He who wishes personal salvation and who wishes to be a true son of the Orthodox Church, must seek in her deliverance from the flood as in the ark of Noah. He who fears the terrible thunder of anathema that overwhelms soul and body must take upon himself the most sweet yoke of Christ - the ecclesiastical dogmas. Let him tame the unruliness of his mind with the ecclesiastical laws and submit in all things to his Mother - the Church!

St. John Chrysostom.

Nothing is more abiding than the Church; she is your salvation; she is your refuge. She is more lofty than the heavens; she is more far-reaching than the earth. She never grows old; she always stays in bloom. And so Scripture indicates her permanence and stability by calling her a virgin; her magnificence by calling her a queen; her closeness to God by calling her a daughter; her barrenness turned to fecundity by calling her 'the mother of seven'. A thousand names try to spell out her nobility. Just as the Lord is called by many names - Father, Way, Life, Light, Arm, Propitiation, Foundation, Gate, Sinless One, Treasure, Lord, God, Son, Only-Begotten, Form of God, Image of God, - since one name could not hope to describe the Omnipotent, and many names give us some small insight into His nature, so the Church goes by many names.

St. John Chrysostom.

Christ the Lord called that Church the Catholic Church which maintains the true and saving confession of the faith.

St. Maximus the Confessor.

The Church is the gathering of the People, the Body of Christ, His Name, His Bride, which calls the peoples to penitence and prayer; purified by the water of Holy Baptism and washed by His precious Blood, adorned as a Bride and sealed with the anointing of the Holy Spirit... The Church is an earthly heaven wherein the heavenly God dwells and walks; it is an anti-type of the Crucifixion, Burial and Resurrection of Christ... The Church is a divine house where the mystical living Sacrifice is celebrated,... and its precious stones are the divine dogmas taught by the Lord to His disciples.

St. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople.

The ark is the Church; only those who are in it will be saved.

St. Nectarius of Optina.
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INTRODUCTION. THE CHURCH: TRUE AND FALSE

They have taken away my Lord, 
and I know not where they have laid Him.
John 20.13.

There is no Christian dogma so fiercely under attack today, or subject to such many and varied interpretations, as the dogma of the Church. If the critical question dividing men is still the same that Christ asked the Apostles: "Whom do men say that I am?" (Matthew 16.13), then that question must now be understood to refer, not only to the single Person of Christ, but also to His many-personed complement, the Church. For many, very many are those who, while looking up to Christ as the Son of God and God, look down on His Church as "having no form or comeliness" (Isaiah 53.2), as a merely human and fallen institution with no part in His Divinity.

And yet, as the Martyr-Bishop Cyprian of Carthage said in the third century: "Whoever breaks with the Church and enters on an adulterous union cuts himself off from the promises made to the Church; and he who turns his back on the Church of Christ will not come to the rewards of Christ: he is an alien, a worldling, an enemy. You cannot have God for your Father if you no longer have the Church for your mother. If there was any escape for one who was outside the ark of Noah, there will be as much for one who is found to be outside the Church. The Lord warns us when He says: 'He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth'. Whoever breaks the peace and harmony of the Church acts against Christ; whoever gathers elsewhere than in the Church, scatters the Church of Christ."\(^1\)

Nor can he have Christ as his Head who does not adhere to the Church as His Body; for, as St. Augustine of Hippo said in the fifth century, it is the Head and Body together which comprise "the whole Christ".\(^2\)

Where, then, is the Church, and what are her marks?

One of the greatest saints of the twentieth century, Father John of Kronstadt, defined the Church as "the community of those being saved in Christ, beautified by every kind of good deed". But this definition, while true, can only be a first approximation. Since the beginning of Christian history, and multiplying at an ever-increasing rate since then, communities have sprung up claiming to be saved in Christ and to practise good deeds, yet differing radically in both faith and deeds, and even in whether faith and/or deeds are necessary for salvation.


Therefore St. John felt compelled to further define the True Church as the Orthodox Church: "There is not one Christian confession of faith besides the Orthodox which can bring Christians to the perfection of Christian life or holiness and to perfect cleansing from sins... because other non-Orthodox confessions 'keep the truth in unrighteousness' (Romans 1.18), and have mixed lies and false wisdom with the truth and do not possess those God-given means of cleansing, regeneration and renewal which the Orthodox Church possesses."\(^3\)

However, this definition will not convince the great majority of people in our time who have had experience neither of the holiness of Orthodox worship nor of a living saint such as St. John. Clearly we need a definition which is both inclusive enough to encompass all the height and the breadth and the depth of the Church and restrictive enough to exclude those pseudo-churches which bear the name of Christ but in essence deny Him. Moreover, we must have clear criteria for distinguishing the true from the false.

And this is no easy task. For the Lord warned that in the last times the false signs and wonders would be so subtle that even the elect, if it were possible, would be deceived (Matthew 24.24). For, as He said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Many shall say to Me in that day: 'Lord! Lord! in Thy name have we not prophesied? and in Thy name cast out demons? and in Thy name worked many miracles?' And then I shall declare to them: 'I know you not. Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.'" (Matthew 7.22-23)

Nicetas of Remesiana wrote in the fourth century: "After confessing the blessed Trinity, you go on to profess that you believe in the Holy Catholic Church. What else is the Church than the congregation of all the saints? From the beginning of the world, all righteous men who have been, are or shall be, whether they be patriarchs, - Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, - prophets, apostles, martyrs or any other righteous man, are one Church because they are sanctified by one faith and life, sealed by one Spirit, made into one Body; of which Body the Head is Christ, as it is written (Ephesians 1.22; 5.23; Colossians 1.18). I go further. Even the angels, virtues and powers above are united in this one Church; for the apostle teaches that 'in Christ all things are reconciled, whether things on earth or things in heaven' (Colossians 1.20). So in this one Church you believe that you are going to attain to the Communion of Saints? You must know that this one Church is ordered throughout the whole world and to its communion you ought firmly to adhere. There are,

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\(^3\)St. John of Kronstadt, *Mysli o Tserkvi (Thoughts on the Church)*, pp. 20, 30 (in Russian). He goes on: "... and not that which produces enmity, persecutions, tortures and torments (the Roman Catholic) or which leads to false wisdom and the domination of the corrupt mind over Divine Revelation, the rejection of the mysteries, the hierarchy, the fasts... which has rashly and brazenly broken all connection with 'the Church of the first-born who are inscribed in the Heavens' (Hebrews 12.23),... broken off all communion with the dead, and considers their prayer for them to be ineffective (Protestantism)."
indeed, other pseudo-churches, but you have nothing in common with them; as for example, the churches of the Manichaeans, the Montanists, the Marcionites, and other heretics or schismatics. For they have ceased to be holy Churches, inasmuch as they have been deceived by doctrines of demons, and both believe and do otherwise than is required by the commands of Christ the Lord and the traditions of the Apostles.4

This definition is both inclusive, in that it includes the angels and the Old Testament righteous, and exclusive, in that it excludes heretics and schismatics. But it provides only a schematic method of distinguishing the one true Church from the many pseudo-churches. For heretics, no less than the Orthodox, claim to be following "the commands of Christ the Lord and the traditions of the Apostles".

This problem vexed a fifth-century Gallic saint, Vincent of Lerins, who wrote: "I have often inquired most earnestly and attentively from very many experts in sanctity and learning, how, and by what definite and, as it were, universal rule I might distinguish the truth of the Catholic Faith from the falsity of heretical perversion; and I have always received an answer of this kind from almost all of them, namely, that whether I, or any one else, wished to detect the frauds of newly rising heretics and to avoid their snares, and to remain sound and whole in the sound faith, one ought, with the Lord's help, to fortify one's faith in a twofold manner: first, by the authority of the Divine Law, and secondly, by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

"Here perhaps one will ask, Since the canon of Scripture is complete and is in itself sufficient, and more than sufficient on all points, what need is there to join to it the authority of ecclesiastical interpretation? The answer of course is that, owing to the very depth of holy Scripture itself, all do not receive it in one and the same sense; but one in one way and another in another interprets the declarations of the same writer, so that it seems possible to elicit from it as many opinions as there are men. For Novatian expounds it one way, Photinus another, Sabellius another, Donatus another, Arius, Eunomius, and Macedonius another, Apollinarius and Priscillian another, Jovinian, Pelagius, and Celestius another, and quite lately Nestorius another. Whence it is most necessary, on account of the great intricacies of such various errors, that the rule for the interpretation of the Prophets and Apostles should be laid down in accordance with the standard of the ecclesiastical and Catholic understanding of them.

"Also in the Catholic Church itself we take great care that we hold that which has been believed everywhere, always, by all. For that is truly and properly 'Catholic', as the very force and meaning of the word show, which comprehends everything almost universally. And we shall observe this rule if

we follow universality, antiquity, consent. We shall follow universality if we confess that one Faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is plain that our holy ancestors and fathers proclaimed; consent if in antiquity itself we eagerly follow the definitions and beliefs of all, or certainly nearly all, priests and doctors alike.

"What, then, will the Catholic Christian do if any part of the Church has cut itself off from the communion of the universal Faith? What surely but prefer the soundness of the whole body to a pestilent and corrupt member?

"What if some novel contagion seek to infect the whole Church, and not merely a small portion of it? Then he will take care to cling to antiquity, which cannot now be led astray by any novel deceit.

"What if in antiquity itself error be detected on the part of two or three men, or perhaps of a city, or even of a province? Then he will look to it that he prefer the decrees of an ancient general council, if such there be, to the rashness and ignorance of a few.

"But what if some error spring up concerning which nothing of this kind is to be found? Then he must take pains to find out and compare the opinions of the ancients, provided, of course, that such remained in the communion and faith of the One Catholic Church, although they lived in different times and places, conspicuous and approved teachers; and whatever he shall find to have been held, written, and taught, nor by one or two only, but by all equally and with one consent, openly, frequently and persistently, that he must understand is to be believed by himself also without the slightest hesitation."

Of course, St. Vincent wrote at a time when the True Church was large and could not easily be confused with other religions or sects; whereas we live in a time when the Catholic truth is upheld by a tiny minority and is certainly not held “everywhere and always and by all”. This is why Fr. Georges Florovsky was critical of St. Vincent’s formula. He argued that if that which is believed “everywhere and always and by all” is interpreted to mean merely “empirical universality”, then the formula becomes “primitive” and “acutely psychologistic”. Rather, it should be interpreted in terms of “charismatic tradition” and “inner catholicity”, which is not revealed to all, but only to the “little flock” (Luke 12.32). Nevertheless, we believe that any seeker for truth who applies this definition carefully, interpreting its universality in time as well as space, will eventually be led to the True Church.

* *

However, it must be admitted that in our apocalyptic days many of the terms used in St. Vincent’s definition - "Catholic", "heretic", "general council" - are barely comprehensible to most people, so deprived have they been of even the rudiments of Christian history and tradition. A different approach is therefore desirable, if such can be found. The approach adopted in this little work is a scriptural-historical one, in the sense that its structure follows the order of the scriptural revelation and the history of the Church.

Such a historical approach to the dogma of the Church is justified, we believe, because, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, “theological consciousness must become historical consciousness, and only to the measure of its historicalness can it be Catholic… Only in history can one be convinced to the end in the mystical reality of the Church, and be freed from the temptation to squeeze Christianity into an abstract doctrine or morality…”

The historical order that reveals to us the nature of the Church begins with the very creation of the world. For, as Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow says, "the history of the Church begins simultaneously with the history of the world. The creation of the world in itself may be seen as a kind of preparation for the creation of the Church because the purpose for which the kingdom of nature was made resides in the Kingdom of grace." Thus corresponding to the first six days of creation, “we can represent [the construction and perfection of the Church] in six consecutive image-changes.

“I. In the beginning the Church was ‘heaven and earth’ together, or heaven on earth. The fall of man made it ‘without form and void’. Darkness covered her in such a way that she was completely united with the abyss of fallen spirits. But ‘the Spirit of God’ hovered over the waters, that is, over the races of men (who are represented in the word of God as ‘waters’ (Isaiah 7.6, 7; Revelation 17.15) that perished in Adam, and grace overshadowed him. God sent him the ‘light’ of the revelation concerning the Redeemer; and He ‘divided’ the kingdom of light from the kingdom of darkness, the believing man from the impenitent devil, the seed of the woman from the seed of the serpent, the race of Seth from the race of Cain, the house of Noah from the first world that was corrupted at the end.

“II. So as to reveal the light of revelation in greater clarity, God wished to create the ‘firmament’, that is, a society in which His promises would be confirmed unshakably, and which would ‘declare His glory’ and ‘proclaim’ the grace-filled ‘works of His hands’ (Psalm 18.1-5, Romans 10.18). For this the troubled ‘waters’ of the earthly races were divided at the tower of Babylon: and the rejected races, like ‘the waters beneath the firmament’, covered the earth, thinking only earthly thoughts; but Abraham and the Patriarchs, like

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‘the waters above the firmament’, were raised to the highest promises and the closest union with God; while the chosen people that proceeded from them was cleansed and established by the law.

“III. Then the Church, which was formerly immersed in the waters of the peoples, appeared on her own ‘firm land’ of the promises, and was adorned with earthly blessings from God. Her ‘earth opened’, so as to ‘bring forth the fruits of salvation and let righteousness spring up together’ (Isaiah 45.8). In the midst of her, like ‘the tree of life’, was planted ‘the root of Jesse’ (Isaiah 11.1), whose ‘rod’ was to establish, its new ‘branch’ renew, and its ‘fruit’ feed the universe with immortality.

“IV. With the incarnation of the Son of God there appeared the spiritual ‘Sun’ of the world and the new Church, like ‘the moon’, radiant with His light. The apostles and teachers of Christianity, with the whole Church, like the moon and ‘the stars’, sent the light into the very ‘night’ of paganism.

“V. With the continuation of the light-giving action of the spiritual Sun, ‘the waters’ of the previously rejected peoples produce ‘living souls’ alive with spiritual life; and high-soaring minds fly above the visible and temporary to the pure contemplation of the invisible and eternal.

“Finally, the once-flourishing, but then for a time abandoned by its Creator ‘land’ of Israel will show in itself ‘life from the dead’ (Romans 11.15). But when the mystical body of ‘the last Adam’ (I Corinthians 15.45), which now, ‘being fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself’ (Ephesians 4.16), and is finally and perfectly constructed, then, upheld by its Head, and infused with the Holy Spirit, it will triumphantly reveal the one image of God in all its members, and the great ‘Sabbath’ of God and man will arrive...”

It is hoped that by means of this scriptural-historical approach the reader with no knowledge of Church Tradition apart from a cursory acquaintance with the Bible will be able to see both the importance of the doctrine of the Church - for it is one of the major themes of Holy Scripture, - and how all those elements which are considered "unscriptural" or "unnecessary" by Protestants and Ecumenists are both quite scriptural and absolutely necessary if the Holy Scriptures are read, as they must be, in their totality. Then, it is hoped, he will see that the Orthodox Church of post-apostolic times is not something foreign to the "primitive simplicity" of the early Church, but in fact is that same Church, being her continuation and fulfilment.

8 Metropolitan Philaret, Zapiski Rukovodstvuushchia k Osnovatel’nomu Rasumeniu Knigi Bytia (Notes leading to a Basic Understanding of the Book of Genesis), Moscow, 1817, 1867, pp. 30-31 (in Russian).
And so the conclusion will follow naturally that he who wishes to join himself to the Church of the Bible must join himself to the Church of the Orthodox.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen!

St. Maximus the Confessor.
1. THE FAMILY CHURCH: FROM ADAM TO JACOB

This is our God, providing for and sustaining His beloved inheritance, the Holy Church, comforting the forefathers who had fallen away through sin with His unlying Word, laying the foundation for Her already in Paradise.

The Order for the Week of Orthodoxy.

The Church in Paradise

God chose His people, according to the Apostle Paul, "before the foundation of the world,... having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1.4,5). Thus just as Christ existed from all eternity, and was manifest in the flesh only at the Incarnation, so the Church may be said to have existed in the mind of God from all eternity, and has been manifested in the flesh - the flesh of Christ - only since the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It is in this sense that St. Clement of Rome could say of the Church that she "does not now exist for the first time, but comes from on high; for she was spiritual, and was manifested in the last days that He might save us".9

The Church was first revealed when God entered into full communion with men for the first time in Paradise. Paradise itself is the first image of the Church in Holy Scripture. At the same time it is the image of the age to come; for the Church is fully revealed only in the age to come, being not a simple creation, but the boundary between the created and Uncreated natures, the place of the communion between the Creator and His creatures.

That is why God is said not to have "created" Paradise, but to have "planted" it; and not during the seven days of Creation, but afterwards, on "the eighth day". For, as St. Symeon the New Theologian says: 'God, Who knows everything beforehand, brought creation into being with order and harmony, and established the seven days as a type of the seven ages which would come later, and Paradise He planted afterwards as a sign of the age to come. For what reason, then, does the Holy Spirit not join this, the eighth day, to the seven preceding ones? This is because it was not fitting to reckon the eighth with the cycle of the seven. With the latter, first and second and in order all the seven circle each other in the cycle which comprises the week, in which first days are many indeed and seventh days just as numerous, but THAT day must be reckoned as wholly outside the cycle, since it has neither beginning nor end."10

9 II Clement, XIV, 1.
In the Garden Adam and Eve lived in full and open communion with God. Thus God is said to have walked with them in the garden: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day..." (Genesis 3.8). This communion with God is the definition of Church membership. As the Apostle says: "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (II Corinthians 6.16). Such communion was possible for Adam and Eve because their nature was as yet uncorrupted by sin, being filled with the Holy Spirit as on the first day of their creation, when God created Adam as "a living soul" (Genesis 2.7) - alive, that is, with the Life-creating Spirit. And being in communion with God, they were in harmony with each other and created nature. Thus individually they were temples of God, and together they were the Church of God - the Church in its first manifestation, as a family...

Only in one sense could Adam and Eve be described as not belonging to the Church - in that sense in which the Church is defined exclusively as "the Body of Christ" (Ephesians 1.23, 5.23; Colossians 1.24). Before Christ became incarnate, no one could be said to belong to His Body, for He had none. Nevertheless, if, in accordance with St. Clement's definition, "the flesh is the Church and the Spirit is Christ" 11, then Adam and Eve were indeed the Church, for in body as well as soul they were sinless and completely penetrated by the Spirit of Christ.

Moreover, it was in them, as representing mankind in its pristine and sinless condition, that the first major revelation of the Incarnation of Christ, and of His union with the Church, was given. For the creation of Eve (the Greek word in the Septuagint translation is: "building") from the side of Adam as he slept a deep sleep (the Greek word is: εκστασία, "ecstasy") was a prophecy of the building of the Church from the blood and water that flowed from Christ’s side as He slept the sleep of death on the Cross. 12 And Adam's exclamation: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh:... Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2.23,24) was a prophecy of Christ's Descent from the heavens and entering into the one-flesh relationship of Bridegroom and Bride with the Church of the New Testament. 13

Again, God's words to the devil after the Fall: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3.15) indicate the means by

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11 St. Symeon, First Ethical Discourse, op. cit.
12 St. John Chrysostom, Third Discourse on Marriage.
13 The Venerable Bede, On Genesis 2.20-22.
which Christ restored the union between Himself and mankind - the defeat of the devil through the blood of Christ shed on the Cross.

Could the Church be said to have existed, or any of mankind to belong to the Church, after the Fall and before the Coming of Christ? This is a difficult question to answer because, on the one hand that spiritual communion with God which we have characterized as the main mark of the Church was now lacking - as the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh" (Genesis 6.3), that is, "carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7.14). But on the other hand, men still conversed with God, even "walked" with Him, like Enoch (Genesis 5.24).

Moreover, many of the signs which we associate with true religion - faith and hope, sacrifice and prayer, covenant and law, separation from the world and dedication to God - are to be found among the Patriarchs. This indicates that, even if we cannot speak of the Church as having existed in the proper sense after the Fall, we can still see it as foreshadowing, and preparing the way for, the Church as we find Her in the New Testament; so that we may speak, without much exaggeration, of "the Church of the Old Testament".

Let us now look at some of the main features of this Church of the Old Testament, beginning with the Patriarchs from Adam to Jacob.

*The Fall of Man*

Adam's sin consisted in pride and unbelief. As St. Symeon the New Theologian writes: "Adam sinned with a great sin because he did not believe the words of God, but believed the word of the serpent. Compare God and the serpent, and you will see how great was the sin of most-wise Adam. In his great wisdom he had given names to all the animals (Genesis 2.19-20). But when with his whole soul he believed the serpent and not God, then the Divine grace which had rested on him slipped away from him, so that he became the enemy of God by reason of the unbelief which he had shown to His words."

Although none of the Patriarchs, and no man before Christ, was able to receive again Divine grace and innocence in the measure that Adam had enjoyed it, they were able to reverse the Fall to this extent, that where Adam had shown unbelief they showed faith. Faith in the Providence of God, and hope in His promises, was characteristic of all the Patriarchs. The very first words of Eve after the expulsion from Eden express this faith: "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord" (Genesis 4.1). Thus Eve saw the hand of God in the birth of Cain. According to one interpretation of the Hebrew text, what she

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actually said was: “I have gotten the God-man”, by which she expressed her belief that Cain was that Redeemer, “the seed of the woman (Genesis 3.15), whom the Lord had promised while she was still in the Garden – a mistake, but one based on faith. And in his murder of Abel she no doubt saw the fulfilment of His word that she would bring forth in sorrow (Genesis 3.16).

The same faith was manifest in her immediate descendants, as the Apostle Paul witnessed: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witnesses that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God." (Hebrews 11.4-7)

The faith of the Patriarchs expressed itself in other ways which show their spiritual kinship and prototypical relationship with the New Testament Church - for example, in the offering of sacrifices well-pleasing to God. In this respect, the relationship between Abel and Cain is typical of the relationship between the True Church and the false; for while the sacrifice of the True Church, like Abel's, is accepted by God, the sacrifice of the heretics and schismatics, like Cain's, is rejected. Indeed, according to the Theodotion text of this Scripture, "the Lord kindled a fire over Abel and his sacrifice, but did not kindle a fire over Cain and his sacrifice". On which the Venerable Bede comments: "By fire sent down from heaven He accepted Abel's victim, which we read is very often done when holy men offer. But he held back from consuming Cain's sacrifice by fire. For the Apostle also seems to signify this when he says, 'By faith Abel offered a greater sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying over his gifts' (Hebrews 11.4). Therefore God 'testified to the gifts' of Abel through fire, receiving them from the heavens, by which testimony of the Apostle we are also taught that the victim of Abel was made acceptable to God through the devotion of his faith, and on the contrary we should understand that Cain was condemned because he did not serve his Creator with integral faith."

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15 Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, op. cit., p. 79.
16 Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, op. cit., pp. 82-83.
17 St. Bede, On Genesis 4.3.
In his famous work *The City of God*, St. Augustine traced the beginning of The City of God, that is, the Church, to Abel and the brother who replaced him, Seth, whereas the city of man takes its origin from Cain and his descendants, who are separated “from the Church in which God reveals His grace-filled presence”.18 Thus Abel, according to Augustine, means 'Sorrow' and Seth - 'Resurrection', prefiguring the Death and Resurrection of Christ. And in the time of Seth's son Enos it is said that "men began to call upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4.26) because the sons of the resurrection live in hope, calling upon the name of the Lord. The name Cain, on the other hand, means 'Possession', and that of his son Enoch, the first city-builder - 'Dedication', indicating that the sons of perdition aim to possess the cities of this earth, being completely dedicated to their pleasures. That is why, moreover, the later descendants of Cain, such as Jabal and Tubal-cain were inventors of metal instruments - technology is necessary for the enjoyment of this life's pleasures.19

One of Seth's descendants, the seventh from Adam, was also called Enoch, who did not see death but was bodily translated from the earth and, according to the Apostle Jude (Jude 14-15), prophesied the Second Coming of Christ with all the saints. Augustine writes of him: "The translation of Enoch is the prefiguration of our dedication which is already performed in Christ, Who rose from the dead to die no more, and was taken up also. The other dedication of the whole house remains yet, whereof Christ is the foundation, and this is deferred until the end, and final resurrection of all flesh to die no more."20 According to the firm tradition of the Church, Enoch, together with the Prophet Elijah, is one of two witnesses who will preach repentance and the Second Coming of the Lord during the time of the Antichrist, and will be killed by him...

*The Ark of Noah*

Another characteristic of the New Testament Church prefigured in the Patriarchs is the clear separation of the Church from the world, and the ban on intermarriage between Christians and unbelievers. This ban appears to have been broken once, when "the sons of God [i.e. the Sethite men] saw the daughters of men [i.e. the Cainite women] that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Genesis 6.2). According to another interpretation, "the sons of God" were fallen angels - demons.21

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18 Metropolitan Philaret, op. cit., p. 89.
21 According to Lopukhin, the majority of the Jewish and Christian interpreters of antiquity, including Justin the Philosopher, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Ambrose and others understood the term "sons of God" to mean "angels" - that is, the fallen angels or demons. But an equally impressive array of Fathers, including John Chrysostom, Ephraim the Syrian, Blessed Theodoret, Cyril of Jerusalem, Blessed Jerome and Blessed
It is after this that we read of God's decision to "destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth" (Genesis 6.7), preserving only Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives in the ark, together with representatives of all the animal species. The Lord Himself said that the world just before His Second Coming in judgement would be "as in the days of Noah" (Matthew 24.37). And the flood is, together with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, one of the clearest scriptural images of the Terrible Judgement.

Archbishop Andrew of Rockland writes of Noah: "It was revealed to him by God that there would be a world-wide flood which would destroy all those who remained in ungodliness. But for the salvation of those who would remain in godliness, those who still preserved all that is God's in honor, God commanded Noah to build an ark. And Noah began to build an ark, and at the same time to call the people to repentance.

"But the sky was clear, not a cloud; the whole of nature, as if indifferent to the sins of men, remained solemnly silent. Men heard Noah, but shrugged their shoulders and went away. The building of the ark was finished, but only the family of Noah entered it. They entered the ark, not yet to escape the flood, but to escape the ungodliness which was everywhere... And finally the rain came; the water began to rise and inundate everything. Now the frightened people hastened to the ark, but the doors closed by themselves, and no one else was able to enter..."22

The ark of Noah is the second major symbol of the Church in Holy Scripture. Since the name Noah means 'Rest', his entering into the ark signifies the rest which the people of God obtain from the billows of this world by entering into the Church (cf. Matthew 11.29). According to St. Peter, it also signifies baptism (I Peter 3.20-21); for the baptismal water is symbolized by the waters of the flood, and the grace of the Spirit by the dove bearing the olive branch to Noah after the waters had abated (Genesis 8.11).

Augustine understood the term to denote the men of the line of Seth, while the "daughters of men" referred to the women of the line of Cain; so that the event described involved an unlawful mixing between the pious and the impious human generations (Tolkovaia Biblia, St. Petersburg, 1904-1907 / Stockholm, 1987, volume 1, pp. 44-45 (in Russian)).

This passage in Genesis was linked by several ancient as well as modern interpreters with II Peter 2.4 and Jude 4. It is argued by these interpreters that the sin of the angels referred to in the New Testament passages is the same sexual fall recounted in the Old Testament passage. However, this interpretation is not accepted by Lopukhin. See Tolkovaia Biblia, vol. III, pp. 299, 357.

If the ark is a type of the Church, then Noah is a type of Christ, and the flood of Noah is a type of the Coming of Christ. Thus Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow writes: “Jesus Christ reveals a correspondence between the times of the flood and the times of His Coming (Matthew 24.37-39; Luke 17.25-27). He as it were intentionally does not define which Coming He is talking about (Luke 17.20), but in the nature of things the flood can be recognized to be a foreshadowing both of the first Coming of grace and of the new and glorious Coming of Christ. The similarity of these three great events in the word of God is indicated by the fact that they are all, in action and name, judgements (Hebrews 11.7; John 12.31; Revelation 20.11) and definite ends (Genesis 6.13; Daniel 9.24-27; Galatians 4.4; Matthew 24.14).

“In His first Coming Jesus Christ appeared as a second Noah. Like Noah, He announced the judgement coming on a corrupt generation, and for the salvation of the believers from the flood of the eternal curse He created an ark not made by hands – His new Church. He Himself became the door (John 10.9) of this ark, and He received into it wild beast and tame beasts, clean and unclean, wheat and tares, so that for all might be prepared sufficient mansions with His Father (John 14.2), and that to all might be given His spiritual blessing. But just as those very people who helped Noah in the construction of the ark did not enter it, so the scribes and Pharisees, who ought to have built the Church, ‘rejected the stone’ which should have been ‘at the head of the corner’ (Matthew 21.42) and closed the Kingdom of heaven for themselves and others (Matthew 23.13). So the Jews, having made themselves from children of the covenant into children of wrath, were scattered and immersed in the waters of the pagan peoples. The ark of Noah was carried for a long time over the waters; but then it stopped on a hard mountain, and gave from itself inhabitants for the whole earth. In the same way the Church of Christ, having for a long time struggled with the waves of temptations and woes, finally conquers, and is established over the kingdoms and kings of the earth, beginning from the lofty state of Rome, and is spread to all the ends of the inhabited earth.

