Rome, including appeals from Christians in the East, stemmed from the universal conviction that Rome was a martyr church, not primarily that it had a legal or juridical claim. The identification of Peter and Paul with Rome is a theological one, and their deaths there, their ultimate confession of faith, is the foundation of “apostolicity” in Orthodox Catholic Christianity, then, and now. (See J. E. Merdinger’s *Rome and the African Church in the Time of Augustine* for a good survey of the relationship of the African Church to Rome.)

Any “definition” of a “primacy” in the universal Church begins and ends as the Akathist Hymn does – addressing the “most glorious Apostles who laid down your lives for Christ and beautified His pasture with your blood.” The definition of primacy must focus on who most closely resembles the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep, as the Apostles and Martyrs did. That is why many Orthodox theologians have said that among the many accumulated titles now attached to the bishop of Rome, the most appropriate and theologically correct is also one of the most ancient: “the servant of the servants of God,” the title adopted by Pope Saint Gregory the Great, the Dialogist (590–604).

What the continuing dialogues between the Orthodox and the separated bishop of Rome will eventually produce is known only to God. Within the Orthodox community itself, a universal honor of Saints Peter and Paul begins with our own examination of how we, both individually, and collectively, centered on the Eucharist, reflect, or fail to reflect the confession of faith handed down from Peter and Paul with all the holy Apostles. If we are inclined to become dismayed at the absence of the original “first see” from the Orthodox communion, or downhearted about the Primus who struggles to

survive in semi-captivity in Istanbul, or troubled by any absence of servanthood among bishops in North America, we should take heart. We have the witness of the Church’s own first apostle – the stumbling, but always penitent Peter who was willing to listen to the sometimes abrasive Paul, and who in the end fulfilled the prophecy Christ made about his laying down his life to strengthen the faith of all the brethren. That peculiar charge of suffering servanthood is given to all the bishops of the Church, but it is not theirs to bear alone. We also, by virtue of our baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ, are given the power by the Holy Spirit, whatever our calling in life, to be His witnesses and to rejoice in the communion of all the saints.

Deacon Gregory Roeber
Professor of Early Modern History and Religious Studies
Department of History, Penn State University

1. For a succinct summary of the claim that Rome’s primacy was either of divine origin (Pope Damasus’ Decretum Gelesianum) versus the claim that it was purely honorific in terms of the size and centrality of the imperial capital, see John Meyendorff, Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: The Church 450-680 A.D. (St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1989), 59-66.

ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

The Syrian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Church are sister churches. Together with the Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox and Malankara Indian Orthodox Churches, they comprise a family of ancient eastern churches known as the Oriental Orthodox Churches. "These five churches are in full sacramental communion," says Fr. Daniel Findikyan, Dean of St. Nersess. "This means that although we are each autonomous, we have the closest possible relationship among Christian churches. Faithful from one church may receive Holy Communion and other sacraments freely in other churches of the family."

PLEASE PAY 2010 DUES. SEND \$20 (\$25 FAMILY) TO ADDRESS IN MASTHEAD. THOSE LISTED HAVE PAID: Witmer, Democko, Kilpatrick, Limbert, Eley, Cariglio, N. Nolfi, Billcheck, Lordi, Venrose, Rossi, Mansour, Beri & Chris Berardi, Gage, Carchedi, Schmidt, Gall, Hopko, Rohan, Nakley, Mattiussi, Mistovich, D. Demiduk, L. Demiduk, Gorup, Tavolario, Stanko, Bonnot, Skurich, EOCA, Benedictine Sisters .

Patriarchal and Synodal Encyclical On the Sunday of Orthodoxy

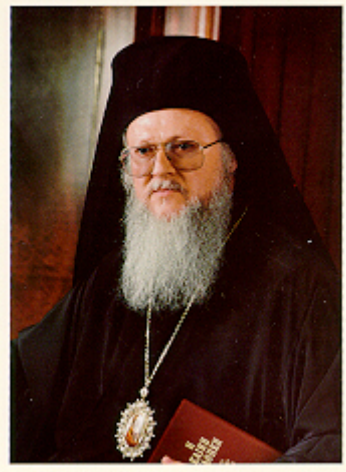
February 19, 2010 by [Irenaeus](#)

(February 21, 2010)

+ **BARTHOLOMEW**

By God's Grace

**Archbishop of
Constantinople-New
Rome and
Ecumenical Patriarch**



To the Fullness of the
Church, Grace and
Peace

From our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Our most holy Orthodox Church today commemorates its own feast day, and – from this historical and martyric See of the Ecumenical Patriarchate – the Mother Church of Constantinople directs its blessing, love and concern to all of its faithful and dedicated spiritual children throughout the world, inviting them to concelebrate in prayer.

Blessed be the name of the Lord! Those who endeavored over the ages to suppress the Church through various visible and invisible persecutions; those who sought to falsify the Church with their heretical teachings; those who wanted to silence the Church, depriving it of its voice and witness; they all proved unsuccessful. The clouds of Martyrs, the tears of the Ascetics, and the prayers of the Saints protect the Church spiritually, while the Comforter and Spirit of Truth leads it to the fullness of truth.

With a sense of duty and responsibility, despite its hurdles and problems, as the First-Throne Church of Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate cares about protecting and establishing the unity of the Orthodox Church, in order that with one voice and in one heart we may confess the Orthodox faith of our Fathers in every age and even in our times. For, Orthodoxy is not a museum treasure that must be preserved; it is a breath of life that must be transmitted and invigorate all people. Orthodoxy is always contemporary, so long as we promote it with humility and interpret it in light of the

existential quests and needs of humanity in each historical period and cultural circumstance.