“At the second Coming of Christ the destiny of the last world will be decided, just as in the flood the destiny of the first world was decided. The woes of the first world were prepared by the mixing of the sons of God with the daughters of men and by the multiplication of giants: the spirit of fornication and predominance in natural and spiritual things, which is represented in revelation as the whore and the beast (Revelation chs. 13, 17), will produce the woes of the last world. The judgement of the first world was announced beforehand by two Prophets: Enoch (Jude 14, 15) and Noah (II Peter 2.5); in the last world there will also appear ‘two witnesses’ of Jesus ‘who prophesy’ (Revelation 11.3). But just as the prophecy of Noah did not bring about faith in those who heard it, and the long-foretold flood of water caught them unexpectedly, so ‘the Son of Man, when He comes, will hardly find faith on the earth’ (Luke 18.8), and the day of the ‘fiery’ flood will come
as a thief’ (II Peter 3.3-10). Finally, just as the first end of the world was also its renewal, so after the coming last times there will appear ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ (Revelation 21.1).”

Thus the Church is the Ark of salvation; and as in the days of Noah there was no other salvation from the wrath of God's judgement than in the ark of Noah, so today there is no other salvation from the burning fire of the Last Day than in the Church, which is entered through faith and baptism. For, as St. Cosmas says, in the Mattins of the Baptism of the Lord: "Christ baptizes in the fire of the Last Day those who are disobedient and believe not that He is God: but through the Spirit and by the grace that comes through water He grants a new birth to all who acknowledge His Divinity, delivering them from their sins." 

After the flood, Noah offered a sacrifice to God of all the clean beasts that entered with him into the ark. For God accepts as sacrifices in the Church only those whose lives have been cleansed by repentance. Only "then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings" (Psalm 50.19). And in return God blessed Noah and his sons, and established a covenant with him whereby He promised never to destroy the earth again by a flood. "And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth..." (Genesis 9.12-13)

This covenant is the first of many Old Testament covenants between God and the people of God, but the last which relates to the whole of mankind, irrespective of their faith or lack of it. And this is in accordance with the universal nature of the judgement that had just been inflicted on mankind, and the fact that mankind was not yet divided into races speaking different languages. However, after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, the division of the languages and the scattering of the peoples over the whole face of the earth (Genesis 11), a new beginning is made according to a new principle which is racial as well as religious - although, as we shall see, this racial principle admitted of many exceptions and was always intended to be only a preparation for the readmittance of all nations into the Church.

The Faith of Abraham

This new beginning was made with Abraham, a descendant of Noah's first son Shem, from which we derive the word 'Semite', and Shem's great-grandson Eber, from which we derive the word 'Hebrew'. And yet Abraham was not the father of the Hebrews only, even in a purely genetic sense. His

23 Metropolitan Philaret, op. cit., pp. 132-133.
first son Ishmael is traditionally considered to be the father of the Arabs. And his grandson through Isaac, Esau, is the father of the Edomites. But in the Apostle Paul’s interpretation, Isaac represents the Church, and Ishmael – the unbelieving Jews enslaved to the Law (Galatians 3.16).

Moreover, there were other men who pleased God at this time who did not belong the family of Abraham. One of these was the Patriarch Job. Another was Melchizedek, of whom it is written: "Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine [to Abraham]: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, Who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand" (Genesis 14.18-20).

The mysterious figure of Melchizedek is, in his kingship, his high priesthood and his apparent lack of human ancestors, the clearest type of Christ as the pre-eternal King and High Priest in the whole period of the Patriarchs, perhaps in the whole of the Old Testament. The Apostle Paul writes of him as "being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace: Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually" (Hebrews 7.2-3). Since he received tithes from Abraham, the Apostle counts him even higher than Abraham; and since he blessed Abraham, the ancestor of Levi, his priesthood is counted as higher than the Levitical priesthood and a type of Christ’s, Who is "a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110.4; Hebrews 7.4-21).

Moreover, Melchizedek’s bringing forth bread and wine was a figure of the New Testament Eucharist - although Mar Jacob considered it to be no figure of the Eucharist but the Eucharist itself: "None, before the Cross, entered this order of spiritual ministration, except this man alone. Beholding the just Abraham worthy of communion with him, he separated part of his oblation and took it out to him to mingle him therewith. He bore forward bread and wine, but Body and Blood went forth, to make the Father of the nations a partaker of the Lord's Mysteries."__27_

Thus while Abraham is the father of the Jewish race, the chosen people of the Old Testament, he received the Mysteries from a priest of a higher order, a man even higher than himself. This shows that the new beginning that God

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made in Abraham related not only to the Jews but to all peoples of all ages, and that in him, as the Lord said, all nations were to be blessed (Genesis 12.3). In fact, the nation which Abraham founded was not an ethnic nation a nation of believers, of those who believe in Christ; for, as St. Paul says, "they which are of the faith, they are the children of Abraham" (Galatians 3.7) - which faith the Jews of Christ's time did not share (John 8.33-58). In a similar way, the "seed" of Abraham, to whom God made such great promises, is not to be understood as referring to his genetic descendants, the Jews, for they would be "seeds" in the plural, but to Christ alone (Galatians 3.16). Therefore those who can truly count Abraham as their father are those who are in Christ, that is, believers in Him and members of His Church.

The proverbial faith of Abraham, which merited for him the title "father of the faithful", was manifested, first, in his leaving Ur and setting out unquestioningly for the Promised Land.

Secondly, it was manifested in his believing God's promise that he would beget a son who would be a father of nations, in spite of the fact that he was very old and his wife was barren.

And thirdly and most strikingly, it was manifested in his continuing to believe in this promise even after God ordered him to kill Isaac.

Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow writes: "The journey of Abram from the land of his birth to the promised land is an image of the journey of self-abnegation, by which man must pass from the condition of damaged nature to the condition of Grace.

"Every believer has the same commandment from God as the father of the faithful – to leave all and renounce himself. 'He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me,' says the Lord (Matthew 10.37).

"Every believer is also promised ‘the blessing of Abraham in Jesus Christ’ (Galatians 3.14). ‘There is no one who would leave home, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and the Gospel’s, who would not receive now, in this time and with persecutions, one hundred times more houses and brothers and sisters (and fathers) and mothers and children, and in the age to come eternal life’ (Mark 10.29,30).

"The believer who leaves his own will does God’s with the same unlimited obedience with which Abram ‘went, as the Lord told him’. God speaks to us in nature, in the Holy Scriptures, in the conscience, in the adventures of life ruled by His Providence. ‘To go, as the Lord tells’ is the rule in which is included the whole path of those seeking the coming heavenly city.
“Like Abram, the believer comes closer to God to the extent that he leaves himself behind; and like Abram, he thanks Him for His gifts of Grace. He will receive them only so as to return them to their origin with faithfulness; and wherever and whenever he receives them, he offers them as a sacrifice to God.”

Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac is cited by the Apostle James as the paragon "work of faith", whereby "faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made manifest" (James 2.22). Moreover, it is the clearest Old Testament prefiguring of the central act of the New, in which "God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3.16). And it merited for Abraham the first clear foreshadowing of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity - the visitation of the three angels speaking as one God at the oak of Mamre (Genesis 18).

St. Gregory Palamas takes Abraham's heroic work of faith as his main illustration of the difference between philosophical or scientific knowledge and the super-rational knowledge of faith: "I believe that our holy faith is, in a certain manner, a vision of our heart which goes beyond all sensation and all thought, for it transcends the mental powers of our soul. I mean by 'faith', not the Orthodox confession, but being unshakeably established upon it and upon the promises of God. For how through faith do we see those things which are promised for that unending age which is to come? By the senses? But faith is 'the basis of things hoped for' (Hebrews 11.1); and there is no way in which that which is to come and is hoped for may be seen by the senses; which is why the Apostle added: 'the proof of things not seen'. Is there, then, some mental power which will see the things hoped for? But how could there be if they 'have not gone up into the heart of man' (I Corinthians 2.9)? What, then? Do we not see through faith the things that have been promised by God, since they transcend all sensual and mental activity? But all those who from the beginning of time sought the heavenly fatherland through works died, according to the Apostle, 'without having obtained the promises' (Hebrews 11.39), but saw and greeted them from afar. There is, then, both a vision and an understanding of the heart beyond all mental activity... Faith is this supramental vision, while the enjoyment of that which is believed in is a vision surpassing that vision...

"But let us dwell a little longer on faith and on the Divine and joyous contemplation which it procures for Christians: faith, the vehicle of the power of the Gospel, the life of the Apostles, the justification of Abraham, from which all righteousness begins, in which it ends, and by which 'every righteous man shall live' (Romans 1.7), while he who with draws from it falls away from the Divine goodwill, for 'without faith it is impossible to please God' (Hebrews 11.6); faith, which ever frees our race from every deception and establishes us in the truth and the truth in us, from which no-one will

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separate us, even if he takes us for madmen, we who through the true faith have gone out into an ecstasy beyond reasoning, witnessing both by word and deed that we are not 'being carried away by every wind of doctrine' (Ephesians 4.14), but possess that unique knowledge of the truth of the Christians and profess the most simple, most Divine and truly unerring contemplation. Let us then leave the future for the time being, let us consider the supra-mental contemplation which faith gives of those things which have happened from the beginning: 'It is by faith that we recognize that the ages were formed by the word of God, so that those things which are seen did not come to be from those which appear' (Hebrews 11.3). What mind could take in that all this which has come to be has come from that which is absolutely non-existent, and that by a word alone? For that which is accessible to the mental powers does not at all transcend them. Thus the wise men of the Greeks, understanding that no corruptible thing passes into non-existence, and no existent thing comes out of non-existence, believed that the world was without beginning or end. But the faith, surpassing the conceptions which come from a contemplation of created things, united us to the Word Who is above all and to the simple, unfabricated truth; and we have understood better than by a proof that all things were created, not only out of non-existence, but also by the word of God alone. What is this faith? Is it a natural or supernatural power? Supernatural, certainly. For 'no-one can come unto the Father except through the Son' (Matthew 11.27; John 10.9), Who has placed us above ourselves and turned us to unity with the Father Who gathers us together. Thus Paul 'received grace for obedience to the Faith' (Romans 1.5). Thus 'if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved' (Romans 10.9). Thus those who have no seen and believed are more blessed than those who have seen and believed in Him Who lives after death and is the Leader of eternal life (John 20.29; Acts 3.15). For through the supercosmic eyes of faith they have seen and venerated those things which the eye has not believed it can see and which reason cannot conceive.

"'This is the victory which has conquered the world, even our faith' (1 John 5.4). Paradoxical though it may be to say so, this faith is that which, in different ways and at different times, re-established the world which had previously fallen. Then it transformed it into a more Divine state, placing it above the heavens, and making a heaven out of the earth. What preserved the seeds of the second world? Was it not the faith of Noah? What made Abram Abraham and the father of many nations, like the sand and the stars in number? Was it not faith in the promises which at that time were incomprehensible? For he held his only-begotten heir ready for slaughter and, O wonder!, never ceased to believe that through him he would have many children. What, then? Did not the old man appear to be a fool to those who see things by reason? But the final issue showed, through the grace of God, that his faith was not folly but a knowledge surpassing all reasoning."

Thus the new beginning for the Church which God created in Abraham He created in the faith of Abraham, which is the faith in Christ. For "Abraham rejoiced to see My Day: he saw it, and was glad," said the Lord (John 8.56). Moreover, in Abraham’s "works of faith", whereby he acted in accordance with his faith against all worldly reason, we see the prototype of those works of "gold, silver and precious stones" which alone, when placed on the foundation of faith, will survive the fire of the Last Day (I Corinthians 3.12).

The Patriarchal Church

Since the foundation of the Church is the faith of Abraham, Her God is called "the God of Abraham". Thus for Isaac God was "the God of Abraham"; and for Jacob He was "the God of Abraham and Isaac"; and for all succeeding generations He is "the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob", or, more simply, "the God of our fathers". Thus our faith is a historical faith; we distinguish it from other faiths as being the faith of our fathers, and our God is distinguished from other gods as being the God of our fathers, and in particular the God of our father Abraham. And that is why we preserve the faith of our fathers in all its details. For as the Scripture says: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (Proverbs 22.28).

Just as in Abraham we see the faith of the Church in its main outlines for the first time, so in his wife Sarah we see the first personal image of the Church Herself since Eve. For, as the Apostle Paul explains, Sarah, being the freeborn wife of Abraham, and the mother of the freeborn Isaac, is the image of "the Jerusalem which is above, [which] is free [and] the mother of us all" (Galatians 4.26). On the other hand, Hagar the slavewoman and the mother of Abraham's first child Ishmael, "answereth to the Jerusalem which now is," that is, the Jews who reject Christ, "and is in bondage with her children" (Galatians 4.25).

Isaac's wife Rebecca is an even closer image of the Church than Sarah; for she was Isaac's only wife as the Church is Christ's only Bride. Moreover, the fathers see in the story of the wooing of Rebecca a parable of Christ's wooing of the Church, in which Eleazar, signifying the Holy Spirit, conveyed Isaac's proposal to her at the well, which signifies Baptism, and gave her gifts of precious jewels, signifying the gifts of the Holy Spirit.30

As for the wives of Jacob, they signify the Old and the New Testament Churches. Thus Leah, whom he married first, signifies with her weak eyes and fertile womb the weak faith of the Old Testament Church (compared to that of the New Testament Church) and her abundant offspring. But Rachel, whom he married later but loved first and most strongly, signifies the New Testament Church, which the Lord loved first - insofar as the Church of the

30 See St. Ambrose of Milan, On Isaac, or the Soul.
Gentiles existed even before Abraham - but married later. Moreover, if Abraham is an image of the Father, and Isaac of the Son, then it is perhaps permissible to see in Jacob an image of the Holy Spirit, Who brought forth fruit in both the Old and the New Testament Churches. However, Rachel brought forth in pain because the second Bride of the Spirit, the New Testament Church, brought forth her first children in the blood of martyrdom - that is, the children killed by Herod (Matthew 2.16-18), and Stephen and the Apostles (cf. Revelation 12.2).

Again, if to Abraham was revealed, in an image, the doctrines of the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and of the Holy Trinity, then to Jacob was revealed, in another image, the doctrine of the Incarnation. For this, according to the fathers, is the meaning of his dream of a ladder between heaven and earth on which the angels of God were seen ascending and descending. The descent of God into the womb of the Virgin, and His abiding in the Church, is symbolized by the descent of the angels, while the ascent of man into heaven through the Church, is symbolized by their ascent; whence the words of Jacob: "This is none other than the house of God [i.e. the Church], and this is the gate of heaven" (Genesis 28.17).

In honour of this revelation, Jacob, like Abraham, was given a new name - "Israel", meaning "he who has seen God". This name is also given to the Church, which is "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6.16). And Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov points out that "in the spiritual sense Christians are called Israel who have made significant spiritual progress".31

The twelve sons of Jacob and the seventy souls who go with him into Egypt signify further New Testament mysteries - the twelve and the seventy Apostles. And the increase in number and the sufferings of the Israelites in Egypt signify the multiplication of the Christians in and through the sufferings inflicted by the world, the flesh and the devil. Thus the whole story of the Patriarchs, while true and of great importance in and of itself, is also an allegory of the Church of Christ, being "a figure for the time then present..., until the time of reformation" (Hebrews 9.9, 10).

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2. THE PILGRIM CHURCH: THE LIFE OF MOSES

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and.. confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.  
Hebrews 11.13.

The image of the Church which emerges in Genesis has many elements - faith and hope, covenant and sacrifice, prayer and sacrament (circumcision) - but it lacks three which must be regarded as essential: the priesthood (if we except Melchizedek's fleeting appearance), the feasts and fasts of the Church's rite, and the law. These three elements are supplied by God in the next stage of the history of His people - the exodus from Egypt and conquest of the Promised Land. And they are supplied in the course of the dramatic story which, as St. Gregory of Nyssa has shown in his Life of Moses 32, is an inexhaustible mine of metaphors of almost every aspect of the Christian life.

The Exodus

Moses himself is perhaps the most complete image of Christ in the whole of the Old Testament. His leadership of the people out of Egypt and against all their enemies in the desert is an image of Christ the King. His institution of the priesthood and the law is an image of Christ the Great High Priest. And his rebuking of the people and prophecy of their destiny is an image of Christ the Prophet. Indeed, Moses' most explicit prophecy of the Coming of Christ says that He will be like himself: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken..." (Deuteronomy 18.15; John 6.14; Acts 3.22)

The name Moses means "drawn out of water"; for just as he was saved by being cast into the water by his natural mother and drawn out again by his adopted mother, so the Christian is saved by being cast into the waters of Baptism by his natural mother and drawn out again by his adopted mother, the Church.

A still clearer image of Baptism is the passage through the Red Sea. Just as the Egyptians were drowned in the waters of the Red Sea, so the sins of our former life are blotted out in the waters of Holy Baptism. The evil passions still remain in the faithful, however; which is why, even after the passage through the Red Sea, the Israelites still have to contend with the Amalekites, the Midianites and other forces of evil.

32 See also the notes to the translation of St. Gregory's Life of Moses by Malherbe and Ferguson, New York: Paulist Press, 1978.
The sacrifice of the passover lamb is an image of the Sacrifice on the Cross of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1.29), Jesus Christ, and therefore also of the Eucharist. Just as smearing the lintels of the doors with its blood delivered the Israelites from the penalty of sin in the form of the angel of death who killed the first-born of the Egyptians, so the Body and Blood of Christ delivers the Christians who partake of it (the lintels of the doors are an image of the lips of the mouth) from the penalty of sin in the form of the eternal death which awaits unbelievers. And it is accompanied by the eating of unleavened bread, that is, a life purged from the leaven of our former sins. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (I Corinthians 5.7-8)

God commanded the Israelites through Moses to keep the feast of the Passover as the first and greatest feast of the Church year and the beginning of the Church calendar. The two other great feasts of the Old Testament Church - Pentecost and Tabernacles - also take their origin from events in the life of Moses.

Pentecost commemorates the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai fifty days after the passage through the Red Sea. And the feast of Tabernacles commemorates the joyful rest and ingathering of the harvest after the forty years wandering through the desert and just before the final crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land. Pentecost, like the Passover, has received its New Testament fulfilment - in the Descent of the Holy Spirit fifty days after the Resurrection of Christ; but the feast of Tabernacles has yet to receive its fulfilment in the New Testament Church...33

After passing through the Red Sea, the Israelites begin to suffer from thirst and other temptations. This signifies the temptations Christians suffer after they have been baptized (the Lord, too, suffered the temptations in the wilderness immediately after His Baptism), which are intensified by the fact that they are now deprived of the "the fleshpots of Egypt" - the pleasures of their former sinful life. Nevertheless, there are consolations on the way.

First, there is the Cross of Christ, which, like the wood cast into the bitter waters of Marah three days' march from the Red Sea, sweetens the bitterness of temptations. Secondly, there is the teaching of the Gospel, signified by the twelve springs of water (the twelve major Apostles) and the seventy date palms (the seventy minor Apostles).

33 See the chapter on the feast of tabernacles in Jean Danielou, The Bible and the Liturgy, Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966.
And then there is the manna from heaven, signifying the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, which strengthens us in soul and body, being that "daily bread" (more accurately: "vital" or "essential" bread) for which we pray in the Lord's prayer.

For as the Lord Himself said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the Bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world... I am the living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; the Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. This is that Bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever (John 6.32-3, 51-58).

The Cross appears again in the struggle with Amalek, in which the Israelites prevailed as long as Moses stood with his arms outspread in the form of a cross. This gives rise to an interesting interpretation of Matthew 5.18: "one iota or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled". "The iota (i) and the tittle (a cross stroke) combined form the image of the cross," write Malherbe and Ferguson.

Moreover, this image is identical with the tau, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in which the Law was written. "Wherefore," writes St. Gregory, "not one dot, not one little stroke, shall disappear from the Law", signifying in these words the vertical and horizontal lines by which the form of the cross is drawn. That which was seen in Moses, who is perceived in the Law's place, is appointed as the cause and monument of victory to those who look at it."34

And we may add that "all will be fulfilled" when the "sign of the Son of man", the Cross, appears, this time from heaven, at the end of the world, after which "all the tribes of the earth shall mourn" (Matthew 24.30), acknowledging the final defeat of the enemies of Christ. For "the sign of Son of God will appear, that is, the sign of the Cross. The whole world, having willingly submitted to Antichrist, ‘will break out in lamentation’."35

After the victory over the Amalekites the children of Israel arrive at Mount Sinai, whose ascent signifies the union of man with God. Now it was at Sinai that Moses had been given the vision of the burning bush, and had received the name of God: "I am Who I am" (Exodus 3.14). This constitutes, after the Lord's words to Eve in the Garden, the promise to Abraham concerning his seed, and Jacob's dream of the heavenly ladder, the fourth biblical prophecy of the Incarnation. Only it is clearer and deeper than its predecessors. It tells us, not only that God will come down to men, as if on a ladder, but that He Who is, absolute and uncircumscribable Being, He in Whom all limited creatures "live and move and have their being" (Acts 17.28), will consent to be circumscribed within the limits of one of these creatures in an unconfused but at the same time indivisible union of Spirit with matter, in the same way as the fire was united with the matter of the bush - except that, unlike the union of ordinary fire with matter, this will not result in the destruction, or the causing of any kind of harm to, the creature into whom He descends.

The second vision at Sinai differs from the first in three ways. First, it involves a stricter preparation and a more arduous ascent, as is appropriate to the greater degree of knowledge which it affords. Secondly, God is seen this time, not in light, but in darkness. For while, on the one hand, God is Light and enlightens all men (John 1.9, 12.46), on the other hand that Light is unapproachable and unknowable in essence (I Timothy 6.16), just as the sun which enlightens the whole material world is unapproachable and unknowable in its interior core. And thirdly, since Moses ascended the mount this time, not as an individual, but as the leader of the people of God, he is entrusted with the Law and its ordinances which will prepare the people to receive the same knowledge that he has received.

St. Paul wrote that "the Law was our schoolmaster unto Christ" (Galatians 3.24), being "glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance" (II Corinthians 3.7). Moreover, the Lord Himself said that He had not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it (Matthew 3.17). On the other hand, "the Law made nothing perfect" (Hebrews 7.19), it was "the ministration of death written and engraven in stones", its glory "was to be done away" (II Corinthians 3.7). Misunderstandings of this apparent contradiction have led to grave errors and heresies in the history of the Church, from that of the Judaizing Christians mentioned in Acts and Galatians, who over-emphasized the holiness of the Law, to the Protestant reformers who over-emphasized its inferiority in relation to grace. It will therefore be fitting at this point to review the main functions of the Old Testament Law.

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In the period of the Patriarchs, the people of God had been a very small unit, no larger than an extended family, in which the faith and piety of the people were largely determined by the character of the family head, who was usually a man of exceptional holiness. This was no longer the case at the time of the exodus from Egypt. The Israelites now numbered six hundred thousand, and although their leader Moses was unquestionably holy, he could not hope, by his personal influence alone, to mould the piety of the whole people corrupted by four hundred years' sojourn in a pagan land.

A rod was therefore required, a rod coupled to a law which clearly fenced the people around from those transgressions which were not counted as sin among the pagans but which offended the holiness of God. For, as the Apostle says, "where no law is, there is no transgression" (Romans 4.15). And "the law entered that the sin might abound" (Romans 5.20). The Law therefore defined sin and the penalty for sin at a time when the natural law of the conscience (cf. Romans 2.14-15) had grown weak through the general corruption prevailing throughout mankind. And if it could not remove that guilt and that sin, it nevertheless created the essential condition for the removal of guilt and the remission of sins - that is, repentance.

The Old Testament Law is often seen as savage and unworthy of the God of the New Testament. But the God of the New Testament, Jesus Christ, both confirmed the sanctity of the Old Testament Law and was revealed, at the Transfiguration, as the very same God Who gave the Law to Moses. Moreover, a comparison of the Laws of the Old and New Testament reveals that the latter is incomparably stricter and more terrifying in its threats. Thus whereas the Old Law demands obedience, as a rule, only with respect to outward acts (the main exceptions are the commandments to love God and one's neighbour), the New Law demands purity also in the inner man of the heart (I Peter 3.4). And whereas the Old Law's worst punishment is the physical death of the transgressor, the New Law threatens the offender with the eternal fire of gehenna (cf. Matthew 5.22).

Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev, who was the leader of the Russian Church in the eleventh century, put it as follows: "God established the law to prepare human beings to receive the truth and grace; so that human nature supported by the law, fleeing idolatrous polytheism, would learn to believe in one God; that humanity, like some contaminated vessel, washed as it were by the water of the law and circumcision, would be ready to receive the milk of grace and baptism. In fact the law has led those who were under the law to the grace of baptism, and baptism, for its part, accompanies its sons and daughters to eternal life. Moses and the prophets had preached the coming of Christ; Christ and His apostles preached the resurrection and the future world...

"As the moon's light disappears with the sun's rising and as the night's chill passes when the sun's warmth heats the earth, so too the law disappeared
with the appearance of grace. Humankind no longer bears the burden of the law but strides firmly in grace. Actually the Jews have sculptured their justification by the light of the lamp of the law, while Christians build their salvation by the light of the sun of grace. The Jews, by means of the shadow and the law have been justified but not saved; Christians, on the other hand, by means of grace and truth have not been justified but saved. For the Jews there is justification and for the Christians salvation; justification then is for this life while salvation is for the future life.  

Besides the moral law, God gave Moses detailed instructions concerning Church rites and the objects to be used in Divine worship. These objects included the tabernacle, the golden censer, the ark, the seven-branched candlestick and the Cherubim overshadowing the ark. Many of these objects had an allegorical significance relating to future events and mysteries. Thus the curtain of the lower tabernacle, which was composed of various colours, signified the Flesh of Christ (Hebrews 10.20). And St. Methodius of Patara compared the tabernacle to the Church, on the one hand, and the resurrection body, on the other.

As St. John of Damascus points out, these commands show that the injunction against idol-worship by means precluded the use of material images, not as idols, but as aids to Divine worship: "Just as words edify the ear, so also the image stimulates the eye. What the book is to the literate, the image is to the illiterate. Just as my words speak to the ear, so the image speaks to the sight; it brings us understanding. For this reason God ordered the ark to be constructed of wood which would not decay, and to be gilded outside and in, and for the tablets to be place inside, with Aaron's staff and the golden urn containing the manna, in order to provide a remembrance of the past, and an image of the future. Who can say that these were not images, heralds sounding from afar off? They were not placed inside the meeting-tent, but were brought forth in the sight of all the people, who gazed upon them and used them to offer praise and worship to God. Obviously they were not adored for their own sake, but through them the people were led to remember the wonders of old and to worship God, the Worker of wonders. They were images serving as memorials; they were not divine, but led to the remembrance of Divine power."

Even the formation in which the Israelites were commanded to march through the desert was the image of a mystery. For it was that of a double cross, with the ark, representing the incarnate presence of God, in the centre, the Levites, representing the priesthood, in the shape of a cross around the

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38 St. Methodius, Symposium 5.7; De Resurrectione 1.14.
ark, and the remaining tribes, representing the laity, in a second cross around that (Numbers 2). ⁴⁰

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La Parataxe de la Croix
protégeant l’Arche de l’Alliance

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⁴⁰ Taken from "La Phalange Cruciforme", La Lumière du Thabor, no. 20, Paris: Fraternité Orthodoxe Saint Grégoire Palamas.
**The Journey through the Desert**

When the Israelites left Sinai, they encountered other temptations. First, Aaron and Miriam were filled with envy against Moses, giving as an excuse the fact that "he had married an Ethiopian woman" ([Numbers 12.1](#)). St. Irenaeus sees in the Ethiopian woman a figure of the Church of the Gentiles[^41], which enables us to see in the whole episode a prophecy of the future envy of the Jews against the Gentile Church, in accordance with Moses' own prophecy: "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you" ([Deuteronomy 32.21; Romans 10.19](#)).

Then came the rebellion of Kore, Dathan and Abiram. If the worship of the golden calf, in which even the (distinctly fallible) high-priest Aaron took part, represents the temptation to idolatry and complete abandonment of the Faith, then the rebellion of Kore, Dathan and Abiram represents the more subtle, but no less dangerous temptation to perversion of the Faith, to heresy and schism. The rebellion was motivated by a combination of personal ambition (in the person of Kore, who "sought the priesthood" ([Numbers 16.10](#)) and material dissatisfaction (in the persons of Dathan and Abiram). It was destroyed with the utmost severity by the Lord. Not only the leaders of the schism, but all their supporters, "and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense" ([Numbers 16.33-35](#)).

St. John Chrysostom uses this story to warn against ecclesiastical schism: "If those persons have dogmas contrary to ours, then on that account one should not have intercourse with them; if, on the other hand, they hold the same opinions, the reason (for avoiding them) is greater still. Why so? Because this is the disease of lust for authority. Do you not know what happened to Kore, Dathan, and Abiram? Were they the only ones to suffer? Did not also their accomplices? What wilt thou say? 'Their faith is the same, they are Orthodox as well.' If so, why are they not with us? There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. If they are right, then we are wrong; if we are right, then they are wrong. Tell me, do you think this is enough that they are called Orthodox, while with them the charism of ordination has grown scarce and done away with? What is the advantage of all things else, if this latter is not observed? As we must contend for the Faith, so must we for this also. For if it is lawful for any one, according to the saying of old, to fill his hands, to be a

[^41]: St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, IV, 34, 12.
priest, in vain the Church order, in vain the assembly of the priests: let us overthrow and annihilate all this."

Next, Moses sent spies into the Promised Land, which is, allegorically speaking, the Kingdom of heaven. They came back with conflicting reports. When the people believed the discouraging reports, they were angry with Moses, and God was angry with them. He decreed that none of those who had no faith in His Providence would enter the Promised Land, and condemned them to wander for another forty years in the desert. "For we are made partakers of Christ," writes the Apostle, "if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. While it is said, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3.14-19).

However, two spies, Joshua and Caleb, came back from the Promised Land with encouraging reports. They survived the journey and entered the Promised Land. This symbolizes the victory of the Christian who believes and endures to the end. For "we are not of those who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10.39). And the grapes hanging on wooden poles which they brought back as a pledge of the accuracy of their report symbolizes the Crucifixion of Christ on the wood of the Cross as the pledge of the reality of our salvation and entry into eternal rest.

Once, as they were wandering through the waterless desert, the people lost faith in God's help and began to revile both Him and Moses. So Moses (after some doubts of his own, which cost him his entry into the Promised Land) struck the rock, from which water flowed to quench their thirst. "For they drank," as the Apostle says, "of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ" (I Corinthians 10.4). Most of the early fathers, developing this allegory, saw in this an image either of the Eucharist, the rock representing the side of Christ out of which flowed blood as well as water, or of Baptism. St. Gregory, however, sees in it the "second Baptism", repentance through tears; and this seems appropriate at this late stage in the journey, when the cleansing received through Baptism had been stained by many sins.

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43 St. Gregory of Nyssa, The Life of Moses, II, 270. See also the note on this passage.
And then they again fell victims to gluttony. Only this time the Lord sent a much fiercer scourge - serpents, which killed many. However, when Moses ordered the construction of a brazen serpent, those who looked upon it were healed. In the same way, the evil passions are healed when we look with faith upon the "passionless Passion" of Christ our God. For "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up [on the Cross]", said the Lord (John 3.14).

Towards the Promised Land

And so the people, purified from sin, turned back towards the Promised Land. Their path took them along "the royal highway", from which their enemies allowed them to deviate neither to the right nor to the left. "In the same way," writes St. Gregory, "the Law requires the person who keeps in step with it not to leave the way which is, as the Lord says, 'narrow and hard', to the left or the right."44

The last major test for the people before crossing the Jordan, which means "Judgement", came from the Midianites under Barak. First, the demonic arts of the sorcerer Balaam proved powerless against the power of God, which spoke through an ass and persuaded the sorcerer to bless, and not curse, the Israelites. Then the Midianites were defeated in battle. And finally, the snare of the Midianite women was overcome by the zeal of the priest Phineas - though not before 23,000 had fallen in fornication (I Corinthians 10.8).

Balaam has been seen as a type of the demonically-inspired false prophets and heretics who wage war against the Church of Christ (II Peter 2.15; Jude 11; Matthew 7.15, 24.24). For "he taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication" (Revelation 2.14). And the threefold struggle against Barak, the women and Balaam signifies the threefold struggle of every Christian against the world, the flesh and the devil.

Moses died at the age of 120; yet, because of his triumphant struggle against sin in all its forms, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deuteronomy 34.7). However, it was not Moses, but Joshua, which is the same name as "Jesus" and means "the Lord saves", who was destined to lead the people across the Jordan and into the Promised Land. And the lesson in this is that even the greatest struggles of the Christian are unable, of themselves, to win for him salvation and the inheritance of the Kingdom. In addition to his own efforts, he needs the grace of the Divine Saviour Jesus, Who says: "Without Me you can nothing" (John 15.5). For, as the Apostle says, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Romans 9.16).

3. THE STATE CHURCH: FROM JOSHUA TO JESUS

From a spiritual point of view, the Church is always a pilgrim in this world. However, there are times when the Lord grants her a rest, as it were, from wandering, a geographical "homeland" and a political support and anchor, to the extent that she even becomes identified with certain States. This brings some very considerable advantages, especially the opportunity to exert a more constant and widespread influence on the world. And if this means that the Church engages, albeit obliquely, in political activity, this is not in itself reprehensible.

As Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles explains: "The notion that engaging in politics is reprehensible has been advanced in an entirely erroneous fashion by the enemies of the faith. This has been done that only those who are against the Church may engage in politics, with great benefit for themselves and with great harm to the faith... The Church has a purpose for working within human society and influencing all its parts, including governments, giving her approval to those that promulgate the Christian faith and chastising those that oppose it. This.. is politics, and at the same time, the duty of the Church."45

However, the Church's attempts to influence politics and acquire a political support also bring with them dangers - dangers of a more subtle kind than those confronting her in the pilgrim phase of her existence. Broadly speaking, these dangers may be described as a tendency to confuse the Church and the world, and to confuse worldly aims and methods with those of God. The Lord warned against any such confusion when he said to the political ruler of his time: "My Kingdom is not of this world" (John 18.36).

The Temptations of the World

Both the opportunities for conversion and the dangers of confusion are well illustrated by the next phase in the history of the people of God, which extends from Joshua to the Maccabees. In the whole of this phase, with the exception of short periods of captivity under the Philistines, the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the people of Israel were settled in a single geographical area over which they exerted the dominant political power. And at some

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times they used the opportunities to make Israel a great light for the world, while at others they sank to depths as yet unseen in the history of the people of God.

Thus in the history of the very first permanent conquest made by the Israelites in their invasion of the Promised Land, the taking of Jericho (Joshua 1-7), we have figures of both the opportunities and the dangers. Rahab the harlot, who helped the Israelites to enter the city, is a figure of those secret sympathizers of the people of God in the world who would help them if they could and join them if they could - but who can join them only if the Church extends her missionary reach into the non-Christian world. And Achan the Israelite, who took for himself a part of the booty which was reserved for God, is a figure of those believers who, under the influence of the seductions opened up by the Church's closeness to the kingdoms of this world, lose the salt of the true faith and are therefore expelled from the Kingdom which is not of this world.

The story of Achan introduces a word which is of great importance in our understanding of the nature of the Church and her relationship to the world: anathema. The booty which is reserved for God is called anathema. This is in accordance with the first part of the definition of the word given by St. Nicodemus the Athonite: "Anathema is that which is set apart by men and consecrated to God; and also we call anathema that which is separated from God by the Church of Christ and thus consigned to the devil."

Since Athan had seized that which was anathema in the first sense he became subject to anathema in the second sense - he was cast out of the Church. And in general any member of the Church who encroaches on the sacred treasure of the Church, her doctrinal or moral teaching, by speaking heresy or hatred, is anathematized by her, that is, cast out from her. Thus the Apostle Paul writes: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (I Corinthians 16.22); and: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Galatians 1.8).

That which is attached or subjected to anathema must be removed. Otherwise the Church will begin to suffer spiritual reverses, as Israel began to suffer military reverses before Achan was removed. That is why the Church's anathemas are acts, not of hatred, but of love - love for the Church and her purity and truth, without which there can be no hope of salvation for the world.

The whole subsequent history of Israel illustrates this fundamental truth. Whenever Israel sinned against the Lord - usually by worshipping some foreign god, - she suffered reverses, in extreme cases, leading to the captivity.

46 St. Nidodemus, in his commentary on The Rudder.
of the whole nation. However, when a new judge or king appeared who was prepared to removed the evil, Israel prospered once more.

That is why it was so important that the leader should be chosen by God. In the time of the judges, this seems always to have been the case; for when an emergency arose God sent His Spirit upon a man chosen by Him (cf. Judges 6.34), and the people, recognizing this, then elected him as their judge (cf. Judges 11.11). And if there was no emergency, or if the people were not worthy of a God-chosen leader, then God did not send His Spirit and no judge was elected; so that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21.25) - the definition of anarchy.

The unity of Israel was therefore religious, not political - or rather, it was religio-political. It was created by the history of deliverance from the tyranny of Egypt and maintained by a continuing allegiance to God - the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God Who appeared to Moses and Joshua, - as their only King. That is why, when the people offered to make Gideon and his descendants kings in a kind of hereditary dynasty, he refused, saying: "the Lord shall rule over you" (Judges 8.23).

The Israelite Theocracy

However, the Israelites clamoured for a different kind of king, one who would judge them, as they declared to the Prophet Samuel, "like all the nations." And this desire for a non-theocratic king amounted to apostasy in the eyes of the Lord, the only true King of Israel. So "the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should rule over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken Me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them" (I Samuel 8.4-9).

And then Samuel painted for them the image of a harsh, totalitarian ruler of the kind that was common in Egypt and Babylonia and the other pagan nations round about. These kings, as well as having total political control over their subjects, were often worshipped by them as gods; so that "kingship" as that was understood in the Middle East meant both the loss of political freedom and alienation from the true and living God.47 As the subsequent history of Israel shows, God in His mercy did not always send such totalitarian rulers upon His people, and the best of the kings, such as David, Josiah and Hezekiah, were in the spirit and tradition of the judges - kings who

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were in obedience to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Nevertheless, the
first introduction of kingship in Israel was a retrograde step in the history of
the people of God. For it represented the introduction of a second, worldly
principle of allegiance into what had been a society bound together by
religious bonds alone, a "schism in the soul" which, although almost
inevitable in the context of the times - a severe defeat at the hands of the
Philistines, and the loss of the ark, - meant the loss for ever of that pristine
purity and simplicity which had characterized Israel up to then. And it is
important to realize that the worldly principle was introduced because the
religious principle had failed, or grown weak: the history of the kings begins
with the corruption of the priests, the sons of Eli, who were in possession of
the ark at the time of its capture. Thus the kings' subsequent oppression of
the people is ultimately ascribable to the failure of the spiritual leaders...

And yet everything seemed to go well at first. Samuel anointed as king
Saul, who, when possessed by the Spirit of the Lord, defeated both the
enemies of Israel, the Ammonites and the Philistines. But the schism which
had been introduced into the life of the nation began to express itself also in
the life of their king, with tragic consequences...

First, before a major battle with the Philistines, the king made a sacrifice to
the Lord without waiting for Samuel. For this sin, which was the first gross
interference of the power of the State into the affairs of the Church, Samuel
prophesied that the kingdom would be taken away from Saul and given to a
man after God's heart. Then Saul, following "the voice of the people" rather
than the voice of God, spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, together with
the best of his livestock, instead of killing them all, as God had commanded.
For this Samuel turned away from Saul "and came no more to see him until
the day of his death" (I Samuel 15.35). And shortly after, he anointed David as
king in his place.

Saul's sins were serious because neither Moses nor Joshua, nor any of the
judges (with the possible exception of Samson), had disobeyed the command
of the Lord. They had preserved that theocratic submission of the whole life
of the people, including political life, to the will of the Lord which is the ideal
of Christian society. But Saul, by interfering in the work of the priests and
listening to the people rather than the Lord, had introduced a secular,
democratic element into the heart of society which was to have devastating
consequences for the whole people in the long run. He was, in effect, the first
revolutionary to appear at the head of the people of God. That is why Samuel
said to him, in words that apply to all later political revolutionaries: "To obey
is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as
the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry" (I Samuel
15.22-23).
These words also contained a prophecy; for, just before his last battle at Mount Gilboa, Saul consulted a witch at Endor, asking her to call up the spirit of the dead Samuel. In fitting punishment for this sin, Samuel appeared to him from beyond the grave and prophesied his destruction, thereby depriving his last hours of any hope. And in despair he ordered his armour-bearer to kill him - for which sin of killing the Lord's anointed David had the armour-bearer himself executed.

The falling away of Saul led directly to the first major schism in the history of Israel. For after Saul's death, the northern tribes supported the claim of Saul's surviving son to the throne, while the southern tribes supported David. Although David suppressed this rebellion, and although, for David's sake, the Lord did not allow a schism during the reign of his son Solomon, it erupted again and became permanent after Solomon's death...

The reigns of David and Solomon are especially important for three main reasons. First, in them the Israelite kingdom attained its greatest strength, subduing its enemies and reaching its geographical integrity as that had been promised to Abraham: "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15.18). Secondly, the covenant which the Lord had sworn to the Family Church in the persons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to the Pilgrim Church in the persons of Moses and Joshua, He now renewed with the State Church in the persons of David and Solomon. The unconditional element of this covenant - the part which the Lord promised to fulfil whatever happened - was the promise of the Coming of Christ: the Seed seen by Abraham, the Prophet seen by Moses, and now the King seen by David; for "thine house and thy kingdom," He said to David, "shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever" (II Samuel 7.16; cf. Luke 1.32-33). And thirdly, the worship of the Old Testament Church reached its maturity and most magnificent development in the building of the Temple and the establishment of all the Temple services.

The importance of Solomon's Temple as a figure of the New Testament Church can be seen in the many resemblances between the two, from the details of the priests' vestments and the use of the Psalter to the offering of incense and the frescoes on the walls. Even the structure of the Temple building, with its sanctuary, nave and narthex and two aisles, recalls the structure of the Christian basilica. But there is this very important difference, that whereas the nave of the Temple was entered only by the priests, and the sanctuary only by the high-priest once a year, while all the services were conducted in the courtyard, the New Testament Church allows all Christians to enter the Church, inasmuch as they are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people" (I Peter 2.9), for whom Christ the
Great High-Priest has made "a new and living way" into the holy of holies (Hebrews 10.19-22).  

The consecration of the Temple by Solomon may be seen the high point of the Old Testament, from which the rest of the Old Testament is a long and uneven, but inexorable fall until the Coming of Christ at its lowest point. The union of the kingship with the priesthood in the only major city of Israel not belonging to any of the tribes - for Jerusalem had been a Jebusite city until David and his men conquered it, - represented that ideal symphony of Church and State which was not to be recovered in its full glory until the Emperor Justinian consecrated the Great Church of the Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) in Constantinople over 1500 years later. And when the Jews looked forward to the Messiah-King who was to restore their fortunes and usher in the Kingdom of God on earth, the image they conceived was compounded of the warlike prowess of David and the peaceful splendour of Solomon.

But in Solomon himself lay the seeds of that corruption which was to bring everything down in ruins. For this lover of wisdom whom God loved was not wise enough to heed the words inscribed in the Mosaic law: "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; Thou shalt set him as king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." (Deuteronomy 17.14-17).

Now Solomon was, of course, a legitimate king, a "brother" and not a "stranger" - that is, a member of the household of the faith. He was a king, moreover, whom God had chosen, giving him the great gift of wisdom. However, he "multiplied horses to himself", many of whom came from Egypt. (Archaeologists have discovered the remains of his huge stables.) And he

48 Cf. Leontius of Neapolis in Cyprus: "Truly this command is awesome: God, who commands Israel to make no image, or carving, or likeness of anything in heaven or earth, Himself commands Moses to make graven images of cherubim which are living creatures. He shows a vision of the temple to Ezekiel, and it is full of the images and carved likenesses of lions, men and palm trees. Solomon knew the law, and yet he made images, filling the temple with metal figures of oxen, and palm trees, and men, but God did not reproach him for this. Now, if you wish to condemn me on this subject, you are condemning God, who ordered these things to be made, that they might be reminders for us of Himself" (quoted in St. John of Damascus On the Divine Images, op. cit., p. 97).

For a detailed allegorical commentary on Solomon's temple, see the Venerable Bede's On the Temple, a companion work to his On the Tabernacle.
"multiplied wives to himself", many of whom again came from Egypt and "turned his heart away" from the living God to idolatry. Finally, he "multiplied to himself silver and gold" on a vast scale. Thus with uncanny precision the prophecy pinpointed the weaknesses of Solomon, which were one of the causes of the division of the kingdom after his death.

It may be objected that David had many of these faults. He, too, had many wives - some, like Solomon's mother Bathsheba, acquired by unlawful means. And by the end of his reign he had amassed fabulous wealth. But David's wives, unlike Solomon's, did not draw him away from the True Faith; and his wealth was not amassed to be spent on his own pleasures, but was handed over en masse near the end of his life towards the building of the Temple. And therefore for his sake - here we see the great intercessory power of the saints - God promised that the kingdom would not be divided in the reign of his son (I Kings 11.12).

In this way David showed that first essential quality of a Christian king: obedience to God and loyalty to the True Faith. Moreover, when he did disobey God, he showed the other vital quality indicated by the prophecy: humility (Deuteronomy 17.20). Thus he fasted, prayed and wept when Nathan rebuked him for his sin with Bathsheba, and accepted without murmuring the loss of his first son from that union, together with all the terrible upheavals that followed in his family. And on the only occasion on which he acted without faith, like an Eastern potentate, - in carrying out a census of the people, - he again accepted God's terrible punishment - in the form of a plague that killed thousands of the people - as entirely his own fault.

Paradoxically, therefore, while Solomon can be seen as a figure of the Messiah in his glory, in the depth of his wisdom and the splendour and peace of his kingdom, David prefigures Him rather in his shame and his sufferings, wherein he displayed the humility and the patience, and the willingness to take upon himself the full blame for the sins of the people, of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53). And as the glory of Solomon's reign was made possible by the suffering of David's, so the glory of the Resurrection is made possible by the suffering of the Cross. For, as the Church chants: "Through the Cross joy is come into the world."49

For that reason, perhaps, it was given that David in his Psalms should utter more prophecies of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ than any other prophetic book of the Old Testament; and that the first apostolic sermon on the Day of Pentecost should be uttered by Peter next to the tomb of David in Zion (Acts 2).

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49 Pentecostarion, The First Sunday of Pascha, Mattins, ikos.
Schism and Apostasy

The downward curve in the history of the kingdom of Israel begins with its division in the time of Solomon's son Rehoboam. The immediate cause was Rehoboam's arrogant refusal to lighten the burden of heavy labour imposed upon the tribes by his father: "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastized you with whips, but I will chastize you with scorpions" (I Kings 12.14). Therefore the ten northern tribes broke away and chose as their king a renegade former servant of Solomon's who had taken refuge in Egypt - Jeroboam. Thus did Rehoboam reject the Lord's warning that the king's heart should "not be lifted up above his brethren" (Deuteronomy 17.20). And thus was fulfilled Samuel's warning about the despotic nature of ordinary - that is, non-theocratic - kingship.

The political schism immediately engendered a religious schism. For Jeroboam reasoned that if the people of his kingdom continued to go up to the Temple in Jerusalem to pray, as the Law commanded, they would soon kill him and go over to Rehoboam. So he set up two golden calves, one in Bethel and the other in Dan, and said: "behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (I Kings 12.28). "And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi" (I Kings 12.30-31).

With astonishing speed, therefore, the glorious kingdom of Solomon, the forerunner of the Kingdom of Christ, became the apostate kingdom of Jeroboam, the forerunner of the kingdom of the Antichrist - even to the extent that Jeroboam set up his false god in Dan, which, according to tradition, will be the tribe of the Antichrist. Nor was the sickness of the northern kingdom ever healed: in spite of the admonitions of such prophets as Ahijah and Elijah, Elisha, Amos and Hosea, the people, led by kings of ever-increasing corruption and idolatry, of whom the Lord said: "They have made kings for themselves, but not by Me" (Hosea 8.4), went from bad to worse. Finally, in the reign of King Hoshea, after a vain attempt to win Egyptian support, the kingdom was conquered by the Assyrian King Shalmaneser, the people were deported and they lost their religious and national identity for ever (II Kings 17).

50 Cf. St. Irenaeus, Against Heresies; Gen. 49.17, Jer. 8.16. Archbishop Averky writes, commenting on the enumeration of the tribes in Revelation 7: "Of these tribes only the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, because from it, according to tradition, will come the Antichrist. In place of the tribe of Dan is mentioned the priestly tribe of Levi which previously had not entered into the twelve tribes" (Rukovodstvo k Izucheniu Svyashchennykh Pisanii Novago Zaveta (Guide to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament, vol. II, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1956 (in Russian)).
Not that there were no faithful worshippers left; for as the Lord said to the Prophet Elijah: "Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (I Kings 19.18). However, the believers lived in a catacomb situation; and the great miracles of Elijah, whereby he stopped the heavens from raining for three and a half years, and showed Baal to be powerless at the sacrifice on Mount Carmel, and resurrected the son of the widow of Zarephath (an image of the Church), and sent down fire on the messengers of King Ahaziah, did not bring about a lasting religious reformation. For this reason, this period - and especially the three-and-a-half years of drought brought about by the prayers of Elijah - is regarded as an image of the period of the Antichrist's rule, when the Church will be in a similarly desperate situation, and the Prophet Elijah will again come to earth to rebuke the evil ruler and "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I [the Lord] come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4.5).

This last verse is a simultaneous prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith of the Christian Jews, of the conversion of the last generation of Jews to the faith of the Christians, and of God's terrible last judgement on the remaining unbelievers. For as St. Jerome writes, Elijah "'will turn the heart of the fathers to the sons', that is, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the patriarchs, that their descendants should believe in the Lord and Saviour, in Whom they also believed: 'for Abraham saw My day, and was glad' (John 8.56): or the heart of the father to the son, that is, the heart of God to everyone who receives the Spirit of adoption. 'And the heart of the sons to the fathers', so that Jews and Christians, who now disagree amongst themselves, may agree by an equal faith in Christ. Whence it is said to the apostles, who passed on the teaching of the Gospel throughout the world: 'Instead of your fathers sons were born unto you' (Psalm 44.17)."

While the northern kingdom of Israel perished, the southern kingdom of Judah fared little better. Isaiah's words are typical of the exhortations of the prophets in these years: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should they be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of

Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1.2-9).

The idea of "the remnant", the faithful core in a mass of apostasy, now becomes more and more important in the writings of the prophets. Just as the Lord in Abraham's time was prepared to spare Sodom and Gomorrah as long as righteous Lot remained in it, so he was prepared to spare Judah as long as a faithful remnant was preserved in it. Sometimes this remnant included the king himself - like Hezekiah, who trusted in God, in response to which the Angel of the Lord destroyed the army of the Assyrian King Sennacherib, or Josiah, who found a lost book of the Law in the Temple and instituted a thorough reformation of the people's religious life.

More commonly, however, the kings led the people in apostasy: "They have set up kings, but not by Me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off" (Hosea 8.4). Sometimes the remnant included diligent priests and truly inspired prophets. But more often "the priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew Me not: the pastors also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit" (Jeremiah 2.8). Gradually the remnant of God's faithful were being squeezed out, and a Pharisaic establishment was taking its place. Soon that establishment would reject the very Messiah the preparation of Whose Coming was their own raison d'être...

Something very close to this happened in the days of Isaiah, whose death was ordered by the idolatrous King Manasseh, and even more in the days of Jeremiah, when not only the kings refused to heed his warnings not to rebel against Babylon and enter into alliance with Egypt, but also the "priests" and "prophets" ganged up to cast him into the stocks (Jeremiah 20). The people continued to believe that, whatever their sins, the grace and the protection of God would never be taken away from them, saying: "Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet" (Jeremiah 18.18). But all of these things happened, and in the end the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem with great slaughter, destroyed the Temple, and deported most of the remaining people with the Temple treasures.

The unthinkable had happened, and now at last the Jews, led in exile by the Prophets Ezekiel and Daniel, began to repent of their sins. They even produced martyrs for the Faith, like the three holy children whom Nebuchadnezzar cast into the fiery furnace for refusing to worship the golden idol. And in the time of the Persian King Ahasuerus, and of the Jewish leaders
Esther and Mordecai, the Lord delivered them from the threat of extermination in response to their heart-felt prayer and fasting.

Chastened, therefore, and purified by their sufferings during seventy years' exile by the waters of Babylon, the Jews were counted worthy by the Lord of a new beginning in a rebuilt Jerusalem. First, as prophesied by the Prophet Isaiah (45.1), He sent the Persian King Cyrus to destroy the power of Babylon and give the Jews permission to return. Then, led by the Davidic Prince Zerubbabel and the High-Priest Joshua, and urged on by the Prophets Haggai and Zachariah, they set about rebuilding the Temple.

The harmony between king, priest and prophets augured well for the success of the undertaking. And in spite of great material difficulties, the fickleness of great-power support, and the active opposition of the semi-Jewish, semi-pagan Samaritans (with whom Zerubbabel refused to work because of the impurity of their faith), Zachariah's prophecy was fulfilled: "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: he shall bring forth the headstone [of the Temple] with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of the Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zachariah 4.6-10)

This story contains an important lesson for the Church during the times of her external humiliation - the lesson, namely, that if only she remains "alien to confusion" (the meaning of the name Zerubbabel), that is, free from any admixture of heresy and idolatry, then she will achieve great things against seemingly overwhelming odds by the power of God alone. Thus it was that the Temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel received a far greater glory than the more splendid building of Solomon (Haggai 2.9); for in it was received, in the arms of Simeon, the Messiah Himself, the new Joshua, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in the time of the Maccabees, when the Syrian King Antiochus Epiphanes conquered Jerusalem, forced the people to break the Law and installed an idol in the holy of holies itself, the faith of the people was sufficiently strong to rise up against their oppressors and drive them out. This period of the Temple's desecration, which, like the drought of Elijah's time, lasted three-and-a-half years, is another image of the reign of the Antichrist. And its joyful conclusion, with the death of Antiochus, and the cleansing and re-consecration of the Temple, is an image of the Second Coming of Christ, when He will destroy the Antichrist "with the spirit of His mouth and... the brightness of His Coming" (II Thessalonians 2.8).
After the Maccabees, however, the kingdom of Judah entered into a terminal decline. Having lost their political independence to Rome, the Jews lost their last prince of the Davidic line when Herod, an Edomite, came to the throne. The stage was set for the Coming of Him of Whom Jacob had prophesied: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49.10).

The Holy Virgin

The Church which the Lord came to was at the very end of her strength. So His first task was to "gather the remnant" and "close up the breaches thereof", blotting out "the transgression of the remnant of his heritage" (Micah 7.18). Then He would have a vessel into which to pour the grace and truth of the New Covenant - a Covenant that far exceeded the old in glory, being not merely a certain relationship with God, while remaining in the condition of alienation and fall, but the final overcoming of the fall, and full reconciliation and communion with God.

The Old Testament Prophets had spoken of this New Covenant. Thus the Prophet Jeremiah wrote: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (31.31-34).

And the Prophet Ezekiel wrote: "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh; That they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God." (11.19 -20; cf. 36.25 -28). And the Prophet Joel wrote: "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit" (2.28-29).

The first vessel into which the grace of the new covenant was poured was neither a king nor a priest, nor a prophet, but a simple woman. This person was the Most Holy Virgin Mary. For it was she who, as Metropolitan Philaret
of Moscow writes, “unreservedly entrusted herself to the desire of the King of kings, and the marriage of the Divine with mankind was consummated.”

Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich writes: "When the most holy Virgin had lived and served in the Temple at Jerusalem for eleven years, and was by then fourteen years old - when, that is, she was entering on her fifteenth year - the priests informed her that, according to the Law, she could no longer remain in the Temple but must be betrothed and marry. But, to the great surprise of all the priests, the most holy Virgin replied that she had dedicated herself to God and wished to remain a maiden till death and enter into wedlock with no-one. Then, by God's providence and under His inspiration, Zacharias, the high priest and father of the Forerunner, in consultation with the other priests, chose twelve unmarried men from the tribe of David so that they might entrust the Virgin Mary to one of them to preserve her virginity and care for her. She was thus entrusted to Joseph, an old man from Nazareth and a kinsman of hers. In his house, the most holy Virgin continued to live in the same manner as in the Temple of Solomon, passing her time in the reading of the sacred Scriptures, in prayer, in pondering on the works of God, in fasting and in handwork. She scarcely ever left the house, nor took an interest in worldly matters or events. She generally conversed very little with anyone, and never without a particular need. She was intimate only with the two daughters of Joseph. But when the time prophesied by the Prophet Daniel had come and when God was pleased to fulfil the promise made to Adam when He drove him out of Paradise, and to the prophets, the mighty Archangel Gabriel appeared in the chamber of the most holy Virgin, at the precise moment (as some priestly writers have related) that she was holding open on her lap the book of the Prophet Isaiah and pondering on his great prophecy: 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son'. Gabriel appeared to her in angelic light and said to her: 'Rejoice, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee!', and so forth, just as is related in the Gospel of the divine Luke. With this angelic greeting and descent of the Holy Spirit, the salvation of mankind and the renewal of creation were set in motion. The Archangel turned the first page of the story of the New Testament with the word 'Rejoice!', to show by this the joy that the New Testament signifies for mankind, and for all things created...!

The Annunciation is, on the one hand, the final goal of the whole history of mankind from the fall of Adam. For that intimate communion with God which had been lost by Adam and Eve was here restored by the new Adam, Christ, entering into the new Eve, the most holy Virgin Mary. Thus she is the remnant of the remnant, the most perfect flower of that long, two-thousand year history of planting and pruning, selection and rejection, by which God

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52 Metropolitan Philaret, quoted in Fr. Georges Florovsky, Ways of Russian Theology, Belmont, Mass.: Nordland, 1979, part 1, p. 216.
raised up for Himself a human being worthy of His habitation. On the other hand, she is the is “the ark, made not by Noah but by God”\textsuperscript{54}, protecting and nourishing the righteous of the New Testament from the flood of sin as Noah’s ark protected the righteous of the Old Testament from the physical flood. For by giving her own flesh to God to be His Body, she made it possible for all Christians to be redeemed from sin and united with God through participation in that same Body in the Eucharist.