To this purpose, Orthodoxy must be in constant dialogue with the world. The Orthodox Church does not fear dialogue because truth is not afraid of dialogue. On the contrary, if Orthodoxy is enclosed within itself and not in dialogue with those outside, it will both fail in its mission and no longer be the “catholic” and “ecumenical” Church. Instead, it will become an introverted and self-contained group, a “ghetto” on the margins of history. This is why the great Fathers of the Church never feared dialogue with the spiritual culture of their age – indeed even with the pagan idolaters and philosophers of their world – thereby influencing and transforming the civilization of their time and offering us a truly ecumenical Church.

Today, Orthodoxy is called to continue this dialogue with the outside world in order to provide a witness and the life-giving breath of its faith. However, this dialogue cannot reach the outside world unless it first passes through all those that bear the Christian name. Thus, we must first converse as Christians among ourselves in order to resolve our differences, in order that our witness to the outside world may be credible. Our endeavors for the union of all Christians is the will and command of our Lord, who before His Passion prayed to His Father “that all [namely, His disciples] may be one, so that the world may believe that You sent me.” (John 17:21) It is not possible for the Lord to agonize over the unity of His disciples and for us to remain indifferent about the unity of all Christians. This would constitute criminal betrayal and transgression of His divine commandment.

It is precisely for these reasons that, with the mutual agreement and participation of all local Orthodox Churches, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has for many decades conducted official Panorthodox theological dialogues with the larger Christian Churches and Confessions. The aim of these dialogues is, in a spirit of love, to discuss whatever divides Christians both in terms of faith as well as in terms of the organization and life of the Church.

These dialogues, together with every effort for peaceful and fraternal relations of the Orthodox Church with other Christians, are unfortunately challenged today in an unacceptably fanatical way – at least by the standards of a genuinely Orthodox ethos – by certain circles that exclusively claim for themselves the title of zealot and defender of Orthodoxy. As if all the Patriarchs and Sacred Synods of the Orthodox Churches throughout the world, who unanimously decided (Cont. next pg.)

on and continue to support these dialogues, were not Orthodox. Yet, these opponents of every effort for the restoration of unity among Christians raise themselves above Episcopal Synods of the Church to the dangerous point of creating schisms within the Church.

In their polemical argumentation, these critics of the restoration of unity among Christians do not even hesitate to distort reality in order to deceive and arouse the faithful. Thus, they are silent about the fact that theological dialogues are conducted by unanimous decision of all Orthodox Churches, instead attacking the Ecumenical Patriarchate alone. They disseminate false rumors that union between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches is imminent, while they know well that the differences discussed in these theological dialogues remain numerous and require lengthy debate; moreover, union is not decided by theological commissions but by Church Synods. They assert that the Pope will supposedly subjugate the Orthodox, because they latter submit to dialogue with the Roman Catholics! They condemn those who conduct these dialogues as allegedly “heretics” and “traitors” of Orthodoxy, purely and simply because they converse with non-Orthodox, with whom they share the treasure and truth of our Orthodox faith. They speak condescendingly of every effort for reconciliation among divided Christians and restoration of their unity as purportedly being “the pan-heresy of ecumenism” without providing the slightest evidence that, in its contacts with non-Orthodox, the Orthodox Church has abandoned or denied the doctrines of the Ecumenical Councils and of the Church Fathers.

Beloved children in the Lord, Orthodoxy has no need of either fanaticism or bigotry to protect itself. Whoever believes that Orthodoxy has the truth does not fear dialogue, because truth has never been endangered by dialogue. By contrast, when in our day all people strive to resolve their differences through dialogue, Orthodoxy cannot proceed with intolerance and extremism. You should have utmost confidence in your Mother Church. For the Mother Church has over the ages preserved and transmitted Orthodoxy even to other nations. And today, the Mother Church is struggling amid difficult circumstances to maintain Orthodoxy vibrant and venerable throughout the world.

From the Ecumenical Patriarchate, this sacred Center of Orthodoxy, we embrace all of you lovingly and bless you paternally, praying that you may journey in health through the holy period of contrition and asceticism known as Holy and Great Lent in order that you may become worthy of celebrating the pure Passion and

glorious Resurrection of our Savior Lord with all faithful Orthodox Christians throughout the world.

Sunday of Orthodoxy 2010

Kyiv Patriarchate on Church unity



KYIV (RISU) – On April 8, 2010, at the press conference Prospects of Establishing One National Church in New Political Conditions, the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan

Patriarchate, Patriarch Filaret, expressed his opinion that the unification of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) with Ukrainian Orthodox Church is quite possible and likely.

He believes, however, that it can happen only when the three branches of Ukrainian Orthodoxy—the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church—unite as one national church recognized by the world, reports Ukrinform.

According to the patriarch, today "good relations have been established between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church." He noted that there are quite powerful forces in the Greek Catholic environment which would like to unite with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

According to the hierarch, serious grounds for such unification must be ripe first of all among the believers of the UGCC.

Posted by Josephus Flavius

PLEASE PAY YOUR 2010 DUES. SEND CHECK FOR \$20 (\$25 Family) TO ADDRESS IN NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD. THANK YOU.