"For how," writes St. Photius the Great, "could He have gladly suffered to see that which He had created with pride being led away captive and seduced? Wherefore, the oneness of the Trinity having, if it is permitted to say so, consulted with Itself (and it is permissible to say this of the re-creation, since it is said of the creation, 'Let us make man in our image and likeness', with reference to the single purpose of the mind), made disposition for the re-creation of the creature that had been crushed. It sought a man (for human kind had become grievously savage and desolate, and would not be brought back either by threats, or penalties, or laws, or prophets) possessing the same nature as ourselves, in whom could be seen the inviolate observance of the laws, so that human kind, in seeing the ways of its kin and fellow, could imitate him, and so that the contriver of the plots against us should be deprived of his mastery by a lawful victory and struggle, by the same means through which he had gained his ascendency over us. It was needful, therefore, for one person of the Trinity to become man, and to make it manifest that the re-creation, too, like the creation, was its own work. And it was altogether meet that he should be the Son on earth and not derogate from His celestial rank, Who had been the Son from all eternity, in being and in glory. But it would have been impossible to be one of the sons of men without incarnation. For incarnation is the road to birth, and birth is the conclusion of pregnancy, which, entailing as it does a mother, naturally requires that such a one be provided beforehand."\textsuperscript{55}

The faith which justified the Old Testament righteous (Hebrews 11) was exemplified to the highest degree by the Holy Virgin. For by her word of faith, "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1.38), she brought God Himself into the world.\textsuperscript{56} "Thus let us stand in awe," writes Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, "at the immeasurably lofty faith of the All-holy Virgin, before which the faith of Abraham, the father of the faithful, who believed in the prophecy of the birth of Isaac despite the barrenness of old age, is less than a mustard seed before the cedar of Lebanon."\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{54} Menaion, October 1, The Feast of the Protecting Veil, Mattins, ikos.
\textsuperscript{56} It seems likely that Christ was born in 7 or 6 BC. See John M. Rist, “Luke 2.2: Making Sense of the Date of Jesus' Birth”, The Journal of Theological Studies, volume 6, no. 2, pp. 489-491.
\textsuperscript{57} Metropolitan Philaret, Homily on the Feast of the Annunciation, translated in Orthodox Life, vol. 28, no. 2, March-April, 1978, p. 10.
The Holy Remnant

Of course, the Holy Virgin was not the only member of the remnant of Israel. Besides her, there were righteous men and women who looked for the Coming of the Messiah, such as the high priest Zachariah and his wife Elizabeth (Luke 1), the God-receiver Simeon and the prophetess Anna (Luke 2.21-38), and Joseph the betrothed. However, by the time Christ entered upon His public ministry at the age of thirty most of these had died (Zachariah had been killed by Herod), and public life in Israel was controlled almost exclusively by evil men who did not understand the prophecies and interpreted them in accordance with their own perverted ambitions.

This had been evident already when the wise men came to Jerusalem following the star and looking for the new-born King of the Jews. Thus Metropolitan Philaret writes: "Let us enter Jerusalem, in which the Gospel presents us with a miniature of the world, and let us note whither the examples of the world lead when they are accepted in blind imitation. The tidings of the birth of Christ the King are brought to Jerusalem, which expected in Him its Liberator. Herod, raised upon the throne of David, not by the sacred right of inheritance, but by his own ambition, and who strengthened his power more by hypocrisy and violence than by a truly beneficent rule, could not quietly hear of the lawful King of the Jews, although he was still in swaddling clothes, and as yet unknown. 'When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled.' But what of Jerusalem? Does it know the time of its visitation? Does it raise its head, bent under a foreign yoke? Does it rejoice? Does it 'bless the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for them in the house of His servant David'? On the contrary. The image of the troubled sovereign is reflected, as in a mirror, in the participators of his unrighteous rule; and from them this same image is impressed on their fawning sycophants; it is circulated by curiosity, malice, and imprudence, and at length all Jerusalem is filled with foolish restlessness and ungodly anxiety concerning the event so full of blessing to Israel and to the whole world. 'Herod the king was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.'"\(^{58}\)

In the years that followed many Jews followed after false Christs, such as Theudas and Judas of Galilee (Acts 5.36, 37). But when the True Christ appeared, with rare exceptions only the despised of the people - the harlots and the publicans - believed in Him. The ruling class was dominated by the sect of the Pharisees, on the one hand, who invented traditions of their own, and the Sadducees, on the other, who rejected the resurrection from the dead. In later parlance, therefore, they would be called heretics; and the fact that they dominated public life shows that Israel was very near to falling away completely from the True Faith.

\(^{58}\) Metropolitan Philaret, *Against Worldly Sin*, translated in *Select Sermons by the Late Metropolitan of Moscow Philaret*, London: J. Masters, 1873.
Thus St. John the Baptist said to them in prophecy of their apostasy and the conversion of the Gentiles: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham as our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matthew 3.7-10).

Christ confirmed the witness of John, calling him the greatest of the prophets and even the greatest born of women. Nevertheless, He said, "He that is younger is greater than he in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 11.11; Luke 7.28). For, as Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Bulgaria, following St. John Chrysostom, writes: "Since He has extolled the praises of John, lest they think that John is greater than He, He says here more clearly, I am the younger in age and the lesser in your opinion, yet I am greater than he in the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, in regards to spiritual and heavenly good things."

However, according to another interpretation given by St. Cyril of Alexandria, Blessed Augustine, Jerome and others, "he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven" refers to any baptized believer, or angel, who is greater than the unbaptized John the Baptist. This shows that there is a great gulf between even Old Testament piety and New Testament piety; for the former, however admirable, is still in the fall and therefore outside Christ, while the latter is the fruit of an intimate union with the God-Man.

In place of the old law, as we have seen, Christ gave us at Pentecost the new Law, whose commandments are incomparably harder to fulfil, insofar as they are directed to the inner, not the outer man, and whose penalties are much more terrifying than those of the old - eternal torments in hell. However, at the same time as He gave us this new Law, the Lord also gave us the means of fulfilling it - which means were not available to the Old Testament believers. In accordance with this interpretation, Vladimir Lossky writes: "Here Old Testament holiness is contrasted with the holiness that could be realized when the redemptive work of Christ was accomplished and when 'the promise of the Father' (Acts 1.4), the descent of the Holy Spirit, had filled the Church with the fulness of deifying grace. St. John, although 'more than a prophet' because he baptized the Lord and saw the heavens open and the Spirit like a dove descending on the Son of Man, died without having received the promise, like all the others 'well-attested by their faith', 'of whom the world was not worthy,' who according to the divine plan 'apart from us should not be made perfect' (Hebrews 11.38-40), i.e. apart from the Church of Christ. It is only through the Church that the holiness of the Old Testament can receive its fulfilment in the age to come, in a perfection which was inaccessible to humanity before Christ."

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Testament Church. These are: first, the full knowledge of God insofar as it is
given to us as created beings - that is, that God is One Essence in Three
Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; and secondly, the grace of the
Holy Spirit, which has been poured out on the Church in response to our faith
in the redeeming Passion and Resurrection of the Incarnate God-Man, Jesus
Christ. And so now the veil of ignorance has been taken away, and we all, in
the Apostle's words, "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the
Lord, are changed into the same image from glory [the glory of the Old
Testament Law] into glory [the glory of the New], even as by the Spirit of the
Lord" (II Corinthians 3.18).

The Rejection of Israel

Why did the leaders of Israel reject their Messiah? The Lord gave three
answers, each of which helps us to understand why people reject the Church.
The first answer is: vainglory. For "how can ye believe," said the Lord, "which
receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God
only?" (John 5.44) And later He said: "If any man will do His will, he shall
know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He
that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but He that seeketh His glory
that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him." (John 7.17-
18) The love of self, and of one's honour and glory above that of the Father, i s
the first cause of disbelief in His Son. That is why, in the Lord's prayer, the
first petition to the Father is: "Hallowed be Thy name."

Vainglory is an especially dangerous passion when persecution arises
because of the faith. Thus the parents of the man born blind would not
confess the great miracle Christ had done for their son "because they feared
the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He
was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue" (John 9.22). And again we
read that "among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of
the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the
synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God"
(John 12.42-43).

Closely related to personal vainglory is national vainglory. The love of the
Jews for Israel as the Church of God, as the place where His glory dwelt, had
come to be replaced by a purely nationalist passion for the nation, which in
essence had nothing to do with God. Thus after the resurrection of Lazarus,
when it became clear that Christ could, if He wished, be enthroned by the
masses as the leader of the nation, the chief priests and Pharisees said: "If we
let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come
and take away both our place and nation" (John 11.49). This confession was
hypocritical: the leaders of the Jews were themselves secret revolutionaries
who wished to throw off the foreign yoke, and in 70 A.D. and again in 135
they rose up against Rome, entraining precisely those terrible consequences
for the nation that they feared would come about under the leadership of Christ. But Christ had made it clear that he did not want to be a nationalist liberator-king in their image (John 6.15); He had refused to be drawn into the revolutionary act of refusing to pay the tax (Matthew 17.27; 22.21); and He had both denounced the leaders of the nation in very strong terms and prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew chs. 23, 24). Therefore the chief priests and Pharisees turned against Christ as they had turned against John, fearing (rightly) that Israel under Christ would not be a nation like other nations, pursuing its own nationalist and materialist aims and ambitions, but would return to what God had always intended her to be - His people, His Church, and a light for the Gentile nations whereby they, too, could join His Church and become His people. And so great was their enmity towards Christ on this account, that in order to secure His condemnation at the hands of the Roman procurator Pontius Pilate they were prepared even to renounce their proud claim to being the people whose King was God alone, crying: "We have no king but Caesar..." (John 19.15)  

A second, still deeper, cause of the Jews' rejection of Christ was: impenitence, the refusal to recognize their sins. For, as the Lord said, "If ye were not blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (John 9.41). The Pharisees were fond of denouncing others for breaking the law when they themselves were laden with sins, thus making them ineligible as accusers. A vivid example of this took place when the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman taken in adultery to be judged by the Lord. Instead of decreeing the sentence of stoning, however, the Lord stooped and started writing with his finger on the ground - writing, according to tradition, the hidden sins and adulteries of the woman's accusers. Then He said: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8.7). Convicted by their conscience, the accusers went out, after which Christ, acting as always in strict accordance with the law, released the woman.  

Impenitence is closely related to the third, and deepest cause of the Jews' apostasy: their blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Pharisees said that the Lord cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons.

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Attempts are often made nowadays to lessen the Jews' guilt for the murder of Christ. It is pointed out, for example, that it was the Romans, not the Jews, who actually executed Christ. However, St. John Chrysostom (Homily 83 on John (18.28)) asks the question: "Why did they not kill Him, instead of bringing Him to Pilate?" And he answers: "In the first place, the greater part of their rule and authority had been cut away, when their affairs were placed under the power of the Romans. And besides, they feared lest they should afterwards be accused and punished by Him." So the only reason why they did not carry out the sentence themselves was their relative powerlessness and fear of punishment.

62 See Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic, "What was Christ writing on the ground?", Orthodox Life, vol. 35, no. 2, March-April, 1985.

The Lord replied with the terrifying words: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." (Matthew 12.31-33) The Jews' blasphemy consisted in their refusal to recognize the working of the Spirit when the fruits of His action were self-evident. They refused to recognize the truth; and so they could not be freed from their sins (John 8.24, 32).64

Sins against the Son of man can be forgiven, even the most grave sin of nailing Him to the Cross; for these may be committed at least in part through ignorance, through not discerning the Divinity of Christ beneath His Humanity. Thus on the Cross the Lord said: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23.34). And on the morning of Pentecost the Apostle Peter said to the Jews: "I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts 3.17). Again, Saul the persecutor received mercy "because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (I Timothy 1.13). This is not to say, of course, that ignorance and unbelief do not separate from the Kingdom (cf. Mark 16.16), but only that they can be overcome, they can be forgiven, if the heart of a man is not set in hardened resistance to the Spirit of truth working within him.

The Pharisees who said that Christ cast out demons by demons were being wilfully ignorant. St. John Chrysostom writes: "though ye say that ye do not know Me, of this ye are certainly not ignorant, that to cast out demons and work healings is a work of the Holy Spirit".65 And if the Lord says that on the last day there will be some who will have cast out demons but will still be rejected as workers of iniquity (Matthew 7.23), this is because in other respects their works were corrupt; for, as Chrysostom says, "neither faith nor miracles avail when there are no works".66

Now what has been said about the Pharisees can be said about any individual or community that acts as they did, that is, wilfully separates itself

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64 This is witnessed even by Jewish sources. Thus Josephus writes: "There was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for He appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day." (Antiquities of the Jews, Volume 2, Page 45, 1845 Edition).

65 St. John Chrysostom, Homily 41 on Matthew.

66 St. John Chrysostom, Homily 24 on Matthew, 2.
from the communion of Christ and His Church, not discerning in Her words and deeds the grace of the Holy Spirit. Such are all those who create heresies and schisms, as well as those who follow their lead. As St. Ambrose says: "The Lord replies to the blasphemy of the Pharisees, and refuses to them the grace of His power, which consists in the remission of sins, because they asserted that His heavenly power rested on the help of the devil. And He affirms that those who divided the Church of God act with satanic spirit, so that He includes the heretics and schismatics of all times, to whom He denies forgiveness; for every other sin is concerned with single persons, this is a sin against all. For they alone wish to destroy the grace of Christ who rend asunder the members of the Church for which the Lord Jesus suffered and the Holy Spirit was given us."\textsuperscript{67}

Similarly, St. Augustine, who was baptized by St. Ambrose after abandoning the heresy of the Manichaeans, writes: "The first gift is that which is concerned with the remission of sins... Against this gratuitous gift, against this grace of God, does the impenitent heart speak. This impenitence, then, is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit... Therefore not only every word spoken against the Son of man, but in fact every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, because where there is not this sin of an impenitent heart against the Holy Spirit, by Whom all sins are remitted in the Church, all other sins are forgiven... Since sins are not forgiven outside the Church, they must be forgiven by that Spirit by Whom the Church is gathered together into one. In fact, if anyone outside the Church repents of his sins, but has an impenitent heart through that great sin whereby he is an alien to the Church, what use is that other repentance to him?... That they who have separated from the Church have not this Spirit, the Apostle Jude has most plainly declared, saying, 'Who separate themselves, psychical, having not the Spirit' (Jude 19)... For the visible form of the branch may exist even when separated from the vine; but the invisible life of the root cannot be had except in the vine. Therefore although those who are separated from the unity of the Christ's Body may have the outward form of sacraments, which gives them 'a form of godliness' (II Timothy 3.5), nevertheless, the invisible and spiritual power of godliness cannot in any way be in them, just as sensation does not accompany a man's limb when it is amputated from the body... And therefore, since remission of sins is given only by the Holy Spirit, it can only be given in that Church which has the Holy Spirit."\textsuperscript{68}

This intimate connection between the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and resistance to the revealed truth is indicated by the title given to the Spirit by the Lord: "the Spirit of truth", Who "guides into all truth" (John 16.13). Thus Metropolitan Anthony (KhраМovitsky) writes: "Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, or 'sin unto death', according to the explanation of the Seventh

Ecumenical Council (VIII, 75), is a conscious, hardened opposition to the truth, 'because the Spirit is truth' (John 5.6).

The Jews fell away because, in spite of the enormous mass of evidence presented to them, and in opposition to the Spirit of truth working within them, they consciously and malevolently refused to believe the truth.

Two critical moments in the last hours of the earthly life of Christ demonstrate beyond doubt the Jews' hatred of the truth, and consequently their hatred both of Christ and of their own people. The first was during the trial of Christ before the high-priests Caiaphas and Annas, when by a supreme irony the blasphemers of God condemned God as a blasphemer. In his commentary on this trial, Archbishop Averky writes: "With Caiaphas were assembled all the high-priests, the elders and scribes, in a word almost the whole Sanhedrin. In spite of it being in the middle of the night, they all hurried quickly to gather witnesses against Jesus, so as to prepare everything necessary for the other, official session of the Sanhedrin in the morning, at which they would officially pass the death sentence on Him. For this they began to search for false-witnesses who could accuse Jesus of some criminal act, 'but found none'. Finally there arrived two false-witnesses - the law required precisely two, no less, to condemn an accused man (Num. 35.30; Deut. 17.6 and others). They drew attention to what the Lord said in Jerusalem during His first casting-out of the merchants from the Temple, with evil intent misinterpreting these words and imposing another sense upon them. The Lord had said at that time: 'destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up', but He did not say: 'I can destroy' but 'in three days I will raise it up' - 'will raise up', in Greek: εγειρω. He did not say: 'I will build', which is expressed by a quite different Greek word: οικοδομω. He was speaking at that time of the temple of His Body, but the false-witnesses interpreted those words of His as some kind of boasting, in which in reality there was nothing criminal, which is why St. Mark also says: 'But neither was such a testimony sufficient' (14.59). During all this Jesus was silent, for it was not worth answering such absurd and at the same time confused accusations (another witness, according to St. Mark, said some things otherwise). This irritated Caiaphas, and he decided to force a confession from the Lord which would give them a reason for condemning Him to death as a blasphemer. According to the judicial customs of that time, he addressed the Lord with the decisive question: 'I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.' 'I adjure Thee' - this was the usual formula of invocation, when the trial demanded that the accused should without fail answer a question of the accusers and give the whole truth in reply, calling God to witness. To a question so directly put, and moreover under oath, the Lord could not but reply, the most since there was now no need to hide His Messianic Divine identity, but on the contrary it was

necessary to witness to it triumphantly. And He replied: 'thou hast said,' that is: 'Yes, truly: I am the Christ,' and to this He adds: 'Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power and coming on the clouds of heaven.' This, of course, is a reference to Psalm 109.1, where the Messiah is portrayed as sitting on the right hand of God, and also - to the prophecy of Daniel 7.13-14 which refers to the Messiah as the 'Son of man', coming on the clouds of heaven. By this the Lord wished to say that all these unclean judges of His would soon see in many signs and wonders the revelation of His Divine power as the Son of God. 'Then the high-priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy' - the rending of clothes among the Jews was the usual sign of grief and lamentation. The high-priest was forbidden to rend his clothes (Leviticus 10.6; 21.10), and in this way, by rending his clothes, Caiaphas wished to express his particular grief, which even led him to forget the prohibition. Of course, this was only hypocrisy on his part, so as to declare the Lord's confession of Himself as the Messiah a blasphemy. 'What think ye? what is your opinion of this?' Caiaphas asked those present, and received the desired response: 'He is liable to death.' As upon an already condemned criminal, they began to abuse and mock Christ; they spat in His face as a sign of extreme contempt and humiliation, they spoke evil of Him, smote Him on the head with the palms of their hands, and mockingly asked: 'Prophesy unto us, Thou Christ, who smote Thee?' that is: if you are the omniscient Messiah, then name him who smote you, although you neither see him nor know him.' The latter shows that this whole trial was only a cruel facade under which was concealed blood-thirsty, bestial malice. These were not judges, but beasts, unable to hide their fury... [And then, after the second trial in the morning] the members of the Sanhedrin declare that further pursuit of the case is unnecessary and sentence the Lord Jesus Christ to be handed over to the Roman Gentile authority - Pontius Pilate - for the carrying out of the death sentence upon Him.'

If the irony of the Sanhedrin trial was that the blasphemers of God condemned God as a blasphemer, then the irony of the trial before Pilate was that the revolutionaries against Rome who wished to enthrone their own king condemned as a revolutionary against Rome Him Who was in truth their King, while obtaining a revolutionary and murderer in the person of Barabbas instead of Him.

Even Pilate recognized the kingship of Christ, saying: "Behold your King" (John 19.14). As Archbishop Averky writes: "It is as if he says - you dream of the return of your independence, of some kind of high calling you have among the peoples of the world: this lofty task no-one is better qualified to carry out as this Man, Who calls Himself the spiritual King of Israel. How can you, instead of bowing down before Him, demand His death? Do you want me, the Roman ruler whom you hate, to take away from you your King, Who can realize all your age-old dreams?

"It seems that the accusers understood these words, because they cried out with special ardour: 'Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him, death, death to Him!' This, in the words of Bishop Michael, 'is a cry of pain from the most sensitive part of the wound', but 'Pilate, before finally giving in, once more turns the knife in the wound with the words: 'Shall I crucify your King?' - if Jesus calls Himself your King, He thereby promises you freedom from the power of the Romans: how then can you demand that I, the representative of Roman power, hand Him over to death? Think again, what are you doing?' - In reply to this exhortation, the high-priests in their mad blindness and malice against Jesus pronounced the terrible, fateful words, which were a sentence on the whole of the further history of the Hebrew people: 'we have no king but Caesar'. Earlier the high-priests had said: 'we have no King but God': now, with the sole purpose of securing the crucifixion of Christ, they denounced all this, saying that they have not, and do not wish to have, any other king that the Roman Caesar. Only then did Pilate decide to satisfy their desire and 'delivered Him (Jesus) to them to be crucified'. St. Matthew informs us that before this Pilate washed his hands (27.24): 'When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this Just Person: see ye to it.' The Jews had the custom of washing their hands to prove that he who washed was innocent of the shedding of the blood of the man found killed (Deuteronomy 21.6-8). Pilate used this custom as a sign that he absolved himself of responsibility for the execution of Jesus, Whom he considered innocent and a Righteous Man. 'See ye to it' - you yourselves will answer for the consequences of this unjust killing. The malicious Jews agreed to everything, without thinking of any consequences, only to receive from the procurator his agreement to confirm the death sentence: 'His blood be on us and on our children', that is: if this is a crime, then let the wrath of God fall on us and on our posterity. 'Such mindless fury', says St. John Chrysostom: 'such evil passion... let it be that you curse yourselves: why do you draw this curse also on your children?' This curse, which the Jews brought upon themselves, was soon fulfilled: in 70 A.D., when at the siege of Jerusalem a huge number of Jews were crucified by the Romans on crosses. It has also been fulfilled in the whole of the further history of the Jews, scattered since that time throughout the world, in those innumerable 'pogroms' to which they have been continuously subjected, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy (28.49-57; 64-67)."

And so, as God hung on the Cross, the people of God, the remnant of Israel who remained faithful to Him to the end, had been reduced to a few weeping women (the Mother of God and the other myrrh-bearing women), an adolescent apostle (St. John) and, at the last minute, a repentant thief. The anguish of God at the betrayal of His people was so great that it wrung from Him the unfathomable words: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken

Me?" (Matthew 27:46). In the interpretation of St. Augustine, these words were spoken by Christ in the place of Israel, and expressed the fact that Israel had at that time been forsaken by God; for as the Head of the Body, and the King of the Jews, He could express in His own Person the spiritual state of the Jews as if it were His own.72

The final act came when Caiaphas, entering the Temple at the precise moment that Christ died on the Cross, saw the veil split from top to bottom: the Old Covenant had been torn up, and the Old Testament Church had died together with her Messiah, while the way was now open through Christ the Great High Priest for the people of the New Covenant to enter into the Holy of holies, the Kingdom of heaven...73

72 St. Augustine, Homily on Psalm 37. Cf. Blessed Theophylact: "Some have understood it in this manner: the Saviour spoke on behalf of the Jews and said, 'Why hast Thou forsaken the Jewish race, O Father, that it should commit such a sin and be handed over to destruction? For as Christ was one of the Jews, He said, 'forsaken Me,' meaning, 'Why hast Thou forsaken My kinsmen, My people, that they should bring such a great evil upon themselves?'" (The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, House Springs: Chrysostom Press, 1992, pp. 247-248).

73 The 18th, Rose Heredom degree of Freemasonry believes that the Shekinah, the visible sign of God’s glory, left the Temple at that point. It describes the ninth hour as "the hour when the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain and darkness covered the earth, when the true Light departed from us, the Altar was thrown down, the Blazing Star was eclipsed, the Cubic Stone [Christ] poured forth Blood and Water, the Word was lost, and despair and tribulation sat heavily upon us." See Rev. Walton Hannah, Darkness Visible, London: Augustine Press, 1962, p. 203.
4. THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH: THE CONVERSION OF EUROPE

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Matthew 28.19-20.

Every Knee shall Bow

The spreading out of Christ’s body on the Cross symbolised a new, truly universal reality: the unity of men and angels, Jews and Gentiles, living and dead – all rational creatures who believe in and love Him – in the Church, for which He shed His blood (Acts 20.28).

As Symeon said, the Death of Christ was set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel (Luke 2.34): the fall of the nation that refused to believe in Him and put its hands to His crucifixion, and the rising again of all those who had fallen asleep in the hope of His Coming and welcomed Him rejoicing, as His soul, united to the Divine Fire, crushed the bars of hades and delivered their souls from the bondage of the devil. This was signified in the most dramatic way at the very moment when He gave up His spirit. For then, on the one hand, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, signifying the rejection of the Old Israel, and on the other, "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And they came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matthew 27.52-53).

And it was not only the Old Testament righteous who welcomed Him in this way. The Apostle Peter writes that He also "went and preached unto the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared" (I Peter 3.19-20). Thus the first-fruits of the Resurrection of Christ, Who entered Paradise with the good thief, included all those who accepted His preaching, whether they had died before the law or after the law, Gentiles as well as Jews.

And so the foundations of the Ecumenical Church were laid in the nethermost depths of hades, where "the gates of death" were uprooted and replaced by "the gates of the daughter of Sion" (Psalm 9.13,14); for God "will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2.4), "that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil" (II Timothy 2.26).
As Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic has written: "God desires that all men be saved; for this the Lord Jesus descended into hell, to save those also who had lived on earth before His coming. For, if He had not descended into hell, it, the greatest abode of evil against God and the human race, would have remained undestroyed. These two reasons, therefore, woke Christ the life-Giver and sent Him down in spirit into hell: firstly, to destroy the nest of the powers of hell; and secondly, to lead forth from hell to Paradise the souls of our forefathers and the prophets and righteous men and women, who had fulfilled the ancient Law of God and had thus been pleasing to Him. Before Satan had done exulting in Christ's humiliation and death on the Cross, Christ appeared, living and almighty, in the midst of hell, the chief abode of Satan. What unexpected and devastating tidings for Satan! For three years he had plaited a noose for Christ on earth, and in three days Christ destroyed his kingdom and led out the most precious booty in the form of a swarm of righteous souls."74

Neither Greek nor Jew

When the Lord sent forth His twelve Apostles, He "commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 10.5-6) By these words He indicated that He came, not to found a completely new Church, but to reconstruct the old one, which had fallen into ruin. As He said through the Prophet Amos: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old." (9.11)

Of course, this reconstructed Church was not thereafter meant to be for the Jews alone. The reception into the Old Testament Church of the Gentiles Rahab and Ruth, both of whom are among the ancestors of Christ, was a sign that the Old Testament Church of the Jews was always intended to be the core of the New Testament Church consisting of Jews and Gentiles together. For as the Lord said: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd" (John 10.16).

This ecumenical character of the New Testament Church was confirmed by the Lord in the instructions He gave to His disciples immediately after the resurrection. No longer were they told to go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16.15). And again: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24.46-47).

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74 Bishop Nikolai, The Prologue from Ochrid, op. cit., Part II, April 3rd, p. 16.
At the same time, the Old Testament basis of the New Testament Church was never denied or forgotten. The Old Testament became the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament Church; the disciples continued to go up to the Temple to pray; and even the specifically New Testament services of Holy Baptism and the Divine Liturgy were full of Old Testament references. Thus in the Divine Liturgy of St. James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, the bishop implores God to "behold this our reasonable service, and receive it as Thou didst receive the gifts of Abel, the sacrifices of Noah, the whole-burnt offerings of Abraham, the priestly offices of Moses and Aaron, the peace-offerings of Samuel, the repentance of David, the incense of Zachariah".75

Indeed, the corporate worship of the Orthodox Church represents a continuation and development of the worship of the Temple, from the incense and the vestments to the architecture of the church, the music of the chants and the words of the liturgy. The differences lie in the new content and grace imparted to the New Testament Church, making it not merely an image and shadow of things to come, but the very substance of those things. Thus we no longer sacrifice the blood of lambs, for example, as an image of the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, but we actually partake of His true Body and Blood.

Moreover, by a special concession the Jewish members of the Church were allowed to continue to keep the Mosaic law - with the clear understanding, however, that faith in Christ, and not the Mosaic law, was necessary for salvation. Thus at the first Council of Jerusalem it was decreed by the whole Church under the leadership of St. James that the Gentile members were not obliged to keep the Mosaic law, but only to abstain from idolatry, fornication and blood (Acts 15.14-20). And when Judaizers continued to insist that the Gentiles had to keep the Mosaic law, St. Paul anathematized them (Galatians 1.8).

The principle then proclaimed by St. Paul - "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3.28) - became the foundation for the missionary effort of the apostles and paved the way for the astonishing success of the Church in penetrating to the furthest reaches of the empire, and beyond, during the first generation after Christ. Thus from India in the East (St. Thomas) to Britain in the West (St. Simon the Zealot), from Russia in the North (St. Andrew) to Ethiopia in the South (St. Matthew), the name of Christ was preached and multitudes were brought to Holy Baptism. For although the path to salvation preached by the disciples of Christ was straight and narrow, it was a path that any man or woman, from any nation or way of life, could tread; and the gifts of the Spirit poured out upon the baptized depended on only two conditions accessible to all - sincere repentance and true faith, conditions which the Early Church fulfilled in abundance.

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75 See the translation by the Monastery of St. Mark of Ephesus, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, 1978.
The Unity of the Church

Among the most striking of these gifts, and the one most symbolic of the ecumenicity of the Church, was the gift of tongues. This was given to the apostles at Pentecost so that the Jews assembled in Jerusalem at that time from every part of the oecumene, and speaking many different languages, could each hear them speak in his own language (Acts 2.6). Thus, as the Church sings: "when the Most High came down and confused the tongues, He divided the nations: but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity."76

However, a little later we find St. Paul protesting at the way that the gift of tongues was being used by the Corinthians. Since those who had the gift often knew what they were saying but were not able to communicate the meaning of what they were saying to others, it was as if they were speaking a foreign language. For "if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me" (I Corinthians 14.11). Paradoxically, therefore, the gift which was supposed to enhance communication between peoples and increase their unity in Christ was being used to create barriers where none had existed before. This is perhaps why, after the Faith had been firmly planted throughout the oecumene, the gift of tongues appears to have disappeared, except in special missionary situations.77

Just as the unity created by the New Testament Church was much wider and deeper than that of the Old, so its enemies were fiercer and more varied. Thus from the beginning the Church of Christ was attacked by Jews and pagans from outside, and by heretics and schismatics from within. And many fell away, either through apostasy in time of persecution, or through confessing a perverted faith that was condemned by the Church, using her God-given authority to bind those who rejected her teaching (Matthew 16.19, 18.18; John 20.23). But while tragic in themselves, these cases were permitted by the Lord to strengthen the unity of those who remained faithful, providing them with a deeper and firmer grasp of the gift that had been given them. For,

76 Pentecostarion, Pentecost, kontakion.
77 Comparing the gift of tongues given to the apostles at Pentecost, the gift given to the Corinthians and the so-called "gift of tongues" given to the adherents of today's "charismatic movement", we may note the following important differences: (i) The apostles' gift was such that both they could understand what they were saying and all of their listeners could understand, whatever their native tongue. (ii) The Corinthians' gift was such that, whereas they could usually understand what they were saying, their listeners usually could not (as St. John Chrysostom says, "they themselves knew what they were saying, but they could not pass this on to others"). (iii) What the modern charismatics are saying seems to be understood neither by themselves nor by their listeners. See the chapter on the charismatic movement in Fr. Seraphim Rose, Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future (Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Press).
as the Apostle Paul said, "there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (I Corinthians 11.19).

The unity of the Church was founded on faith made firm by mutual love. And it was cemented in the Holy Mystery of the Body and Blood of Christ, which was from the beginning the mystical and strictly guarded heart of the Church's life (and the source of many rumours about "cannibalism"). Great miracles of healing and deliverance from danger gave joy to the people, while miracles of punishment - as of Ananias and Sapphira, the sons of Scaeva, Simon Magus and those who died through communicating in the Mysteries unworthily (I Corinthians 11.27-30) - filled them with godly fear.

These miracles emphasized the gulf between the Church and the world, and served for the strengthening of the faithful, while attracting those outside the Church whom God had chosen and warding off the unworthy whom He had not chosen. For "of the rest dared no man join himself to then: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5.13)

This unity of the Church in the teachings of the faith and the love of the brethren, in obedience to the bishops and the participation of the sacraments, was greatly emphasized by the early Church writers. Thus St. Ignatius the Godbearer, bishop of Antioch and disciple of St. John the apostle, wrote: "'Being born', then, 'of the light' of truth, shun division and bad doctrines. Where the shepherd is, there you, being sheep, must follow. For many wolves there are, apparently worthy of confidence, who with the bait of baneful pleasure seek to capture the runners in God’s race; but you stand united, they will have no success.

"Avoid the noxious weeds. Their gardener is not Jesus Christ, because they are not the planting of the Father. Not that I found any division in your midst; but I did find that there had been a purge. Surely, all those that belong to God and Jesus Christ are the very ones that side with the bishop; and all those that may yet change their mind and return to the unity of the Church, will likewise belong to God, and thus lead a life acceptable to Jesus Christ. ‘Do not be deceived’, my brethren: if a man runs after a schismatic, ‘he will not inherit the Kingdom of God’; if a man chooses to be a dissenter, he severs all connection with the Passion.

"Take care, then, to partake of one Eucharist; for one is the Flesh of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and one the cup to unite us with His Blood, and one altar, just as there is one bishop assisted by the presbytery and the deacons, my fellow servants."78

78 St. Ignatius, Epistle to the Philadelphians, 2-4.
In the middle of the third century, St. Cyprian of Carthage emphasized this mystery of the Unity of the New Testament Church: "This holy mystery of oneness, this unbreakable bond of close-knit harmony is portrayed in the Gospel by our Lord Jesus Christ's coat, which was not divided or cut at all, but when they drew lots for the vesture of Christ to see which of them should put on Christ, it was the whole coat that was won, the garment was acquired unspoiled and undivided. These are the words of Holy Scripture: 'Now as to His coat, because it was from the upper part woven throughout without a seam, they said to one another: Let us not divide it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be.' (John 19.23 sq.) The 'oneness' with which He was clothed came 'from the upper part', that is, from His Father in heaven, and could in no way be divided by whoever came to acquire it: it retained its well-knit wholeness indivisibly. That man cannot possess the garment of Christ who rends and divides the Church of Christ. For this reason, by contrast, when Solomon was dying and his kingdom and people were to be divided, Achias the prophet on meeting king Jeroboam in the field tore his own garment into twelve pieces saying: 'Take to thyself ten pieces, for thus saith the Lord: 'Behold I rend the kingdom of Solomon and I will give thee ten sceptres, and two sceptres shall be his for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem the city which I have chosen,... that I may place there My name.'" (I Kings 11.31 sq., 36) When the twelve tribes of Israel were being divided, Achias the prophet divided his own garment. But because Christ's people cannot be divided, His coat, woven compactly as it was throughout, was not divided by those who acquired it; indivisible, woven all of a piece, compact, it showed that we, who have put on Christ, form a people knit together in harmony. By the sacred symbolism of His garment was proclaimed the oneness of the Church.

"Can anyone then be so criminal and faithless, so mad in his passion for quarrelling, as to believe it possible that the oneness of God, the garment of the Lord, the Church of Christ should be divided, or dare to divide it himself? Christ admonishes and teaches us in His Gospel: 'And they shall be one flock and one shepherd.' (John 10.16) And does anyone think that in any one place there can be more than one shepherd or more than one flock? The Apostle Paul too commends this same oneness when he begs and exhorts us: 'I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no schisms among you; but that you be knit together, having the same mind and the same judgement.' (I Corinthians 1.10) And again he says: 'Supporting one another with love, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' (Ephesians 4.2 sq.) Do you think a man can hold his own or survive, when he leaves the Church and sets up a new place and a separate home for himself? For it was said to a woman, in whom the Church was prefigured: 'Gather to thyself in thy house thy father and thy mother and thy brethren and all thy father's household, and whosoever shall pass outside through the door of thy house, his blood shall be on his own head.' (Joshua 2.18 sq.) So too the sacred meaning of the Pasch
lies essentially in the fact, laid down in Exodus, that the lamb - slain as a type of Christ - should be eaten in one single home. God says the words: 'In one house shall it be eaten, ye shall not cast its flesh outside the house.' (Exodus 12.46) The flesh of Christ, and the Lord's sacred body cannot be cast outside, nor have believers any other home but the one Church. This home, this dwelling of concord is indicated and foretold by the Holy Spirit when He says in the Psalms: 'God who maketh those who are of one mind to dwell in a house. (Psalms 68.6 (LXX 67.6)) In God's house, in the Church of Christ do those of one mind dwell, there they abide in concord and simplicity.'

This understanding of the Unity of the Church entails that those who do not share her oneness of mind, or whose life is completely at odds with the Christian norm, must be excommunicated until they repent. Thus the Apostle Paul "delivered unto Satan", i.e. excommunicated, both heretics such as Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1.20) and committers of incest (1 Corinthians 5.5). And he warned the Ephesian elders to beware of wolves who would "enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20.28).

Again, the Lord Himself in the Apocalypse warned the churches against false prophets and apostles and heretics such as the Nicolaitans. The consequence of failing to heed these warnings would be that He would "come and remove thy candlestick out of his place" (Revelation 2.5), that is, remove His grace, the mystical bond which unites each individual church to Christ and to the other churches comprising the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The outward sign of this mystical, inner bond was the intercommunion of the bishops, whom the apostles appointed in their places to administer and watch over the churches they had founded. The sacramental priesthood of the bishops, priests and deacons in no way contradicted the royal priesthood of all the people, both being empowered by Christ and owing their institution and final obedience to Christ alone as the Chief High-Priest. This is attested both by the New Testament writers and by the writers of the first post-apostolic generation.

Thus St. Clement of Rome, who was consecrated by the Apostle Peter, wrote thus to the Corinthians in about 96 A.D.: "Our Apostles, too, were given to understand by our Lord Jesus Christ that the office of bishop would give rise to intrigues. For this reason, equipped as they were with perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the men mentioned before, and afterwards laid down a rule once for all to this effect: when these men died, other approved men shall succeed to their sacred ministry. Consequently, we deem it an injustice to eject from the sacred ministry the persons who were appointed either by them, or later, with the consent of the whole Church, by

79 St. Cyprian, On the Unity of the Catholic Church, 7, 8. Cf. St. Aphraphat of Syria, Demonstration, XII, 525.8; St. Methodius of Olympus, Symposium, IX, 2.
other men in high repute and have ministered to the flock of Christ faultlessly, humbly, quietly and unselfishly...

Here we see how the apostolic traditions concerning the episcopate, which were not written down in the New Testament, were nevertheless considered of binding authority by the closest disciples of the apostles. St. Paul spoke about these traditions thus: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (II Thessalonians 2.15; cf. 3.6). Eventually these unwritten but fully authoritative traditions - for example, concerning the consecration of bishops, the administration of the other sacraments, and the sign of the Cross - came to be written down in such collections as The Apostolic Canons, whence they were incorporated into the canons of the Ecumenical Councils. It was the Ecumenical Councils, moreover, that decided which of the written Scriptures were of truly apostolic authority. Thus the canon of the Bible, which is considered to be the sole authority by Protestants, was actually determined by the Ecumenical Councils, who at the same time sealed the authority of the unwritten traditions rejected by the Protestants.

Again, another disciple of the apostles, St. Ignatius of Antioch, wrote: "You must all follow the lead of the bishop, as Jesus Christ followed that of the Father; follow the presbytery as you would the Apostles; reverence the deacons as you would God's commandment. Let no one do anything touching the Church, apart from the bishop. Let that celebration of the Eucharist be considered valid which is held under the bishop or anyone to whom he has committed it. Where the bishop appears, there let the people be, just as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not permitted without authorization from the bishop either to baptize or to hold an agape; but whatever he approves is also pleasing to God. Thus everything you do will be proof against danger and valid (Hebrews 6.19). It is consonant with reason, therefore, that we should come to our senses, while we still have time to change our ways and turn to God. It is well to revere God and bishop. He who honors a bishop is honored by God. He who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop worships the devil."  

Strong words, which show the extreme importance attached to unity of faith and love in the early Church. This unity is expressed as follows. A man belongs to the Church if he is in obedience to the local bishop. A bishop belongs to the Church if he is in communion with the other bishops throughout the world. And this Church is proved to be the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church if it holds to the Apostolic Tradition handed to the Apostles by "the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (I Peter 2.25), the Lord Jesus Christ.

80 I Clement, 44.
81 St. Ignatius, To the Smyrneans, 8, 9.
The fervent faith of the early Church, and the shedding of the blood of the martyrs such as Saints George and Demetrius, Catherine and Barbara, finally overcame the enmity of her pagan persecutors; and when the Emperor Constantine saw the sign of the Cross in the heavens and in obedience to the vision conquered his enemies by the power of that same sign, the Church was freed to come out of the catacombs and to preach the Gospel openly. This enabled a vast harvest of souls to enter her granary; and in the course of the fourth century the religion which had been believed by perhaps 10% of the population of the Roman Empire at the beginning of the century was the religion of the great majority by the end. Moreover, the faith had spread to become the dominant religion of regions beyond the bounds of the empire, such as Georgia in the East, Ireland in the West and Ethiopia in the South.

It is fashionable to decry the unity of Church and State established under St. Constantine as undermining the independence of the Church and the purity of her worship. However, the ideal of Church-State unity is perfectly in accord with the general Christian ideal of bringing all things into unity under Christ. And if the fourth century introduced new problems and temptations not known in previous centuries, this was not the fault of the ideal, but the inevitable consequence of the fact that greater unities are more difficult to achieve than smaller ones.

The Orthodox bishops, as opposed to the heretics, did not put their service to the earthly king before their worship of Christ. They gladly availed themselves of the opportunity provided by the Christian emperors of meeting in councils to condemn heresies. But when the emperor himself became a heretic or an apostate, such as Julian the Apostate, they were ready to lay down their lives for the true faith.

Even in his fulsome tribute to Constantine in 335, Eusebius is careful to begin with a eulogy in honour of the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ. And while he draws out the analogies between Constantine's rule and that of Christ, it is always made clear that the human emperor derives his authority from the Divine One, and for the sake only of the spreading of the Divine rule: "The only-begotten Word of God continues sharing in His Father's rule from ages without beginning to infinite and endless ages. So too the one who is dear to Him, sustained by royal aid emanating from on high and strong in the power of his sacred title, has been exercising an earthly rule for long periods of years. Again, the Saviour of the universe is bringing the whole of heaven and earth and the Kingdom that is above into a condition worthy of His Father. So too the one dear to Him directs those who come under his control on earth to the only-begotten saving Word and makes them fit for His Kingdom. The one Saviour of the universe, like a good shepherd keeping wild beasts far from His flock, drives away by His Divine and invincible might the
rebellious powers which used to fly about in the air above the earth and harass the souls of men. So too the one dear to Him is adorned by Him from on high with the trophies of victory over his enemies; by the rule of war he masters the open enemies of the truth and brings them to a right mind.\textsuperscript{82}

The victory of the Church over the pagan Roman emperors had been too decisive for any Christian, not least the newly-converted Christian emperor, to consider that the Church should ever be in subjection to any worldly power. At the same time, Constantine's victory had naturally, and not wrongly, increased the authority of the emperors and of the institution of kingship. Not that the authority of the emperors had ever been disputed - the Holy Scriptures were very clear that they should be obeyed in all matters not contrary to the faith (Matthew 22.21; Romans 13.1; I Timothy 2.2; I Peter 2.13). But now the very institution of kingship had acquired a semi-sacred character as reflecting and reinforcing the authority of God. The Roman empire was now seen as the providential creation of God for the furtherance and strengthening of His rule on earth; and if some of the emperors both before and after Constantine persecuted the Christian faith, this was not seen as affecting the major benefits that the empire brought, rooted as they were in both the unity of God and the constitution of man made in the image of God.

Thus Eusebius writes: "The kingdom with which he [Constantine] is invested is an image of the heavenly one. He looks up to see the archetypal pattern and guides those whom He rules below in accordance with that pattern. The example of monarchical rule there is a source of strength to him. This is something granted to man alone of the creatures of the earth by the universal King. The basic principle of kingly authority is the establishment of a single source of authority to which everything is subject. Monarchy is superior to every other constitution and form of government. For polyarchy, where everyone competes on equal terms, is really anarchy and discord. This is why there is one God, not two or three or even more. Polytheism is strictly atheism. There is one King, and His Word and royal law are one."\textsuperscript{83}

Thus just as the hierarchy of the Kingdom of God in the heavens is the source and model of the hierarchy of the Kingdom of God on earth, so the emperor is a true image of the Kingship of Christ - as long as he remains Orthodox in faith.

It was natural, therefore, to entrust to the Christian emperor a certain role in the defence of the Orthodox Faith. Thus the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council welcomed the Emperor Constantine with the following words: "Blessed is God, Who has chosen you as king of the earth, having by your

\textsuperscript{83} Eusebius, \textit{op. cit.}, 3.
hand destroyed the worship of idols and through you bestowed peace upon the hearts of the faithful... On this teaching of the Trinity, your Majesty, is established the greatness of your piety. Preserve it for us whole and unshaken, so that none of the heretics, having penetrated into the Church, might subject our faith to mockery... Your Majesty, command that Arius should depart from his error and rise no longer against the apostolic teaching. Or if he remains obstinate in his impiety, drive him out of the Orthodox Church." As Tuskarev (now Bishop Dionysius of Novgorod) observes, "this is a clear recognition of the divine election of Constantine as the external defender of the Church, who is obliged to work with her in preserving the right faith, and in correspondence with the conciliar sentence is empowered to drive heretics out of the Church." It was precisely the theocratic nature of the Church that enabled her to check the power of the emperor when he transgressed God's law. Thus Theodosius the Great, one of the most powerful men ever to wear the purple, was forbidden to enter the Church by St. Ambrose of Milan until he had repented of murder. When Theodosius said that King David had committed both murder and adultery, Ambrose replied: "As you imitated him in his transgressions, imitate him in his amendment."

**The Ecumenical Councils**

It was not, therefore, any supposed caesaropapism which led to what many people have seen as the weakening of the Church's unity in the course of the fourth and fifth centuries. The real cause was the dilution of the purity of the Church's faith and life by the multitudes of pagans who entered the Church during this period. Whereas during the persecutions entrance into the Church alone required great courage and involved the very real possibility of martyrdom or hard labour, such a threat was lifted in the reign of Constantine, which meant that many of those who entered the Church then were of a lesser stature spiritually and had not fully repented of their pagan beliefs and lifestyle.

The Holy Spirit working through the Church reacted to this threat in several ways. First, a strict three-year catechumenate was introduced, involving regular instruction and exorcisms. How thorough this preparation was can be gauged from the mid-fourth century *Catechetical Instructions* of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

Secondly, the heresies, such as Arianism, were combatted in a series of Ecumenical Councils assembling bishops from all over the *oeicumene*. The model for these Councils was the First Ecumenical Council convened by St.

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Constantine in Nicaea in 325. 318 bishops, including St. Nicholas and many confessors from the time of the persecutions, condemned Arius' teaching that "there was a time when Christ was not", affirming that Christ was Pre-Eternal God, of one essence with the Father. They also agreed on the correct method of calculating the date of Pascha. The emperor confirmed the decisions of the Council, giving them the status of civil law.

Although Arianism was not finally defeated at this Council, and the Arians continued to stir up persecutions against the Church for decades, and even centuries to come, the Creed drawn up at Nicaea and completed by the addition of articles on the Divinity of the Holy Spirit and the Church at the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381, became the official statement of faith of the True Church from henceforth; and the Third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus in 431 forbade any addition to, or subtraction from, its wording. The later Councils did not change the Creed, but made further definitions to combat further heretical interpretations of its articles. Thus the Third Ecumenical Council anathematized Nestorianism, which alleged that the Divine and Human natures of Christ were united only by a moral, and not by a personal, bond, so that the Virgin Mary could be called the Mother of Christ only, and not the Mother of God as the Church maintains. Again, the Fourth and Fifth Ecumenical Councils of 451 and 553 condemned various manifestations of Monophysitism, which alleged that Christ was not fully man (the opposite error to Arianism). The Sixth Ecumenical Council of 680-81 condemned Monothelitism, which alleged that Christ had only one will. And the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787 condemned Iconoclasm, which forbade the veneration of icons as if they were idols. The Seventh Council forms a fitting conclusion to the series of Councils concerned with Christological and Trinitarian heresies insofar as Iconoclasm attacked the Incarnation of Christ by denying the ability of Spirit to penetrate and sanctify matter (specifically, the matter of icons, but by inference also the matter of Christ's Body).

The Seven Ecumenical Councils are the seven pillars upon which the Orthodox Church is built (Proverbs 9.1), and every Orthodox Christian is obliged to accept their Divine authority. Their significance was indicated by the Encyclical of the Eastern Patriarchs in 1848: "Our faith received its beginning not from men or through a man, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1.12), which the divine Apostles preached, which the Ecumenical Councils confirmed, which great and wise teachers passed on by succession to the whole inhabited world, and which the martyrs sealed with their own blood. We will hold to this confession, which we have received in purity from so many men, and will reject every innovation as an inspiration of the devil."86

86 Quoted in Archimandrites Seraphim (Aleksiev) and Sergei (Yazadzhiev), Pochemu Pravoslavnomu Khristianinu nelzia byt' ekumenistom (Why it is Impossible for an Orthodox Christian to be an Ecumenist), Saint Petersburg, 1993, p. 59 (in Russian).
The Seven Ecumenical Councils, together with the many local Councils confirmed by them, helped to preserve the purity and integrity of the Church's faith - but at great cost to the territorial integrity of the empire. Thus, beginning from the Fourth Council of Chalcedon in 451, large areas of the non-Greek-speaking East fell away into heresy (mainly Monophysitism), and from the seventh century all these areas together with large parts of North Africa and the Iberian peninsula fell under the yoke of Islam - which St. John of Damascus considered to be almost a Christian heresy. Thus the blow to the ecumenical ideal of the Church which had been delivered by the refusal of the Jews to believe was compounded by the falling away of the other Semitic and Persian races of the East. Increasingly, the Orthodox Christian empire became the Greek - or rather, East Roman - empire, in which the Greek ethnos and language were dominant. And the very word "Greek", which among the early Fathers had been almost synonymous with "pagan", became honourable again.

The Spreading of the Faith

However, the gradual loss of ecumenicity was partially compensated by the spread of the faith, later in the millennium, in North-West Europe, on the one hand, and throughout the Balkan peninsula and Russia, on the other, as well as by the gradual recovery of Christianity in Iberia. Thus by the end of the millenium the loss of most of the Middle East (except present-day Turkey and Georgia) had been balanced by the emergence of a united Christian Europe. And if there were ominous signs of discord between Latin and Greek preachers in such areas as Moravia, and disturbing rivalries between the Christian empire centred on Constantinople and the "Holy Roman Empire" established by Charlemagne and the Pope, this does not take away from the great missionary achievement of both the Latin and the Greek Churches in this period.

The majority of the missionaries in both East and West were monks, and it is to monasticism that we now tum as the third major new development in the Church after Constantine's victory. Of course, the basic principles of monasticism were not new, being simply the practice of the Gospel commandments in their most uncompromising form; and from the beginning, during the apostolic period as during the pagan persecutions, there had been Christian men and women living essentially monastic lives. But as a large-scale, semi-institutionalized movement involving flight from the main inhabited centres into the desert, monasticism may be said to date from the fourth century, and in particular from the lives of the first well-known hermit, St. Anthony, and the first organizer of coenobia, St. Pachomius.

The major centre of fourth-century monasticism was Egypt, and this location in itself tells us much about the nature of the movement. First, Egypt was, since the fall of Babylon, the world-centre of pagan religions and demonic enchantment of all kinds. However, there was a tradition that when Christ as a child had entered Egypt all the idols of the nation had fallen down, and the monks saw themselves as following in Christ's footsteps. Therefore they deliberately set out for the desert and the graveyards where the demons were thought to dwell in the greatest numbers, and there they exorcised them by mighty feats of prayer and fasting.

Secondly, the climate and ecology of the Egyptian desert was extremely severe, and life was hard even for those who had no other purpose than to earn their living. But the monks drastically limited themselves even in those material consolations which were available. In this way they practised the Gospel commandments relating to poverty, chastity, obedience and self-denial in all things, translating them into the terse philosophy of the desert: "Give your blood, and receive the Spirit."

Thirdly, with a few exceptions (such as the Roman St. Arsenius), the Egyptian monks were of Coptic peasant stock, usually illiterate, with no part in that rich Greco-Roman civilization which the conversion of St. Constantine was opening up to Christian influence. And yet so striking were their spiritual attainments that well-educated Christians from the West, such as Saints John Cassian, Jerome and Melanie, as well as from the East, such as Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, came to them as to their teachers in Christian philosophy. In this way the Egyptian monks demonstrated both the possibilities of the royal priesthood of the laity (monasticism was essentially a lay movement), and reasserted a truth which was in danger of being lost as many wise and mighty men of the world entered the Church - the truth, namely, that lack of formal education is no barrier to the attainment of Christian wisdom, and that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty,... that no flesh should glory in His presence" (I Corinthians 1.27-29).

Fourthly, these visitors from abroad took back with them the lessons they had learned in Egypt and applied them with astonishing success in their homelands, so that monasticism spread into the deserts of Palestine, Syria and Cappadocia, Gaul, Wales and Ireland. The Egyptian monks themselves rarely left their desert (although the names of seven of them are found in the Irish martyrologies), but the reports of their exploits (especially St. Athanasius' Life of Antony) fired the imaginations of Christians with the desire to imitate them. Thus long after Egyptian monasticism had succumbed to Monophysitism and Islam, its principles were still being practised far to the west and north. Moreover, by the second half of the millenium the spiritual wisdom of the Egyptian monks had been combined in an exceedingly fruitful union with the
more secular wisdom of the Greco-Roman world, so that the English monks in Germany and Scandinavia, or the Greek monks in the Balkans and Russia, brought with them not only the Faith but also the rudiments of education (in the case of Saints Cyril and Methodius' mission to the Slavs, even the alphabet). Thus monasticism became the major missionary and civilizing force throughout the rural areas of Europe and the Middle East, and even the urban households of the bishops were as often as not monastic communities.

Fifthly, the Egyptian monks took a leading part in the doctrinal disputes of the day, the most famous example being St. Antony's expedition to Alexandria to support St. Athanasius against the Arians. This demonstrated the important truth that the Faith was the concern not only of bishops and kings, but also of the humblest layman. As St. Theodore the Studite, the great organizer of monasticism in Constantinople, wrote during the iconoclast persecutions: "It is a commandment of the Lord that we not remain silent when the Faith is in danger. When, therefore, it is a question pertaining to the Faith, thou hast not the right to say: Who am I? A priest, a magistrate, a soldier, a farmer, a beggar? Do not concern thyself with any of these things. Yea! shall even the stones cry out whilst thou art silent and heedless?"

This was a truth that was beginning to be lost in the West, where the sacramental hierarchy of the clergy, led by the increasingly despotic papacy, was tending to replace completely the royal priesthood of the laity and the charismatic authority of the Spirit-bearing monks...

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5. THE IMPERIAL CHURCH: EMPERORS, POPES AND PEOPLES

There are two supreme gifts which God, in His love for mankind, has granted from on high: the priesthood and the imperial dignity. The first serves Divine things, while the latter directs and administers human affairs. Both, however, proceed from the same origin and adorn the life of mankind.

Emperor Justinian the Great, Sixth Novella.

As we have seen, the idea of the oecumene, "the inhabited earth", closely corresponded, in the mind of the ancients, to the bounds of the Roman empire; so that, after the triumph of St. Constantine, the Ecumenical Church became almost synonymous with "the Church of the Roman Empire".

Even those Churches which lay beyond the bounds of the Empire, in Georgia, Persia, Ethiopia or Britain, felt in some way parts of it. Thus after the Roman legions left Britain in 410, the parents of the leader of the Christian Britons, Ambrosius Aurelianus, are described as having "worn the purple", i.e. held Roman imperial rank.89 By the late sixth century, however, decades of separation from what we may now call the Imperial Church had loosened the ties of the British and Irish Churches with her.

Thus when Welsh bishops met the Roman archbishop of Canterbury, St. Augustine, the Welsh acknowledged a community of faith with, and a common membership of, the Ecumenical Church, but no canonical obedience to the Roman or any other patriarchate. It was not until the Synod of Whitby in 664 that the Celtic Churches - and not the Welsh even then - accepted the Roman-Byzantine paschalion and again became canonically subject to the Imperial Church.90

The Symphony of Powers

The first important blow to the concept of the Imperial Church came in 476, when the capital of the pagan empire, Old Rome, fell to the Goths, and the line of the Western emperors came to an end.

However, the impact of this blow was softened by the fact that the real capital of the Empire had for many decades now been the New Rome of Constantinople, which, having been built from the foundations by the first Christian Emperor, was not associated with the worship of demons and the killing of Christians that so stained the history of Old Rome. And while the Christian Empire centred on Constantinople always proudly retained the...

90 See the Venerable Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, book III, 25.
name, and preserved many of the traditions and even (up to the sixth century) the language, of its western predecessor, it was the Christianity of this Empire, rather than its Romanness, that constituted its chief glory in the eyes of its citizens.

This was also true of the Western citizens of the Empire - but less so as time went on, and always with a subtly different emphasis. It was in the city of Old Rome itself, paradoxically, that the prestige of the New Rome was highest. This was the result of two factors: (i) many of the early Popes, right up to the end of the seventh century, were Greeks, and as such staunch defenders of the traditions of the Eastern Church, while even Latin Popes brought up in these traditions, such as St. Gregory the Great, could be fiercely loyal to both the Church and the Empire of the New Rome; (ii) for many centuries - at least until the reign of Justinian in the sixth century - the Popes looked to the Eastern Emperors to defend them and their Christian heritage against the pagan barbarians.

But there were times - even before Justinian, and increasingly after him - when Old Rome, besieged by barbarians, received little or no help from the East. At such times the Popes had to take a political role and face off the barbarian threat, clothing themselves in all the prestige of the ancient western emperors. The earliest and most dramatic example of such a confrontation took place between that most imperial of the Orthodox Popes, St. Leo the Great, and Attila the Hun. Western Christian civilization hung by a thread; and it was the Pope - aided by a threatening appearance of the Apostles Peter and Paul to Attila - who saved it. This greatly increased the prestige of Old Rome in the eyes both of the Romans and of the Germanic barbarians, many of whom actually became protectors of Roman Christian civilization.

Thus John Meyendorff writes: "Within the political void created by the barbarian invasion, in the eyes of Western Christendom, the popes were identified both as successors of St. Peter and as substitutes for the emperor. Being themselves convinced that they were performing an essentially apostolic mission towards the Western Barbarians, while also standing up, whenever necessary, against imperial abuse and heresy coming from the East, they boldly began to describe their own function in the universal Church as one of government. The term, which under popes Leo and Gelasius had entered the papal vocabulary to designate their authority, was not only primatus (which traditionally was used only for spiritual 'primacy'), but also principatus, heretofore designating the emperor's power. Pushed by circumstances, the Roman bishops now understood their role as heads of a 'body' (corpus) of Christians. But this 'body' was not simply a spiritual and sacramental entity in the Pauline sense, but a concrete, legally definable organism, endangered by the Arian barbarians and by imperial doctrinal vagaries. This development, which was provoked by historical circumstances, involved subtle shifts in the fields of eccesiology and eschatology. The popes
were not always equally affirmative in proclaiming their authority. There was resistance to their claims, both in the East and in the West. But the remarkable missionary, moral and doctrinal achievements of the Roman see obtained universal, and well-deserved respect. The real and very serious problems, connected with the confusion between 'primacy' and 'principality', between sacramental episcopal ministry and political power, between missionary expansion and Latin cultural integration will appear only later, and will have serious consequences, especially in the relations between Rome and the East.\footnote{Meyendorff, \textit{Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions}, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989, p. 129.}

This new political role forced upon the Popes was translated into a new assertiveness in their relations with the Eastern Churches. Thus at the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451, St. Leo refused to accept the canon which gave the patriarchate of Constantinople precedence over the older patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, together with jurisdiction over the barbarian areas in the north. Such a change reflected the increased political importance of Constantinople, and did not alarm the Eastern Christians, who were used to changes in the relative importance of sees in accordance with changed political conditions. (Jerusalem, for example, though "the Mother of all the Churches", had been not even the most important see in Palestine at one time.) St. Leo's arguments were based on the ancient prerogatives of the three older patriarchates, not of Rome alone; but his resistance to Constantinople's "promotion" was later to be seen as a reassertion of the Roman Church's primacy in the Church as a whole, and her alleged right to veto the decisions even of Ecumenical Councils on the basis of her quasi-imperial authority.

At this point it should be explained that the organization of the Ecumenical Church in her early, as it were pristine stage as a quasi-democratic union of independent, essentially equal bishops, was very soon modified, perhaps as early as the second century, by the grouping of bishops into metropolitan areas roughly corresponding to the administrative divisions of the civil power (cf. Apostolic Canon 34). In these areas one bishop was chosen as metropolitan archbishop and president of the local councils of bishops which consecrated new bishops, condemned heresies, etc. Later, these metropolitans were in turn grouped into patriarchates, with one metropolitan - usually the bishop of the most important city - being elected as patriarch. By the late fourth century, therefore, all the bishops of the Empire came within the jurisdiction of one or another of five patriarchates: (in order of seniority) Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople, with the exception of a few autocephalous Churches of sub-patriarchal, archiepiscopal status, such as Cyprus and Sinai. Rome had acquired the senior position both because it was the former imperial city and the only patriarchate for the whole of the Western half of the Empire, and because it had been the chief...
centre of Christianity in the early centuries, being distinguished by a large number of martyrs, including the Apostles Peter and Paul.

Now if the organization of the Church were to be modelled completely on that of the Empire, then we would expect the emergence of a super-patriarchate in the Church corresponding to the role of the Emperor in the Empire. However, this never took place; and even within each patriarchate the patriarch never had - before the rise of the heretical papacy - the full authoritarian powers of the Emperor in the Empire. For the Church jealously guarded the apostolic teaching that there are only three ranks of the priesthood: the diaconate, the presbytery and the episcopate, so that bishops differ in seniority, but not in grace. Thus while the Church modified her administration, for obvious reasons of practical convenience, in the direction of that of the imperial administration, she held back from making it identical in form. This is one of the ways in which, even in a Christianized world, the Church shows that she is 'in', but not 'of' it.

For the Orthodox, therefore, the ideal relationship between Church and State is one of "symphony", to use the Emperor Justinian's phrase. But to the Latin mind - at least in its semi-pagan, unredeemed condition - this was unsatisfactory. First, it asked, if the State is undeniably represented by one man who holds supreme authority within it, why should this not also apply to the Church? Secondly, if Church and State can indeed work together, and be united in a single Christian commonwealth in which the bishops are citizens of the State and the civic officials sons of the Church, why should this unity not be expressed by a single man at the head of the entire organism, just as the pagan Roman empire was united both politically and religiously in the person of the emperor and pontifex maximus? And thirdly: since the Church is superior to the State as the spirit is to the body, why should this man not be the most senior of the bishops, the Roman Pope?

The first hint of an embryonic Romanist or Papist heresy can perhaps be found in a letter that Pope Gelasius addressed to the Emperor Anastasius: "There are two powers, august Emperor, by which this world is chiefly ruled, namely the sacred authority of priests and the power of kings. Of these, the responsibility of the priests is the heavier in that in the Divine judgement they will have to give an account even for kings. For you know, most dear son, that you are permitted rightly to rule the human race, yet in things Divine you devoutly bow your head before the principal clergy and ask of them the means for your salvation... In these matters, as you know, you are dependent on their judgement, and you have no desire to compel them to do your will. And if it is proper that the hearts of the faithful be in submission to all priests everywhere who exercise their Divine ministry aright, how much more is obedience to be given to the bishop of that see whom the Most High God willed to be pre-eminent over all other bishops?"

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Already here we see how the Orthodox teaching of the Pope as primus inter pares is giving way to the heretical teaching of the papal monarchy. Moreover, the claim is being expressed - albeit in a moderate form - that the Pope has authority even over the imperial power. No Orthodox prelate would deny that, in purely spiritual matters, the Emperor, like every member of the Church, should submit to the teaching of the Church (as must the Pope himself); but in later centuries the Popes came to extend the duty of submission to political matters, too.

Thus by the time of Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) in the late eleventh century, and still more clearly by the time of Pope Boniface VIII's bull Unam Sanctam in 1302, it was official papal doctrine that all power on earth, both spiritual and political, belongs to the Pope as the successor of St. Peter and the Vicar of Christ (the so-called "two swords" theory).

The doctrine of the papal monarchy did not escape criticism, even in the West; and towards the end of the sixth century another Pope, St. Gregory the Great, vigorously rejected it, saying that a universal bishop who would have authority over all other bishops would be "the forerunner of the Antichrist". Another factor helping to keep the embryonic heresy in check was the great prestige attained by the Christian Roman emperors in the sixth century. Indeed, the Emperor Justinian, as well as giving the classic statement of the "symphony" doctrine, showed in practice how essential it was that supreme authority in the empire should not rest with the Pope. For at the Fifth Ecumenical Council convened by him in 552 in Constantinople, the Roman Pope Vigilius was condemned as a heretic, while the armies of Justinian's general Belisarius had to rescue Rome itself from the Lombards! Moreover, the whole character of Justinian's reign showed how supra-national and unbound to one place or nation the Christian empire was. For he himself was a Slav (though this is disputed), his wife Egyptian, his capital and the largest section of his empire Greek and the official language of his empire Latin, while his armies ranged from Spain to North Africa to the Middle East! This was the truly Catholic Romanism of which the Roman Catholicism of the later "Holy Roman Empire" was no more than a grim caricature. And if later Popes and western scholars pointed to the frequent intervention of the Eastern emperors in the affairs of the Church, this also had its basis in the ultimate good of the Church insofar as bishops, no less than emperors, were capable of falling away from the faith.

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93 St. Gregory the Great, Epistle 33. In 991, a Council of French and English bishops at Rheims expressed the fear that the Pope was not just a forerunner, but the Antichrist himself. See also Abbé Guettée, The Papacy, New York: Minos, 1866.

The Carolingian Empire

In the middle of the eighth century, the Roman Church, disappointed by the failure of the Eastern Empire to defend it against the Lombards, and repelled by its fall into the heresy of Iconoclasm, made the fateful decision of appealing to the kingdom of the Franks for political support.

The "Holy Roman Empire", as the Frankish kingdom came to be called, was really conceived at a council convened by the Frankish King Charlemagne in Frankfurt in 794, when the Frankish Church rejected the decrees of the Seventh Ecumenical Council on the veneration of icons (the Franks mistakenly believed that the Greeks advocated the worship, as opposed to the veneration of icons). Also at this council the Franks introduced the heretical idea of the Filioque - the teaching that the Holy Spirit proceeds, not from the Father only, but also from the Son - into the Creed. The Roman papacy remained faithful to Orthodoxy at this time, but proved unable to extinguish the Frankish error.

The empire was born on Christmas Day, 800, when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as "Holy Roman Emperor" in Rome. This was not simply the birth of another Christian kingdom, but a direct challenge to the authority of the Eastern Roman Empire and the latter's claim to be the only Christian empire. From now on, although Charlemagne dropped the title “Emperor of the Romans” for the less controversial “Emperor”, the potential for a political schism in Christendom was manifest.

This came at a particularly vulnerable point in Byzantine history. For from a political point of view, the empire's suzerainty over Italy, which had been re-established by Justinian, was now more nominal than real; and the presence of a woman, Irene, on the throne of Constantine was seen by many as a sign of weakness. From a religious point of view, moreover, the Eastern empire had been weakened by the heresies of Monothelitism and Iconoclasm, during which period the see of Rome had remained - almost alone among the patriarchates - faithful to Orthodoxy.

And indeed, it must be acknowledged that this crisis in East-West relations was not caused primarily by Rome. Although the Popes had turned away from the Eastern Emperors and appealed to the Franks to protect them from their enemies, they remained faithful to the Eastern Church in dogmatic matters. Thus they refused to follow Charlemagne in rejecting the decrees of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, and Pope Leo III caused the Creed without the Filioque to be inscribed in Greek and Latin on silver shields placed outside the doors of St. Peter's.
The real impulse both to rebellion in the body politic and to heresy in the Church came from the Frankish empire of Charlemagne, which at its height ruled most of Western Europe except for Southern Spain and Italy, the British Isles and Scandinavia.95

The crisis was the more important in that, in both East and West, the Theocratic ideal of the indivisibility of the Church and the Christian Roman empire had taken deep root. Not that it was asserted that independent Christian kingdoms, such as England or Georgia, could not exist outside the Empire; nor that the capital of the Empire could not be moved, as St. Constantine had moved it from Rome to Constantinople. What was considered inconceivable, to Greek and Latin alike, was that there could be two Christian Roman empires, any more than there could be two Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Churches. For the empire was understood to be that support of the Church which would "restrain", in St. Paul's words, the appearance of the Antichrist. After the removal of "that which restrains", according to the Church's tradition, there would be a great "apostasy" followed by the rule of the Antichrist and the end of the world (II Thessalonians 2.7).96

The Greek position was expressed by a chronicler of Salerno some two centuries later: "The men about the court of Charles the Great called him Emperor because he wore a precious crown upon his head. But in truth, no one should be called Emperor save the man who presides over the Roman - that is, the Constantinopolitan kingdom.97 Charlemagne, on the other hand, considered, in John Romanides' words, "that the East Romans were neither Orthodox nor Roman"98, and that the Pope in Rome was too loyal in dogmatic matters to the position of the Eastern Church.

If such a view had taken root throughout the West, then the first schism between Rome and Constantinople might have taken place half a century earlier, and with its centre in Aachen rather than Rome. However, as we have seen, moderate Popes such as Leo III maintained the Orthodox confession of faith and the ecumenical understanding of Romanism. Moreover, by the providence of God the Frankish empire declined in strength after Charlemagne's death, and after the battle of Fontenoy in 841 it began to disintegrate.

98 Romanides, op. cit., p. 31.
Meanwhile, the Eastern Roman empire, after finally throwing off the shackles of iconoclasm and celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 842, entered upon perhaps the most glorious period of its existence...

But, in 858, the Romans elected the first truly Papist Pope, Nicolas I, who proceeded to put the Frankish policies into effect - except that he now in effect took Charlemaigne's place as emperor and heresiarch. Thus he inserted the *Filioque* into the Creed, claimed the eastern provinces of Sicily and Bulgaria for the Roman patriarchate, persuaded the Bulgarians to expel the Greek preachers from their midst as heretics, and declared invalid the election of St. Photius the Great to the patriarchate of Constantinople. Moreover, in 865 he declared that the Roman papacy had authority "over all the earth, that is, over every Church". This claim, which had no foundation in Holy Scripture or the Tradition of the Church, and was supported only by the forged *Donation of Constantine* and *Pseudo-Isidorean Decretals*, was strenuously rejected by the patriarchate of Constantinople and the other patriarchates of the East.

Even some of the western bishops found his actions unacceptable. Thus the archbishops of Trèves and Cologne replied to an unjust sentence of his: "Without a council, without canonical inquiry, without accuser, without witnesses, without convicting us by arguments or authorities, without our consent, in the absence of the metropolitans and of our suffragan bishops, you have chosen to condemn us, of your own caprice, with tyrannical fury; but we do not accept your accursed sentence, so repugnant to a father's or a brother's love; we despise it as mere insulting language; we expel you yourself from our communion, since you commune with the excommunicate; we are satisfied with the communion of the whole Church and with the society of our brethren whom you despise and of whom you make yourself unworthy by your pride and arrogance. You condemn yourself when you condemn those who do not observe the apostolic precepts which you yourself the first violate, annulling as far as in you lies the Divine laws and the sacred canons, and not following in the footsteps of the Popes your predecessors."99

The reaction from Constantinople was swift and decisive. In 867, St. Photius convened a Council in Constantinople which was attended by the archbishops of Treves, Cologne and Ravenna from the West, and which excommunicated and anathematized Nicolas. Two years later, a palace revolution enabled another, "anti-Photian" council to be convened, at which the Council of 867 was annulled. Roman Catholics have often regarded this anti-Photian council as being the eighth Ecumenical, not least, one suspects, because Pope Hadrian II demanded that all its members recognize him as "Sovereign Pontiff and Universal Pope". But a much better claim to ecumenicity can be made for the Great Council convened in Constantinople in 879-80 by St. Photius, at which 400 eastern bishops were present together with the legates of Pope John VIII.

99 Translated in Guettée, op. cit., p. 305, note.
This Council annulled, under the papal legates’ signatures, the acts of the anti-Photian council, and made two other very important decrees which have been summarized by John Meyendorff thus: "1. On the level of discipline, the two Churches [Rome and Constantinople] recognized each other as supreme instances in their respective spheres: there would be no papal ‘jurisdiction’ in the East (canon 1) but the traditional honorary primacy of Rome would be recognized, as well as the traditional territorial limits of the Roman patriarchate. 2. On the level of doctrinal teaching, the Council maintains unity of faith, through a reaffirmation of the original text of the Creed of Nicea-Constantinople; ‘additions’ to the text are explicitly condemned. The Filioque is clearly implied in the conciliar decree, but the authority of the pope is not directly involved, since the addition at that time was not yet used in Rome itself, but only in Frankish countries and in Spain."\[^{100}\]

Except for a brief period in 903-4, communion was maintained between East and West until 1014, when the Filioque was introduced into the Creed of the Roman Church during the coronation of the Western Emperor Henry II. At that point the names of the Popes were removed from the diptychs of the Church of Constantinople - the first step towards full excommunication. Then, in 1054, after Rome had introduced two further innovations - the removal of the epiclesis, the prayer to the Holy Spirit at the consecration, and the substitution of unleavened bread for leavened at the Divine Liturgy - the two Churches anathematized each other; and by the end of the century Rome was out of communion with all of the eastern patriarchates, while the few pockets of resistance in the West - England, the German emperor, and the Greek-speaking south of Italy - had been bullied (in England’s case, by force of arms) into submission.

The Balkans, however, remained faithful to Orthodoxy. So, still more importantly, did Russia. St. Vladimir of Kiev's decision in 988 to adopt the Eastern rather than the Western form of Christianity for his nation was to prove fateful for the whole future of Christianity...

**The Papist Heresy**

Papism amounted to a completely new view of the relationship between truth and authority in the Church. Instead of the Eastern view that authority is based on truth, which is the expression of apostolic tradition, the Popes began to teach that truth is guaranteed by the authority of the Pope alone. And this new teaching had a political dimension: the authority of the Pope extended to the State as well as to the Church. As Pope Gregory VII, the real founder of the heretical papacy, put it in 1076: "The pope can be judged by no one; the Roman Church has never erred and never will err till the end of time;"

the Roman Church was founded by Christ alone; the pope alone can depose and restore bishops; he alone can make new laws, set up new bishoprics, and divide old ones; he alone can translate bishops; he alone can call general councils and authorize canon law; he alone can revise his judgements; he alone can use the imperial insignia; he can depose emperors; he can absolve subjects from their allegiance; all princes should kiss his feet; his legates, even though in inferior orders, have precedence over all bishops; an appeal to the papal court inhibits judgement by all inferior courts; a duly ordained pope is undoubtedly made a saint by the merits of St. Peter.\textsuperscript{101}

It was the Crusades of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries that opened the eyes of the faithful to the true nature of the monster that had been born in their midst. And it then became imperative to cast out this teacher of what was in effect a blatant form of idolatrous man-worship, lest the warning of the Lord to the Thyateira Church be realized: 'I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezabel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and heart' (Revelation 2.20-23).

Already before the First Crusade, the previously unheard-of spectacle of wars between nations calling themselves Christian had become common. Thus for much of the period 886-1018, the Greeks were fighting the Bulgarians; in 1043 the Russians attacked Constantinople; and between 1066 and 1081 the Normans conquered England and southern Italy and invaded Greece. Fortunately, in the East a shared religion and a common respect for the ideal of the Christian Empire ensured that the scars did not go deep. Thus when the Bulgarians or Serbs waged war against the Empire, they did not seek to destroy it, but rather to replace the Greek Emperor with a Bulgarian or Serbian one. For Tsarigrad - "the city of the King" - remained unchallenged as the spiritual and political centre of Eastern Christendom. In the West, however, the Norman Conquest of England, motivated as it was by religious as well as political considerations, and blessed by the pope, left deep scars which changed the religious, political, social and even linguistic character of England, and underlay the hostility between England and France for centuries to come. And when the West as a whole marched to the Christian East during the Crusades, idealistic plans to free the Holy Places from the Mohammedan yoke soon degenerated, on the part of the knights - into lust for land and spoils, and on the part of the Pope - into dreams of subduing "schismatic Romania" to himself. Thus the only Orthodox nation really to benefit from the Crusades was Georgia, whose people under the leadership of

King David the Restorer profited from the preoccupation of the Saracens with the Crusaders to liberate their land from the Mohammedan yoke. But the ancient autocephalous Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch and Cyprus merely exchanged one heavy yoke for another, much more rapacious and religiously intolerant one. This process reached its bloody climax in 1204, when the Crusaders ravaged Constantinople, defiling the sanctuary of Hagia Sophia and installing a Latin king and patriarch...

The honour of being the first Westerner decisively to condemn the Jezabel of the Roman papacy belongs to Bishop Ethelwine of the North English see of Durham, who solemnly anathematized the pope in 1070, after witnessing the terrible fruits of Papism in his own land. Shortly after, a flood of English refugees began arriving in Constantinople and Kiev (the daughter of the last English Orthodox king Harold married Grand-Prince Vladimir Monomakh), and English soldiers played a notable part in the Byzantine Emperor's wars against the West.102

Sadly, however, England and the rest of the West gradually succumbed to the papist machine, and only occasionally did the Orthodox consciousness of the first thousand years of Western Christianity flicker into life, as when the English Proto-Protestant John Wiclif declared in 1383: "The pride of the pope is the cause why the Greeks are divided from the so-called faithful... It is we westerners, too fanatical by far, who have been divided from the faithful Greeks and the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ..."103

A reminder of what true Catholicism is was provided by the foundation, not long before the Western schism, of the multinational monastic community of Mount Athos, whose first coenobitic community had been founded by St. Athanasius of the Holy Mountain in the tenth century. "Following the lead of St. Athanasius," writes Vasiliev, "many new monasteries, Greek and others were founded. In the time of Basil II there was already one Iberian or Georgian monastery; emigrants from Italy founded two, a Roman and an Amalfitan. Bishop Porphyrius Uspensky, a profound Russian student of the Christian East, asserted that when the aged Athanasius died (about 1000 A.D.) there were three thousand ‘various monks’ on Mount Athos. As early as the eleventh century there was a Russian Laura on this mountain..."104

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After the schism, however, the Latin monasteries ceased to exist; and early in the thirteenth century, when the uniate John Beccus was patriarch in Constantinople, Catalan soldiers ravaged the Holy Mountain, putting to death many monks who refused to accept the pope. From that time until now, the Holy Mountain - which today has Bulgarian, Serbian and Romanian, as well as Greek, Georgian and Russian communities - has been at the heart of the Orthodox Church’s struggle against the false unia with Rome.

"On October 7, 1207," writes Boyeikov, "Pope Innocent addressed ‘all the Russian bishops, clergy and the whole Russian people’, demanding that they renounce Orthodoxy, since ‘the land of the Greeks and their Church has almost completely returned to the recognition of the Apostolic see’. The Russian Church rejected the pretensions of the papacy, and the centre of Russian-Byzantine relations moved to Nicaea.

"The metropolitan of Kiev, who was himself a Nicaean Greek, in inspired manner led the struggle of the Russian Church in the name of the defence of Rus and Ecumenical Orthodoxy. The metropolitans of Kiev and all Russia cared for the unity and reconciliation of the warring princely groupings (of Kiev, Suzdal, Chernigov and Volhynia).

"Historians have paid a lot of attention to the Latin expansion in the Baltic. But they often forget that the other flank of the struggle in this period remained Southern Russia, while the field of battle was the Balkans. In 1205 the Bulgarians destroyed the crusading army of Baldwin II at Adrianople. The Second Bulgarian kingdom (which came into being in 1187), while recognizing the nominal headship of the Pope, was historically drawn towards Orthodox Rus’. Tsar Ivan Asen II (1218-1241) was allied to Kiev and Nicaea, for which Pope Gregory IX expelled him from the Catholic Church in 1236. This was on the eve of the Mongol-Tatar invasion.

"Then came 1238: Ryazan was burned to the ground, Vladimir was defeated, and the holy right-believing Princes Yury Vsevolodovich and his sons, and Vasilko of Rostov fell in battle. It was in these circumstances that on August 9, 1238, the Pope blessed the Hungarian king to undertake a crusade against Bulgaria.

"The Russian Church and the whole of the Russian land was overwhelmed by the flame of the Mongol-Tatar invasion. The prophecies of St. Avraam of Smolensk became clear. Many churches, monasteries, books and church utensils were captured and destroyed; in the taking of the Russian cities many bishops, priests and monks were killed; the administration of the Church fell into disarray: Metropolitan Iosif disappeared without a trace, while Bishops Mitrophan of Vladimir and Simeon of Peryaslavl were killed. Kiev, the adornment and 'mother of Russian cities' was turned into ruins (1240) and lost
its significance as a political and ecclesiastical centre. Russian state life became concentrated on the North-Eastern counties.\textsuperscript{105}

The thirteenth century represents a deep nadir in the history of the Orthodox Church. Beginning with the (temporary) fall of Constantinople to the Latins, and continuing with the (again temporary) apostasy of King John Asen of Bulgaria, the devastation of most of Russia and the second city of Christendom, Kiev, by the Mongols in 1240, and the signing of the union with Rome by the Emperor Michael Paleologus at the council of Lyons in 1274, it shows Orthodoxy struggling to survive against enemies from East and West who were at the height of their power. Even the better rulers of the time, such as the Nicaean Emperor John Vatatzes, were forced into making alliances with heretics and infidels which would have horrified earlier generations. Only the twentieth century can compare with the thirteenth in the depth and extent of its spiritual and physical destruction.

However, there were bright spots in the prevailing gloom. One was the gradual rise of Serbia under the inspired leadership of the holy King Stephen Nemanja and his son St. Sava. Another was the struggle of Novgorod, the last independent province of Russia, under St. Alexander Nevsky. This great prince decided, in spite of much opposition from his people, to pay tribute to the Mongols in order to concentrate all his forces in a successful war against what he considered to be his - from the spiritual point of view - more dangerous enemies, the papist Swedes and Teutonic Knights. It would have been good if other Orthodox - especially Greek - rulers of the time had imitated the priority St. Alexander placed on religious and spiritual over political freedom, and had taken heed to his saying: "Not in might, but in truth, is God".

\textit{The Fall of Constantinople}

A new phase in the history of Orthodoxy in general, and of Russia in particular, begins in 1299 with the moving of the seat of the Russian metropolitanate from the devastated ruins of Kiev in the South to Vladimir-Suzdal in the North. From now on it is the northern cities of Vladimir and Suzdal, and later Moscow, that take the lead in political and spiritual life of Russia. And from this time, too, begins the slow and painful, but steady rise of Russia to the leadership in the Orthodox world as a whole...

The six-hundred-year history of Russia from the Baptism of Kiev Rus' in 988 until the establishment of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1589 presents a very striking and instructive illustration of the Lord's words: "the last shall be first" (Matt. 20.16). For most of this period Russia was the most populous and flourishing, and (except during the two-hundred-year Mongol yoke)

\textsuperscript{105} Nikolai Boyeikov, \textit{Tserkov', Rus' i Rim (The Church, Rus' and Rome)}, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1983. (in Russian).
powerful nation in the Orthodox commonwealth. The beauty of her churches and the piety of her people amazed all comers. Thus at one time the famous Kiev-Caves Lavra contained more than fifty monks capable of casting out demons. And the monastic missionary movement inspired by St. Sergius of Radonezh in the fourteenth century came to be called "the Northern Thebaid" because of the resemblance of its piety to those of the Egyptian Thebaid (over 100 of Sergius' disciples were canonized). And yet during the whole of this period the Russian Church remained no more than a junior metropolitan district of the Constantinopolitan patriarchate, even when Constantinople itself fell under the yoke, first of the Latins (from 1204 to 1261), and then (after 1453) of the Turks! Unlike the much smaller Serbian and Bulgarian Churches, the Russian Church never sought autocephaly, and even when the Byzantine empire had contracted to a very small area around the capital city, the Russian Grand-Princes looked up to the emperors in Constantinople as to their fathers or elder brothers.

Of course, this tendency towards centralization around the city and the patriarchate of Constantinople was a long-standing historical tendency which answered, in part, to the need to counter the centralized empire of the papacy. Moreover, the spiritual unity of the Russian Church under the patriarchate of Constantinople was seen to be particularly providential when the political unity of the Russian lands was fractured by the quarrels of the Kievan princes, when Russia lay under the Mongol yoke, and again when a large part of the Russian lands found itself, in the fourteenth century, under the rule of the Lithuanian Grand-Prince, who wished to have a second Russian metropolitan for his Russian Orthodox subjects. However, we have also noted a fissiparous tendency for the Orthodox Churches to divide along national lines. And in this respect the Russian Church presents a striking (and, it must be said, very rare) example of the opposite tendency, the tendency towards national humility and self-denial in favour of the Ecumenical and Catholic ideal of the Orthodox Church. And therefore as the Lord said that he who humbles himself will be exalted, so it came about that the humblest and most self-denying of the Churches was exalted by Him to the position of leader and protector of all.

The first step in this direction came after the ill-reputed council of Florence-Ferrara in 1438-39. At this council, in spite of the anathema of 1054 and all the evidence of the Crusades, and in spite of the fact that the Roman Church had again been anathematized by the mid-fourteenth century Palamite Councils for holding the heretical doctrine that the grace of God is created, the Greek emperor and all the Greek patriarchates formally entered into union with the Roman papacy on the papacy's terms - that is, acceptance of the Filioque and the supreme authority of the Pope. Only two metropolitans, St. Mark of Ephesus and Gregory of Georgia, refused to sign this union; and it was around St. Mark that the Greeks who remained Orthodox now organized their
opposition to the union. Many saw the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 as God's punishment of the Greeks for this betrayal of the Faith. And the faithful Greeks were wont to say thereafter: "Better the Sultan's turban than the Pope's tiara!"

The Russian delegate at this council, Metropolitan Isidore of Kiev, had acquired his position by guile, by securing the confirmation of the patriarch of Constantinople before the choice of the Russian people, Jonah, had arrived in the city. He now showed his true colours by returning to Russia, after an absence of three years, as the legate of the Pope. The Muscovite Russians, led by Grand-Prince Basil II, were horrified by this; and after Isidore had fled to Rome, they elected St. Jonah as metropolitan.

"However," writes Boyeikov, "even after he had learned about the treachery of the Orthodox emperor and the events which had shaken Byzantium, Basil did not consider that he had the right to break the canonical dependence which the Russian Church had inherited since the time of the Baptism of Rus', and after Jonah's election he wrote the following: After the death of Metropolitan Photius, having taken counsel with our mother, the Great Princess, and with our brothers, the Russian princes, both the Great Princes and the local ones, together with the lord of the Lithuanian land, the hierarchs and all the clergy, the boyars and all the Russian land, we elected Bishop Jonah of Ryazan and sent him to you in Constantinople for consecration together with our envoy. But before his arrival there the emperor and patriarch consecrated Isidore as metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus', while to Jonah they said: 'Go to your see - the Ryazan episcopate. If Isidore dies or something else happens to him, then be ready to be blessed for the metropolitan see of all Rus'." Since a disagreement in the Church of God has taken place in our blessed kingdoms, travellers to Constantinople have suffered all kinds of difficulties on the road, there is great disorder in our countries, the godless Hagarenes have invaded, there have been civil wars, and we ourselves have suffered terrible things, not from foreigners, but from our own brothers. In view of this great need, we have assembled our Russian hierarchs, and, in accordance with the canons, we have consecrated the above-mentioned Jonah to the Russian metropolitanate of Kiev and all Rus'. We have acted in this way because of great need, and not out of pride or boldness. We shall remain to the end of the age devoted to the Orthodoxy we have received; our Church will always seek the blessing of the Church of Tsargrad and obey her in everything according to the ancient piety. And our father Jonah also begs for blessing and union in that which does not concern the present new disagreements, and we beseech your holy kingdom to be kindly disposed to our father Metropolitan Jonah. We wanted to write about all these church matters to the most holy Orthodox patriarch, too; and to ask

his blessing and prayers. But we do not know whether there is a patriarch in your royal city or not. But if God grants that you will have a patriarch according to the ancient piety, then we shall inform him of all our circumstances and ask for his blessing.'

"On reading this gramota of the Great Prince Basil, one is amazed at his tact and the restraint of his style. Knowing that the emperor himself had betrayed the faith, that Patriarch Gregory had fled to Rome, as also that Isidore who had been sent to Moscow, Basil II, instead of giving a well-merited rebuke to his teachers and instructors, himself apologized for the fact that circumstances had compelled the Russian bishops themselves to consecrate a metropolitan for themselves, and comes near to begging him to receive Jonah with honour. It is remarkable that the Great Prince at every point emphasizes that this consecration took place 'in accordance with the canons', while doubting whether there was a lawful patriarch in Byzantium itself or not. The whole of this gramota is full of true Christian humility and brotherly compassion for the emperor who had fallen onto hard times."107

On May 29, 1453, just six months after the Pope's name had been commemorated for the first time in Hagia Sophia, Constantinople fell to the Turks. And so, one might have thought, fell the imperial ideal of the Orthodox Church. However, the Lord was about to pass the guardianship of that ideal to the youngest and humblest of the Christian peoples, Russia; and it was the Russian Church and Empire that was destined to play the major role in preserving the Orthodox heritage to the beginning of the twentieth century...

6. THE NATIONAL CHURCH: THE THIRD ROME AND THE NATIONS

The earthly fatherland with its Church is the threshold of the Heavenly Fatherland. Therefore love it fervently and be ready to lay down your life for it, so as to inherit eternal life there.

St. John of Kronstadt, Sermon (1905).

The fall of Constantinople presented the Eastern Churches with a new situation the like of which they had not experienced since before the conversion of St. Constantine.

The East Roman Empire was now dead; and although some cities, such as Trebizond, continued a brief and fitful independent existence, none of these could reasonably hope to serve as a new capital, still less as a springboard to the recapture of Constantinople, in the way that Nicaea had served after the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders in 1204. The Balkan Orthodox nations had been subdued by the Turks, although Romania, under great leaders such as King Stephen the Great and St. Daniel the Hesychast could be said to be semi-independent. Only little Georgia remained fully independent, though increasingly at the mercy of invasion from the south. As for the largest Orthodox nation, Russia, she was still, formally at any rate, under the suzerainty of the Mongols.

The organization of the Church might therefore reasonably have been expected to devolve into a loosely connected structure of national Churches similar to that of the Protestant national churches which were soon to appear after the collapse of the papist empire in Reformation Europe. And indeed, a tendency towards such a structure is evident - together with a corresponding increase in nationalist passions - after the liberation of Greece in the early nineteenth century.

However, it was slowed down by two antithetical tendencies: on the one hand, the grouping by the Turkish authorities of all the Orthodox Christians of their empire, of whatever race, into a single Rum millet, or "Roman nation", under the civil as well as the religious leadership of the patriarchate of Constantinople; and, on the other hand, the emergence of the ideal of Moscow as the Third Rome, the heir of the Empires of the Old and New Romes.

The Turkish Yoke

There was one immediate and major gain from the fall of the Empire: the conqueror of Constantinople gave the patriarchate into the hands of St. Gennadius Scholarius, a disciple of St. Mark of Ephesus and a firm opponent of the unia. However, in almost every other respect the Christians of the
Greek lands and the Balkans suffered greatly from their new rulers. Since the Constantinopolitan patriarch was made both civic and religious leader of all the empire's Orthodox, his throne became the object of political intrigues involving not only Turkish officials, but also Greek merchants, Georgian kings, Romanian princes and, increasingly, Western ambassadors. And since each new patriarch had to pay a large sum, as well as an annual tribute, to the Sublime Porte, this meant that, with rare exceptions, the candidate with the biggest purse won. This in turn led to frequent depositions, even murders, of patriarchs, and the extortion of ever-increasing sums from the already impoverished Christians.108

In the towns and villages, conditions also deteriorated. Gradually, more and more churches were converted into mosques; bribes and intrigues were often necessary to keep the few remaining churches in Christian hands, and these usually had to have drab exteriors with no visible domes or crosses. On the whole, Christians were allowed to practise their faith; but all influential positions were restricted to Muslims, and conversion from Islam to Christianity was punishable by death. Many of the martyrs of this period were Orthodox Christians who had, wittingly or unwittingly, become Muslims in their youth, and were then killed for reconverting to the faith of their fathers.109 The general level of education among the Christians plummeted, and even the most basic books often had to be imported from semi-independent areas such as the Danubian principalities or from Uniate presses in Venice.

It was only to be expected that the Western heresies would attempt to benefit from the weakened condition of the Orthodox. The Society of Jesus was founded in 1540 with the specific aim of buttressing the Counter-Reformation papacy, and was soon mounting a formidable war, not only against Protestantism, but also against Orthodoxy on a wide front. The Jesuits' methods ranged from crude force, which they used with the connivance of their Polish patrons in the Russian lands conquered by Catholic Poland, to the subtler weapon of education, which was particularly effective among the sons of Greek families who went to study in the College of Saint Athanasius in Rome or the Jesuit schools of Constantinople. Soon this pressure was producing results: in 1596, five Orthodox bishops of the Western Russian lands (but not including the metropolitan of Kiev) submitted to Rome at the infamous union of Brest-Litovsk; and several Greek metropolitans also apostasized, especially in the Antiochian patriarchate, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nor did the Protestant reformers fail to make gains, especially in Romania.110

Amidst all this turmoil, and with the bishops so often wavering in faith or bound by political pressures, it was often left to the lower clergy or the laypeople to take up the banner of Orthodoxy. Thus the unia was fought by hieromonks, such as St. Job of Pochaev, lay theologians such as the Chiot Eustratios Argenti, aristocratic landowners such as Prince Constantine Constantinovich Ostrozhsky, and lay brotherhoods such as those which preserved Orthodoxy in uniate-dominated towns as Lvov and Vilnius for centuries. Many monks wandered around the Orthodox lands strengthening the Christians in the faith of their fathers and receiving martyrdom as their reward, such as the exarch of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Nicephorus, who was killed by the Poles, and St. Athanasius of Brest, who was tortured to death by the Jesuits, and St. Cosmas of Aitolia, who was killed by the Turks in Albania.

The international character of Orthodoxy in these centuries is illustrated by the life of the Russian hieromonk St. Paisius Velichkovsky, who, having acquired spiritual wisdom on Mount Athos, founded some model monasteries in Romania which became the seedbed of the revival of Russian monasticism in the nineteenth century.

Sometimes the lack of Orthodox political leadership made it necessary for bishops to take on political roles. We have already seen how this was forced upon the Constantinopolitan patriarchs by the Turkish sultans. But the same pattern is found in lands on the borders of the Turkish empire, as we see in the lives of the holy prince-bishops Maximus of Serbia and Peter of Montenegro. Such developments, though not strictly canonical, were forced upon the Christians of the Balkan lands. They were the result of the Christian power vacuum left by the fall of the Byzantine empire, which made it more and more imperative to find a political protector of the Orthodox who would save them from the crushing weight of the Muslims, in the East, and the Poles and Austro-Hungarians, in the West.

But where was this power to be found? One Orthodox power which remained relatively free of the Turks and which certainly helped the enslaved Greek and Slavic Orthodox was Romania. In the fourteenth century, a remarkable monastic movement, nourished by hesychastic monks from Mount Athos and Bulgaria, began in Romania. This movement gathered pace in the centuries that followed, being supported by pious princes such as

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112 See Boyeikov, *op. cit*.; Kartashev, *op. cit*.; * Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' (The Russian Orthodox Church)*, a publication of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1988, pp. 45-48 (in Russian).
Stephen the Great (1457-1504), who first united the three Romanian provinces of Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania, and churchmen such as St. Daniel the Hesychast, Prince Stephen's spiritual father. The Romanians were very generous in their support of the Orthodox under the Turkish yoke, and some patriarchs of Constantinople, such as St. Niphon, even retired to Romanian monasteries. Moreover, in the eighteenth century a revival of hesychast monasticism took place in Romania, as we have seen, which became the seedbed of the similar revival in Russia in the nineteenth century centred on Optina.\textsuperscript{115}

However, the only power which could possibly take the place of Byzantium was not Romania, but Russia; and increasingly, from the end of the fifteenth century, we see Russia measuring herself up, as it were, for this role. In 1480, Grand-Prince John III, having already married the niece of the last Byzantine emperor, declared himself independent of the Golden Horde and took to himself the title of Tsar. In 1498, he was crowned in a ceremony which was a rough copy of the Byzantine coronation service, and the metropolitan charged him "to care for all souls and for all Orthodox Christendom". In 1511, the Pskov monk Philotheus, writing to Great-Prince Basil III, spoke of Moscow as "the Third Rome", the heir of the Empires of Rome and Constantinople - "and a Fourth there shall not be", he added.\textsuperscript{116} This concept received credence from the rapid expansion of the Russian lands in this period, and by the triumph of the Russian Church over its first home-grown heresy, that of the Judaizers.

At the same time, it must be remembered that Muscovy had not yet won control even over all the Russian lands, a good half of them being still under the control of Poland-Lithuania - which also had its own Orthodox metropolitan who was not in obedience to the Muscovite metropolitan, but to the Patriarch of Constantinople. This meant that, for several centuries, the Muscovite grand-princes and tsars saw as their main task the building up of a national kingdom embracing "all the Russias"; and the idea of Moscow as the protector of all Orthodox Christendom by virtue of its position as "the Third Rome" (an idea that was originally imported into Russia by monks from the Balkans)\textsuperscript{117} did not receive any intensive development until the reign of Alexander II in the nineteenth century. However, the seeds for that development were laid at this time, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth

\textsuperscript{116} See Sir Steven Runciman, \textit{The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State}, Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 46-47.
\textsuperscript{117} The Bulgarians had hopes that their empire would take the place of the New Rome. However, St. Theodosius of Trnovo (+1363) prophesied that the Turks would conquer the Bulgarian land because of its sins; and in fact Bulgaria fell to the Turks before Byzantium. See Ivan Marchevsky, \textit{Apokaliptichnata Perspektiva ot Kraya Vremenata v Svetootolcheski Sintez (An Apocalyptic Perspective on the Last Times in a Patristic Synthesis)} (Sofia: "Monarkhitchesko-Konservativen Seyuz", 1994, p. 80 (in Bulgarian).
centuries, and as the Muscovite state gradually grew and became stronger, the mission entrusted by Divine Providence to her gradually became clearer.\textsuperscript{118}

In fact, the first intimation of the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome may be a Greek prophecy of the eighth or ninth century, which declared: "The sceptre of the Orthodox kingdom will fall from the weakening hands of the Byzantine emperors, since they will not have proved able to achieve the symphony of Church and State. Therefore the Lord in His Providence will sent a third God-chosen people to take the place of the chosen, but spiritually decrepit people of the Greeks."\textsuperscript{119}

\textbf{The Heresy of the Judaizers}

However, before Moscow could take on the burden of “the Third Rome”, she had to prove herself in a struggle against the foremost enemies of the Faith. Since the heresy of the Judaizers is sometimes considered to be the spiritual ancestor of the Russian revolution, it is worth pausing to examine its roots and history. "Its roots," writes a publication of the Moscow Patriarchate, "go deeper than is usually imagined. The part played by national elements in the heresy, which exploded like epidemics onto medieval Europe, has not yet been sufficiently clarified. The acts of the inquisition demonstrate that most of the sects were Judeo-Christian in character with a more or less pronounced Manichaean colouring. The flourishing of the Albigensian heresy in France has been directly linked by historians with the rise of Jewish influence in that country. The heresy of the Templars, 'the knights of the Temple', who were condemned in 1314, was linked with esoterical Judaism and blasphemy against Christ...

"Judaizers were also known in the Orthodox East. In Salonica in the first third of the 14th century 'there existed a heretical Judaizing society in the heart of the Greek population' which had an influence on 'the Bulgarian Judaizers of the 40s and 50s of the same century'. In 1354 a debate took place in Gallipoli between the famous theologian and hierarch of the Eastern Church Gregory Palamas, on the one hand, and the Turks and the Chionians, i.e the Judaizers, on the other. In 1360 a council meeting in Trnovo, the then capital of the Bulgarian patriarchate, condemned both the opponents of Hesychasm (the Barlaamites) and those who philosophize from the Jewish heresies.

"The successes of the heresy in Russia could be attributed to the same cause as its success in France in the 14th century. Jews streamed into the young state

\textsuperscript{119} Quoted by Archbishop Seraphim, “Sud’by Rossii” ("The Destinies of Russia"), \textit{Pravoslavnij Vestnik (Orthodox Messenger)}, N 87, January-February, 1996, pp. 6-7 (in Russian).
of the Ottomans from the whole of Western Europe. Thereafter they were able to penetrate without hindrance into the Genoan colonies of the Crimea and the Azov sea, and into the region of what had been Khazaria, where the Jewish sect of the Karaites had a large influence; for they had many adherents in the Crimea and Lithuania and were closely linked with Palestine. As the inscriptions on the Jewish cemetery of Chuf-Kale show, colonies of Karaites existed in the Crimea from the 2nd to the 18th centuries. The Karaites were brought to Lithuania by Prince Vitovt, the hero of the battle of Grunwald (1410) and great-grandfather of John III Vasilievich. From there they spread throughout Western Russia.

"... One has to admit that the beginning of the polemic between the Orthodox and the heretics was made, not in Byzantium, but in Russia. Besides, the polemic began... in the time of Metropolitan Peter (+1326), the founder of the Muscovite ecclesiastical centre. In the life of St. Peter it is mentioned among his other exploits for the good of the Russian Church that he 'overcame the heretic Seit in debate and cursed him. The hypothesis concerning the Karaite origin of the 'Judaizers' allows us to see in Seit a Karaite preacher.

"... The heresy did not disappear but smouldered under a facade of church life in certain circles of the Orthodox urban population, and the Russian church, under the leadership of her hierarchs, raised herself to an unceasing battle with the false teachings. The landmarks of this battle were: Metropolitan Peter's victory over Seit in debate (between 1312 and 1326), the unmasking and condemnation of the strigolniki in Novgorod in the time of Metropolitan Alexis (1370s), the overcoming of this heresy in the time of Metropolitan Photius (+1431), and of the heresy of the Judaizers - in the time of Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod (+1505) and St. Joseph of Volotsk (+1515).

"... From the time of the holy Prince Vladimir, the Baptistizer of Rus', who rejected the solicitations of the Khazar Rabbis, wrote St. Joseph of Volotsk, 'the great Russian land has for 500 years remained in the Orthodox Faith, until the enemy of salvation, the devil, introduced the foul Jew to Great Novgorod. On St. Michael's day, 1470, there arrived from Kiev in the suite of Prince Michael Olelkovich, who had been invited by the veche, 'the Jew Scharia' and 'Zachariah, prince of Taman. Later the Lithuanian Rabbis Joseph Smoilo Skaryavei and Moses Khanush also arrived.

"The heresy began to spread quickly. However, 'in the strict sense of the word this was not merely heresy, but complete apostasy from the Christian faith and the acceptance of the Jewish faith. Using the weaknesses of certain clerics, Scharia and his assistants began to instil distrust of the Church hierarchy into the faint-hearted, inclining them to rebellion against spiritual authority, tempting them with 'self-rule', the personal choice of each person in
the spheres of faith and salvation, inciting the deceived to renounce their Mother-Church, blaspheme against the holy icons and reject veneration of the saints - the foundations of popular morality - and, finally, to a complete denial of the saving Sacraments and dogmas of Orthodoxy concerning the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. So they went so far as Jewish war against God and the substitution of Christ the Saviour by the false messiah and antichrist.

"The false teaching spread in secret. Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod first heard about the heresy in 1487; four members of a secret society, while abusing each other in a drunken frenzy, revealed the existence of the heresy in front of some Orthodox. The zealous archpastor quickly conducted an investigation and with sorrow became convinced that not only Novgorod, but also the very capital of Russian Orthodoxy, Moscow, was threatened. In September 1487 he sent Metropolitan Gerontius in Moscow the records of the whole investigation in the original. Igumen Joseph (Sanin) of the Dormition monastery of Volotsk, who had an unassailable reputation in Russian society at the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, also spoke out against the heresy.

"But the battle with the heresy turned out to be no simple matter, for the heretics had enlisted the support of powerful people in Moscow. Great Prince John III, who had been deceived by the Judaizers, invited them to Moscow, and made the two leading heretics protopriests - one in the Dormition, and the other in the Archangels cathedrals in the Kremlin. Some of those close to the Tsar, such as Deacon Theodore Kurytsyn, who headed the government, and whose brother became the heretics' leader, were coopted into the heresy. The Great Prince's bride, Helen Voloshanka, was converted to Judaism. In 1483 a correspondence between Ioann II and the heresiarch Scharia himself was established through diplomatic channels between Moscow and Bakhchisarai. Finally, the heretic Zosima was raised to the see of the great hierarchs of Moscow Peter, Alexis and Jonah.

"The struggle between Archbishop Gennadius and St. Joseph, on the one hand, and the opponents of Orthodoxy, on the other, lasted for nineteen years.

"In 1479 St. Joseph founded the monastery of the Dormition in Volokolamsk. There he wrote his major theological works, including 'The Enlightener', which brought him the reputation of a great father and teacher of the Russian Church. His fiery epistles against the heretics were spread widely. The labours of Igumen Joseph of Volotsk and St. Gennadius, archbishop of Novgorod, were crowned with success. In 1494 the heretic Zosima was removed from the metropolitan see, and in 1502-1504 councils were assembled which condemned the most evil and impenitent heretics."120

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The Moscow Patriarchate

However, in the first half of the sixteenth century a dangerous tendency began to make itself manifest in Russian life: caesaropapism. The victors over the Judaizers invoked the power of the State to mete out some very harsh treatment to the heresiarchs. Moreover, the monastic ideal of non-possessiveness, represented especially by St. Nilus of Sora, began to decline as monastery holdings increased and were increasingly devoted to the support of the State.

As contact with Byzantium declined, the Byzantine idea of the "symphony" between Church and State became distorted in favour of the preponderant power of the State. The first clear sign of this development was the treatment meted out to the famous monk St. Maximus the Greek, who was imprisoned for twenty years for refusing to recognize the authority of the Tsar in spiritual matters. Still more serious was the fate suffered by St. Philip, metropolitan of Moscow. In 1569 he had used the traditional prerogative of the chief bishop to rebuke John the Terrible for his cruelty and oppression; but then a subservient synod deposed Philip and handed him over to the Tsar, who had him strangled. However, the balance was somewhat restored under John's pious son Theodore. And in 1589 the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II, who was in Moscow to ask for alms, raised the Russian Church to the rank of an autocephalous patriarchate (the fifth in seniority), thereby increasing her authority vis-a-vis the Tsar.

Jeremiah was one of the outstanding hierarchs of this period of the Church's history, one of the few who could justly be said to be ecumenical in his vision and his activities. In 1583, in a Pan-Orthodox Council which included two other patriarchs, he had anathematized the new calendar which Pope Gregory XIII had introduced in the West, and this anathema was confirmed by two further Pan-Orthodox Councils in 1587 and 1593. Later, he politely but firmly rejected the confession of the Lutheran Church in a dialogue with Augsburg. And shortly after his trip to Moscow he made an important tour of the beleaguered Orthodox in the Western Russian lands, ordaining bishops and blessing the lay brotherhoods. Now he confirmed the doctrine of the Moscow as the Third Rome, proclaiming that the Tsar was "Christian Emperor for all Christians in the whole world".

121 At the same time, St. Maximus recognized the right of a true Tsar to lead Christian society, calling him "an animate image of the Heavenly King" (quoted in Sergius Fomin, Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1993, p. 95 (in Russian)).
At the same time, however, he made Moscow only the fifth in seniority, after the four Greek patriarchates. This was to prove a prudent reservation, for in the century that followed, the Poles briefly conquered Moscow, necessitating the continued supervision of the Western and Southern Russian Orthodox by Constantinople. Indeed, in the Time of Troubles which followed the death of Tsar Theodore, Russia very nearly lost her identity as an Orthodox nation. The ambitions of Catholic Poland, the rebellions of the Cossacks and other groups, and the opportunistic intervention of Sweden, combined to put a Catholic Tsar (the so-called "false Demetrius") in the Kremlin and Jesuit priests in the Kremlin cathedrals. The national resistance to the Poles was led from his prison cell in the Kremlin by the heroic Patriarch Hermogenes (he was starved to death there in 1612), and by the monks of the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius monastery near Moscow. Through their unceasing efforts, and encouraged by miraculous appearances of St. Sergius of Radonezh and the grace of the wonder-working Kazan icon of the Mother of God, an army of national liberation was eventually organized by a prince, Pozharsky, and a butcher, Minin, from the eastern town of Nizhni-Novgorod. This army expelled the Poles; and in 1613 a zemsky sobor (council of the land) representing the whole Russian land elected Michael Romanov, the son of Metropolitan Philaret, as Tsar. In recognition of the fact that it was largely their faithlessness to tsarist authority that had led to the Time of Troubles, the delegates at this council swore eternal loyalty to Michael Romanov and his descendants, calling a curse upon themselves if they should ever break this oath.\footnote{See Kartashev, op. cit., pp. 124-219; Archbishop Seraphim Sobolev, Russkaia Ideologia (The Russian Ideology), Saint Petersburg: Suvorina, 1992, chapter 7 (in Russian).}

There followed a period of steady national recovery. The Western and Southern lands occupied by Poland were gradually won back. After his return from Polish captivity, Metropolitan Philaret was elected patriarch; and the father-and-son relationship of patriarch and tsar symbolized the austere, fortress-like mentality of Muscovy in those years, with the defence of the Church and the Orthodox Faith against Rome the first priority.

\textit{The Old Ritualist Schism}

The beginnings of the tragedy of the Old Ritualists lay in the arrival in Moscow of some educated monks from the south of Russia. They pointed to the existence of several differences between the Muscovite service books and those employed in the Greek Church. These differences concerned such matters as how the word "Jesus" was to be spelt, whether two or three "alleluias" should be chanted in the Divine services, whether the sign of the Cross should be made with two or three fingers, etc.
The Muscovites had difficulty in accepting these criticisms. They suspected that the southerners were tainted with Latinism through their long subjection to Polish rule, and were therefore unwilling to bow unquestioningly to their superior knowledge. Moreover, beneath the issue of ritual differences between the Greek and Russian Churches lay a deeper principle, that of the source of authority in the Orthodox Church as a whole. The Greeks argued that, since Orthodoxy came to Russia and the other Orthodox nations from the Greeks, the criterion of correctness should be the practices of the Greek Church. The Muscovites, however, argued that the Greeks had betrayed the faith at the council of Florence, and that the pupils might have remained more faithful over the years to the teaching they had received than their original teachers.

At this point Patriarch Nicon began to play an important part in the controversy. Not that the issue of the service-books was of paramount importance to him: his primary concern was to restore the balance of power between Church and State which had tilted towards the State, and in particular to repeal the hated Monastirskij Prikaz of 1649, which had removed control of much of the economic life and administration of the monasteries from the Church to the State. Also, if Moscow was to be the Third Rome and the protector of all Orthodox Christians, it was necessary that the faith and practice of the Moscow patriarchate should be in harmony with the faith and practice of the Orthodox Church as a whole, especially now that the Ukraine and Belarus, which had been under the jurisdiction of Constantinople and employed Greek practices, were again coming under the dominion of Muscovy and the Moscow Patriarchate. That is why Nicon supported the reform of the service-books to bring them into line with the practices of the Greek Church. Since the Tsar, in accordance with the Grecophile traditions of the Russian princes, also supported the reforms, the Patriarch went ahead with vigour.

Soon opposition began to form against the reforms. The problem was, not only that a large part of the Russian aristocracy, clergy and people were suspicious of the Greeks, as we have seen, and looked upon them as of doubtful Orthodoxy, but that the practices of the Russian Church had been sanctified and confirmed, under pain of anathema and excommunication, by the famous Stoglav council of the Russian Church in 1551. Relying on this council, therefore, the opposition condemned the proposed corrections to the service-books as treacherous and heretical.

The problem was further compounded by the doubtful methodology of the reforms, which did not take into account the fact that the newest Kievan and Greek books (many of which were printed on Latin presses in Venice) were themselves not in conformity with the most ancient manuscripts of both Greek and Slavonic origin. However, if the matter had been left to Nicon alone, there would probably have been no schism. He shared the opinion of
the Patriarch of Constantinople, who wrote that differences in ritual were tolerable so long as the dogmas of the Faith are held in common. He was quite willing, as Fr. Andrew Phillips writes, "for those who did not wish to accept modifications to Russian Church ritual, to bring it into line with the practices of the rest of the Orthodox Church, to continue to use their 'old' rites. He was a man of the people and well understood the desire of the simple to keep their former ways. He required only one thing, that those who kept the 'old' rites remain in obedience and unity with the rest of the Church. Metropolitan Macarius writes that if Nicon had continued to be Patriarch, there would never have been a schism."

But it was not to be. The Tsar was growing increasingly independent of the Patriarch, and the nobles intrigued against him - in spite of the fact that they had all sworn obedience to him at the beginning of his tenure. Deprived of support from the State, Nicon withdrew to his monastery of New Jerusalem. This move was taken by the Tsar and the nobles to mean his final resignation from Church affairs. So when Nicon began to protest against moves made by his deputy on the patriarchal throne, and especially when he began to attack the Tsar for interfering in the Church's affairs, his enemies portrayed him as a dangerous rebel against both Church and State.

Since the Russian Church was now an autocephalous patriarchate, she could have acted against Nicon on her own. But at this point the Tsar, in his efforts to gain greater support for his policies, made a fatal mistake. He invited three Greek hierarchs who were in Moscow at the time on alms-raising missions - two retired patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, and the defrocked crypto-papist Paisius Ligarides, former metropolitan of Gaza - to participate in the councils of the Russian Church.

During the course of the next few years, these three hierarchs, by dint of bluff, skilful diplomacy and plain forgery, succeeded in gaining such an ascendancy over the Tsar, the nobles and the submissive Russian hierarchy that - in spite of the opposition of the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem - both the Grecophile Nicon was reduced to the rank of a simple monk on the basis of a mixture of true and patently false charges (this decision was reversed by the Eastern patriarchs in 1682), and the Grecophobe Old Ritualists had their rite anathematized. This injured the long-term interests of the Greek, no less than the Russian Churches; for only a strong and united Russia could hope to fulfil the mission of the Third Rome which Patriarch Jeremiah II had entrusted to her, and free the Greek and Balkan lands from the Turkish yoke. The only good to result from these councils was the suspension of the Monastirskij Prikaz - whereby one of Nicon's most persistent aims was realized after his own downfall.

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125 Phillips, "Patriarch Nikon and the New Jerusalem", in Orthodox Christianity and the English Tradition, English Orthodox Trust, 1995, p. 76.
The worst consequence was that the delicate symphony between Church and State was badly damaged, and the State now gained the ascendancy to the detriment of Holy Russia. In the next century Alexis' successor, Peter the Great, abolished the patriarchate and reduced the Church to a department of the State, and then Catherine the Great decimated the monasteries and confiscated their estates. Meanwhile the Old Ritualist schism continues to the present day, in spite of concessions to the Old Rite made in 1801 (the edinoverie) and the annulment of the anathemas against it in 1971...

There has been much idealisation of the Old Ritualist schism, as if the Old Believers represented the true old piety of Holy Russia which the "Niconians" destroyed. But this was not the opinion of the great Russian saints who opposed the schism, such as Demetrius of Rostov, Metrophanes of Voronezh and Seraphim of Sarov. The fact is that the Old Ritualists represented a dangerously pharisaical and nationalist stream which, if allowed to triumph, might well have torn the Russian Church away from the Ecumenical Church altogether.¹²⁶ Their fanatical attachment to the letter of the law (which they in case distorted) led to the loss of the Spirit that gives life; and, like the Jews, they became the enemies of lawful political authority and the revolutionary forerunners of the Bolsheviks.

This is not to excuse the coercive methods used against the Old Ritualists – although the violence was initiated by the State rather than the Church. And it is true that, having rejected the nationalist temptation of the Old Ritualists, the Russian Church showed herself less resolute in rejecting the opposite, internationalist temptation 250 years later. But that grace and truth remained with the official Church at this time, and not with the Old Ritualists, there can be no doubt.

*The Russian Synodal Church*

Between the council of 1667 and the death of Patriarch Adrian in 1700, the Moscow Patriarchate was at the height of its power. With the weakening of Poland and the increase in strength of the generally pro-Muscovite Cossacks under Hetman Bogdan Khmelnitsky, large areas of Belorussia and the Ukraine, including Kiev, were freed from Latin control, which could only be joyful news for the native Orthodox population who had suffered so much from the Polish-Jesuit yoke. Moreover, the liberated areas were returned to the jurisdiction of the Russian Church in 1686. This meant that most of the Russian lands were now, for the first time for centuries, united under a single,

¹²⁶ The nationalist spirit of the schism is illustrated by one of the letters that Archpriest Avvakum, perhaps the most articulate and educated of the schismatics, wrote from his prison cell to Tsar Alexis: 'Say in good Russian 'Lord have mercy on me'. Leave all those Kyrie Eleisons to the Greeks: that's their language, spit on them! You are Russian, Alexei, not Greek. Speak your mother tongue and be not ashamed of it, either in church or at home!' See Michael Cherniavsky, "The Old Believers and the New Religion", *Slavic Review*, vol. 25, 1966, pp. 27-33.
independent Russian State and Church. The Russian national Church had been restored to almost its original dimensions.

But there were also danger-signals. The Old Ritualists schism, far from abating, took a newly militant turn in the form of mass suicides at the approach of government troops (by 1690, 20,000 are reported to have burned themselves to death). Again, another heretical current was approaching from the West and had already influenced the upper levels of Muscovite society: the secularist, laicizing mentality of the Protestant Reformation. And one of those most influenced by this current of thought was none other than the Tsar himself, Peter the Great.

Peter's reforms were undoubtedly a great shock to Russia and the Church. Their essence, which was borrowed from the Protestant monarchies of North-West Europe, consisted in making the whole life of the country, including the Church, subordinate to the single will of the Tsar. Thus the Church was deprived of her head, the patriarch, and ruled, formally at any rate, for the next two centuries by lay officials. The nobility were chained to public service in the bureaucracy or the army; the peasants - to the land. And the whole country was subjected, by force at times, to the cultural, scientific and educational influence of the West.

This transformation was symbolized especially by the building, at great cost in human lives, of a new capital at St. Petersburg. Situated at the extreme western end of the vast empire as Peter's 'window to the West', this extraordinary city was largely built by Italian architects on the model of Amsterdam, peopled by shaven and pomaded courtiers who spoke more French than Russian, and ruled, from the middle of the eighteenth century on, by monarchs of mainly German origin. Western technological innovations undoubtedly benefited the country from an economic and military point of view, and in the eighteenth century Russia became a great power, waging successful campaigns against the Swedes, the Poles and the Turks. But Peter's reforms divided the country socially and weakened it spiritually.

Andrew Bessmertny writes: "A violent and superficial Europeanisation - that was the chief distinguishing feature of "the age of Enlightenment' in Russia, with its relativism bordering on atheism, 'Voltaireanism' and 'Freemasonry', its aggressive secularist policy in relation to the Church and its degrading of the latter to the level of a government department. Russia was being more and more conformed to the external norms of western civilization, but by what methods? The empress's correspondence with Voltaire and Diderot did not stop her from enserfing the Ukrainian peasantry, on the one hand, and on the other, allowing herself to be called 'the head of the Church'. Western religious tolerance was 'transplanted' with weird effect onto Russian soil; Lutheran and Calvinist catecheses were printed..., but Metropolitan Stephen Yavorsky's apologetic book The Stone of Faith was forbidden by the
Tsar 'for reasons of religious tolerance', since it contained a polemic with the Protestants, and they could be offended... Under Peter a fine for the giving of alms (from 5 to 10 roubles) was introduced, together with corporal punishments followed by cutting out of the nostrils and exile to the galleys 'for the proclamation of visions and miracles. In 1723 a decree forbidding the tonsuring of monks was issued, with the result that by 1740 Russian monasticism consisted of doddery old men, while the founder of eldership, St. Paisius Velichkovsky, was forced to emigrate to Moldavia. Moreover, in the monasteries they introduced a ban on paper and ink - so as to deprive the traditional centres of book-learning and scholarship of their significance. Processions through the streets with icons and holy water were also banned (almost until the legislation of 1729)! At the same time, there appeared... the government ban on Orthodox transferring to other confessions of faith.

"In Biron's time hundred of clergy were tonsured, whipped and exiled, and they did the same with protesting bishops - and there were quite a few of those. 6557 priests were forced into military service, as a consequence of which in only four northern dioceses 182 churches remained without clergy or readers. St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, a zealous... missionary and theological writer, was persecuted all his life. Catherine II dealt so cruelly with Metropolitan Arsenius Matseyevich, who was tortured in prison, that for a long time the desire of the Russian hierarchs to criticize the higher authorities was knocked out of them".127

And yet, according to the historian Kartashev, this seeming triumph of eighteenth-century Western culture over the last independent Orthodox State turned, by a great mystery of Divine Providence, into one of the great triumphs of Orthodoxy. For in the two centuries that followed Peter's reforms, the Russian Empire, having absorbed what was good in Western culture (and a lot of what was bad, too, as we shall see), proceeded to extend the saving influence of the Orthodox Faith more widely and deeply over the peoples of the earth than any other Church in Orthodox history, including that of the Byzantine Empire at its greatest extent. Indeed, we may say that it was precisely in the 'enslaved' Petersburg-Synodal, and not the 'free' Moscow-Patriarchal period of her history, that Russia fulfilled her historical mission as the Third Rome. For while her armies liberated all the formerly Orthodox lands from the Neva to the Vistula and the Eastern Danube, and protected the Orthodox still remaining under the Turkish yoke from the worst excesses of the infidels, her Church, as well as consolidating the Christianisation of the vast area of European Russia, sent important and fruitful missions to the Caucasus, Persia and Central Asia, Siberia, Japan, Korea and Alaska.

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Moreover, even if the poison of Western rationalism finally reaped its bitterly destructive harvest in the revolution, nineteenth-century Russian writers and artists, such as Pushkin, Gogol and Mussorgsky, Tiutchev, Repin and Dostoyevsky had succeeded in creating a culture that was Western in form but more Orthodox than Western in spirit and which might well have helped to form a bridge between the Western world and Orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{128}

And this miracle was achieved in the face of the almost continual opposition of the Western and Muslim powers. Thus from the reign of Peter to that of Alexander I, Russia faced, and triumphed over, mortal threats from Sweden, Poland, Germany, Turkey and the France of Napoleon. In the nineteenth century, again, Russia, the so-called "prison of the nations", was the initiator and most steadfast bulwark of the "Sacred Alliance" of the major continental powers against the common enemy of civilized Europe, the Socialist revolution.

In spite of this, the "Christian" countries of France and England allied themselves with infidel Turkey to invade Orthodox Russia in the Crimean war, and continued to impede (especially at the Treaty of Berlin in 1878) the attempts of Russia to free the Orthodox Balkan nations from the increasingly savage Turkish yoke. And in 1914 Russia again hurled her troops into war to defend Orthodox Serbia, on the one hand, from the invasion of Catholic Austro-Hungary, and her ally France, on the other, from the invasion of Protestant Germany.

There can be little doubt that the attack of the ill-prepared Russian armies in Eastern Prussia in August, 1914 diverted vital German armies from the assault on Paris. Solzhenitsyn has argued that Russia's intervention in that war was the fatal mistake which made possible the revolution.\textsuperscript{129}

Be that as it may, it was a fittingly self-sacrificial end to Orthodox Russia's centuries-old, and still largely unrecognized, defence of Western Europe against the Mongol khans and the Turkish sultans, the French grenadiers and the German junkers - and the Socialist revolutionaries...

\textit{The Roots of Socialism}

However, neither the piety of her monastics nor the zeal of her missionaries, neither the endurance of her soldiers nor the imagination of her artists, was able to save Russia from the invasion of the corrosive spirit of Western rationalism, liberalism and pseudo-mysticism. This entered Russia in two waves. The first, eighteenth-century wave took the form mainly of

\textsuperscript{128} Kartashev, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 311-19.

\textsuperscript{129} See his great novel, \textit{Krasnoe Koleso (The Red Wheel)}, Paris: YMCA Press (in Russian), and \textit{Le “problem russe” a la fin du XXe siecle (The “Russian Problem” at the End of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century)}, Fayard, 1994 (in French).
Voltaireanism and Freemasonry, and was encouraged especially by Catherine the Great - until she took fright at their offspring, the French revolution, and turned against them.

However, the Russian armies which entered Paris in 1814 brought back with them a second dose of this malignant virus; and in spite of a change of heart on the part of the westernizing Alexander I (who probably ended his life as a secret hermit in Siberia\textsuperscript{130}), the virus was allowed to spread and gave birth to the Decembrist rebellion of December, 1825 - the first ideologically motivated rebellion in Russian history (as opposed to the more elemental uprisings of Stenka Razin and Pugachev).

Tsar Alexander's successor, Nicholas I, reacted to the rebellion by executing six of the leading revolutionaries, exiling some of the others, and imposing censorship controls on literature and art. And he attempted to rally society around the slogan "Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Patriotism". But society was already gathering around an opposite set of principles which derived from the "Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood" of the French revolution and which might be reconstructed as "Naturalism, Socialism and Internationalism".

The first of these was defined with typically Russian explicitness by Petrashevsky, the one-time mentor of Dostoyevsky, thus: 

\textbf{[Naturalism] means a science which holds that by thought alone, without the help of tradition, revelation, or divine intervention, man can achieve in real life a state of permanent happiness through the total and independent development of all his natural faculties. In the lower phases of its evolution, naturalism considers the appearance of the divine element in positive religions to be a falsehood, the result of human rather than divine action. In its further evolution, this science - having absorbed pantheism and materialism - conceives divinity as the supreme and all-embracing expression of human understanding, moves towards atheism, and finally becomes transformed into anthropotheism - the science that proclaims that the only supreme being is man himself as a part of nature. At this stage of its rational evolution, naturalism considers the universal fact of the recognition of God in positive religions to be a result of man's deification of his own personality and the universal laws of his intellect; it considers all religions that reflected the historical evolution of mankind to be a gradual preparation for anthropotheism, or - in other words - total self-knowledge and awareness of the vital laws of nature.\textsuperscript{131}}


This was the new religion, based on Western rationalism, materialism and evolutionism. Against this, there stood up a series of outstanding philosophers and writers. Prominent among them were the Slavophiles Kireyevsky, Khomiakov, Tiutchev and Dostoyevsky, who defended the unique value of Russian traditions, the Russian autocracy, and, at the base of and underlying everything else, Russian Orthodoxy.

They pointed to the roots of contemporary Western thought in Roman Catholic rationalism; and Dostoyevsky in particular demonstrated the kinship between Romanism and Socialism - which, he prophesied, would soon lead the whole of Europe to a terrible catastrophe: "Europe is on the eve of a general and dreadful collapse. The ant-hill which has been long in the process of construction without the Church and Christ (since the Church, having dimmed its ideal, long ago and everywhere reincarnated itself in the state), with a moral principle shaken loose from its foundation, with everything general and absolute lost - this ant-hill, I say, is utterly undermined. The fourth estate is coming, it knocks at the door, and breaks into it, and if it is not opened to it, it will break the door. The fourth estate cares nothing for the former ideals; it rejects every existing law. It will make no compromises, no concessions; buttresses will not save the edifice. Concessions only provoke, but the fourth estate wants everything. There will come to pass something wholly unsuspected. All these parliamentarisms, all civic theories professed at present, all accumulated riches, banks, sciences, Jews - all these will instantly perish without leaving a trace - save the Jews, who even then will find their way out, so that this work will even be to their advantage."132

Dostoyevsky’s intuitions were confirmed by the finest churchmen of the age - St. Seraphim of Sarov, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, Bishop Theophan the Recluse, the Optina Elder Ambrose and, on the eve of the revolution itself, the great wonderworker St. John of Kronstadt. These men pointed out that according to St. Paul, the Antichrist will come when "he that restraineth" is removed (II Thessalonians 2.7) - that is, the Orthodox Russian Tsar. And so the removal of the Tsar, they prophesied, would lead to chaos and bloodshed on an unparalleled scale.133

But what form would this Antichrist take? In the year 1900 the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev had a remarkable intuition. He felt that the Antichrist would appear first in a collective form, and that the Church would be forced to flee from him into the catacombs, as in the Roman period. Only five years later, in the abortive revolution of 1905, the name of this collective Antichrist was revealed. It was - Soviet power...

133 See especially the books by Sergius Nilus, *Velikoe v Malom (Great Things in Small)* and *Sviatynya pod Spudom (Holy Things under a Bushel)* (Sergiev Posad, 1911), Fr. John Sursky, *Otets Ioann Kronshhtadskij (Father John of Kronstadt)* (Belgrade, 1941) and Sergius Fomin, *op. cit.* (all in Russian).
Again, only four years later, in 1909, the future head of that Church, Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Petrograd: “Now many are complaining about the hard times for the Church... Remembering the words of the Saviour with complete accuracy, we must expect still worse times for the Church... Without any exaggeration, she must truly live through a condition close to complete destruction and her being overcome by the gates of hell. Perhaps with us, exactly as in the land of freedom, America, they will drive the Name of Christ out of the schools. They will adapt prayer assemblies into ordinary meetings permitted by the police, as in that other land of freedom, France, and will convert the heritage of the Church, together with the very right of faith, into the property of the state. Perhaps the faith of Christ will again hide in the woods, the deserts, the catacombs, and the confession of the faith will be only in secret, while immoral and blasphemous presentations will come out into the open. All this may happen! The struggle against Christ will be waged with desperation, with the exertion of the last drop of human and hellish energy, and only then, perhaps, will it be given to hell and to mankind to assure us with complete obviousness of the unfailing power and might of the priceless promise of Christ: ‘I will build My Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against her’ (Matthew 16.18).”

As for the doctrine behind Soviet power, this was summed up by another philosopher, Simeon Ludwigovich Frank, as follows: "Socialism is at the same time the culmination and the overthrow of liberal democracy. It is ruled by the same basic motive that rules the whole modern era: to make man and mankind the true master of his life, to present him with the possibility of ordering his own destiny on his own authority... Socialism is the last stride in the great rebellion of mankind and at the same time the result of its total exhaustion - the complete spiritual impoverishment of the prodigal son in the long centuries of his wandering far from his father's home and wealth.”

The Rise of Balkan Nationalism

In Greece and the Balkans the ideas of the French revolution found expression in national liberation movements, which succeeded in liberating a large part of the Greek lands in Europe from the Turkish yoke, but also split the Greek Church in a schism which was not healed until 1852. The opposing views with regard to the revolution were especially incarnate in two hierarchs who came from the same village of Dhimitsana in the Peloponnes: the Hieromartyr Patriarch Gregory V of Constantinople, and Metropolitan Germanus of Old Patras. When Alexander Ypsilantis raised the standard of

revolt by crossing from Russia into Turkish-occupied Romania with a small band of Greeks in 1821, a simultaneous rebellion took place in the Peloponnesse under the leadership of Metropolitan Germanos and eight other bishops. Ypsilantis' force was soon crushed, for it was repudiated by both the Russian Tsar and the Romanian peasants. But Germanos' campaign prospered, in spite of the deaths of five of the bishops in prison; and soon the south of Greece and the islands of Hydra, Spetsae and Poros were in Greek hands.

At this point the frightened Turks put pressure on Patriarch Gregory and his Synod to anathematize the insurgents. They obeyed. Some have argued that the patriarch secretly repudiated this anathema and sympathized with the insurgents; which is why the Turks, suspecting him of treachery, hanged him on April 10.

However, the evidence does not support this view. The patriarch had always refused to join the philiki hetairia, the secret society to which most of the insurgents (including Metropolitan Germanus) belonged. Moreover, the righteousness of his character precludes the possibility that he could have been plotting against a government to which he had sworn allegiance and for which he prayed in the Divine Liturgy.

The true attitude of the Church to the revolution had been expressed in a work called Paternal Teaching which appeared in Constantinople in the year of the French revolution 1789, and which, according to Charles Frazee, "was signed by Anthimus of Jerusalem but was probably the work of the later Patriarch Gregory V. The document is a polemic against revolutionary ideas, calling on the Christians 'to note how brilliantly our Lord, infinite in mercy and all-wise, protects intact the holy and Orthodox Faith of the devout, and preserves all things'. It warns that the devil is constantly at work raising up evil plans; among them is the idea of liberty, which appears to be so good, but is only there to deceive the people. The document points out that [the struggle for] political freedom is contrary to the Scriptural command to obey authority, that it results in the impoverishment of the people, in murder and robbery. The sultan is the protector of Christian life in the Ottoman Empire; to oppose him is to oppose God."

Certainly, the Greeks had to pay a heavy price for the political freedom they gained. After the martyrdom of Patriarch Gregory (whose body was washed ashore in Odessa, and given a splendid State funeral by the Russian Church), the Turks ran amok in Constantinople, killing many Greeks and causing heavy damage to the churches; and there were further pogroms in Smyrna, Adrianople, Crete and especially Chios, which had been occupied by the revolutionaries and where in reprisal tens of thousands were killed or

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sold into slavery. When the new patriarch, Eugenios, again anathematized the
insurgents, twenty-eight bishops and almost a thousand priests in free Greece
in turn anathematized the patriarch, calling him a Judas and a wolf in sheep's
clothing, and ceasing to commemorate him in the Liturgy. As for the State of
Greece, it "looked to the west," writes Charles Frazee, "the west of the
American and French Revolutions, rather than to the old idea of an Orthodox
community as it had functioned under the Ottomans. The emotions of the
times did not let men see it; Orthodoxy and Greek nationality were still
identified, but the winds were blowing against the dominant position of the
Church in the life of the individual and the nation..."137

And so, forgetting the lessons of the council of Florence four hundred years
earlier, the new State and Church entered into negotiations with the Pope for
help against the Turks. Metropolitan Germanus was even empowered to
speak concerning the possibility of a reunion of the Churches. However, it
was the Pope who drew back at this point, pressurized by the other western
States which considered the sultan to be a legitimate monarch. The western
powers helped Greece again when, in 1827, an Allied fleet under a British
admiral destroyed the Turkish-Egyptian fleet at Navarino. But after the
assassination of the president of Greece, Count Kapodistrias, in 1832, the
country descended further into poverty and near civil war.

Then, in 1833, the western powers appointed a Catholic prince, Otto of
Bavaria, as king of Greece, with three regents until he came of age, the most
important being the Protestant George von Maurer. Maurer proceeded to
work out a constitution for the country, which proposed autocephaly for the
Church under a Synod of bishops, and the subordination of the Synod to the
State on the model of the Bavarian and Russian constitutions, to the extent
that "no decision of the Synod could be published or carried into execution
without the permission of the government having been obtained". In spite of
the protests of the patriarch of Constantinople and the tsar of Russia, and the
walk-out of the archbishops of Rethymnon and Adrianople, this constitution
was ratified by the signatures of thirty-six bishops on July 26, 1833.

The Greek Church therefore exchanged the admittedly uncanonical
position of the patriarchate of Constantinople under Turkish rule for the even
less canonical position of a Synod unauthorized by the patriarch and under
the control of a Catholic king and a Protestant constitution! In addition to this,
all monasteries with fewer than six monks were dissolved, and heavy taxes
imposed on the remaining monasteries. And very little money was given to a
Church which had lost six to seven thousand clergy in the war, and whose
remaining clergy had an abysmally low standard of education.

In spite of this, Divine grace worked to transform the situation from within,
as it had in Russia. Thus in 1839 the Synod showed independence in

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137 Frazee, op. cit., p. 48.
forbidding marriages between Orthodox and heterodox; and gradually, within the Synod and outside, support for reunion with the patriarchate grew stronger. Then, in 1843, a bloodless coup forced the king to dismiss his Bavarian aides and summon a National Assembly to draw up a constitution in which the indissoluble unity of the Greek Church with Constantinople was declared. Then, in 1848, an encyclical issued by Pope Pius IX calling on the Greeks to "return at last to the flock of Christ" was fiercely attacked by Patriarch Anthimus. Finally, on June 29, 1851, a Synodal Tomos was read in Constantinople, which re-established relations between the now officially autocephalous Church of Greece and the other eastern patriarchates, while at the same time demanding that the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece should be independent of all secular intervention - which demand, however, was only partially met when the union was legitimized by the Greek Assembly in the following year.\textsuperscript{138}

However, even while this major wound in the Church caused by the spirit of nationalism was being healed, other wounds inflicted by the same spirit were being opened, fed by the "Great Idea" of the restoration of the Byzantine Empire. Thus, on the one hand, the idea of the liberation of all the Greek lands from the Turkish yoke was pursued with suicidal mania.\textsuperscript{139} And on the other hand, the non-Greek lands were subjected to a policy of hellenization whereby native hierarchies were repressed, and Greek metropolitans celebrating the Liturgy only in Greek were imposed on non-Greek-speaking Arabic, Slavic and Romanian populations.

This process had already begun in the eighteenth century, when the increasing power of Greek Phanariote merchants (especially in Romania, where the voyevodes were Greek princes under Turkish sovereignty), and the privileged position of the Constantinopolitan patriarch in the Turkish millet system of government, spread Greek influence throughout the Balkans. Thus in September, 1766, the Serbian patriarchate of Pec was suppressed, and in January 1767 the Bulgarian Church was absorbed with the forced retirement of the archbishop of Ochrid. However, the ability of the Constantinopolitan patriarchate to impose its will in this way was limited, during the next century, by two factors: the gradual liberation of these non-Greek areas from Turkish rule, and the influence of the Russian Church.

These limitations can most clearly be seen in the controversial question of the Bulgarian schism. Already in 1860, before the liberation of their country by the Russian armies in 1877-78, the Bulgars had succeeded in obtaining the

\textsuperscript{138} Frazee, op. cit., chs. 7 and 8. On this period of Greek Church history, see the series of articles being published in Agios Agathangelos Esfigmenites (St. Agathangelos of Espigmenou) under the title "To atheon dogma tou oikoumenismou Prodromos tou Antikhristou" (in Greek).

\textsuperscript{139} As when Abbot Gabriel of the monastery of Arkadiou in Crete blew himself and nearly a thousand other Greeks up in 1866 rather than surrender to the Turks.
status of a millet, and therefore the right to have an autocephalous Church independent of the patriarch of Constantinople. However, not content with having an autocephalous Church for the territory of Bulgaria, in 1870 the Bulgars, with the active cooperation of the Turkish government, set up a bishop in Constantinople with the title of Exarch, who was to have jurisdiction over all the Bulgars in Turkey itself. This undoubtedly uncanonical act was resisted with fury by Patriarch Anthimus VI and his Synod, who in 1872 excommunicated the Bulgarian exarch and all those with him, branding them as schismatics and heretics, their heresy being the newly-defined one of "phyletism", that is, nationalism, the invasion of the national principle into the affairs of the Ecumenical Church. Hierarchs of the Antiochian and Alexandrian patriarchates were present at this council, but Patriarch Cyril of Jerusalem refused to sign its decision, and the Slavic and Romanian Churches remained in communion with the Bulgars.

Now such a condemnation of nationalism was certainly timely. For the Bulgarians' attempts to achieve ecclesiastical independence from Constantinople had given rise to another danger - the Vatican's attempt to introduce a uniate movement into Bulgaria. 140 However, for many the conciliar condemnation of nationalism carried little weight because it came from the patriarchate which they considered the first sinner in this respect. The conflict was therefore not resolved, although the mediation of the Russian Church, which remained in communion with both sides, somewhat softened it. The Churches of Constantinople and Bulgaria remained out of communion until 1945, when Constantinople accepted the Bulgarian patriarchate's autocephaly. 141

We see, then, that in the nineteenth century national feeling was threatening to divide and rule the Church in the Balkans, and that the "Ecumenical" Patriarchate was herself a threat to the ecumenical character of the Church. As the famous theologian Nicholas Glubokovsky wrote in 1914: "Greek nationalism historically merged with Orthodoxy and protected it by its own self-preservation, while it in its turn found a spiritual basis for its own distinctiveness. Orthodoxy and Hellenism were united in a close mutuality, which is why the first began to be qualified by the second. And Christian Hellenism realized and developed this union precisely in a nationalistic spirit. The religious aspect was a factor in national strivings and was subjected to it,

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140 This attempt was foiled by enlightened hierarchs such as Clement of Trnovo. See Bishop Photius of Triaditsa, "Metropolitan Clement of Trnovo", Orthodox Life, vol. 46, no. 6, November-December, 1996, pp. 21-23.
and it was not only the Phanariots [the inhabitants of Greek Constantinople] who made it serve pan-hellenic dreams. These dreams were entwined into the religious, Orthodox element and gave it its colouring, enduing the Byzantine patriarch with the status and rights of "ethnarch" for all the Christian peoples of the East, and revering him as the living and animated image of Christ (Matthew Blastaris, in his 14th century Syntagma, 8). As a result, the whole superiority of the spiritual-Christian element belonged to Hellenism, and could be apprehended by others only through Hellenism. In this respect the enlightened Grigorios Byzantios (or Byzantijsky, born in Constantinople, metropolitan of Chios from 1860, of Heraklion in 1888) categorically declared that 'the mission of Hellenism is divine and universal'. From this source come the age-old and unceasing claims of Hellenism to exclusive leadership in Orthodoxy, as its possessor and distributor. According to the words of the first reply (in May, 1576) to the Tubingen theologians of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Jeremiah II (+1595), who spoke in the capacity of 'successor of Christ' (introduction), the Greek 'holy Church of God is the mother of the Churches, and, by the grace of God, she holds the first place in knowledge. She boasts without reproach in the purity of her apostolic and patristic decrees, and, while being new, is old in Orthodoxy, and is placed at the head', which is why 'every Christian church must celebrate the Liturgy exactly as she [the Greco-Constantinopolitan Church] does' (chapter 13). Constantinople always displayed tendencies towards Church absolutism in Orthodoxy and was by no means well-disposed towards the development of autonomous national Churches, having difficulty in recognising them even in their hierarchical equality. Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Hellenism has done nothing to strengthen national Christian distinctiveness in the Eastern patriarchates and has defended its own governmental-hierarchical hegemony by all means, fighting against the national independence of Damascus (Antioch) and Jerusalem. At the end of the 16th century Constantinople by no means fully accepted the independence of the Russian Church and was not completely reconciled to Greek autocephaly (from the middle of the 19th century), while in relation to the Bulgarian Church they extended their nationalist intolerance to the extent of an ecclesiastical schism, declaring her (in 1872) in all her parts to be 'in schism'. It is a matter of great wonder that the champions of extreme nationalism in the ecclesiastical sphere should then (in 1872) have recognized national-ecclesiastical strivings to be impermissible in others and even labelled them 'phyletism', a new-fangled heresy."

By the end of the nineteenth century, it was becoming clear that the Ecumenical patriarchate, which had played such a glorious role during the Byzantine Empire, and had continued to lead the Orthodox under the Turkish yoke, was declining in spiritual authority. At the same time, the Greek State continued to pursue its "Great Idea" of the unification of all the Greek lands.

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342 Glubokovsky, N.N. “Pravoslavie po ego sushchestvu” (“Orthodoxy according to its essence”), in Tserkov’ i Vremia (The Church and Time), 1991, pp. 5-6 (in Russian).
However, the Cretan uprising and the Greco-Turkish war of 1897 ended in disaster for the Greeks, although under pressure from the West the Turks had to cede effective control of Crete. Only when, in 1912, the Greeks joined with the Bulgarians and the Serbs against the Turks did they gain significant success. But this brief unity among the Orthodox nations was shattered when war broke out between them in 1913 for the control of Macedonia. An attack on Greece and Serbia by Bulgaria was met with firm resistance by the other nations, including Turkey. And the war ended in defeat for Bulgaria - and, still more tragically, for the idea of Orthodox Catholicism.

**On the Eve of the Catastrophe**

On the eve of the First World War, therefore, Orthodox Christendom presented a paradoxical picture. On the one hand, the Muslim yoke, which had extended over almost all the Orthodox in 1453, had been all but broken - and it would be further weakened as a result of the coming War. The Russian Empire was at the height of her power and influence, and all the Orthodox peoples were rapidly increasing in numbers and self-determination. On the other hand, beneath this outer freedom and prosperity, one yoke was being exchanged for another - the yoke of westernism.

Westernism took two, apparently contradictory forms: socialism and nationalism. Thus in Russia, Orthodox were murdering Orthodox in the name of socialism and democracy - concepts having no root in the Tradition of the Orthodox Church. And in Greece and the Balkans, Orthodox were likewise murdering Orthodox in the name of nationalism and self-determination. Moreover, behind these fairly primitive idols of race and politics was looming a more subtle and still more dangerous western import - Ecumenism...

All this could not have come at a worse time; for the western nations were moving further and further away from Orthodoxy. Thus in 1854 the Pope proclaimed the new false dogma of the "immaculate conception" of the Virgin Mary from her parents Joachim and Anna, while in 1870 the first Vatican Council proclaimed the infallibility of the Pope, declaring: "The Pope is a divine man and human god... The Pope is the light of faith and reflection of truth." Meanwhile, German Protestantism was losing its faith in the Divinity of Christ and introducing new techniques of "higher textual criticism" which would become a favoured tool of all kinds of heresy in the twentieth century.

Thus the words of the Lord to the Church of Sardis apply also to the Church in 1914: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee..." (Revelation 3.2-3)

And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write:
... Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it;
For thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.
Revelation 3.7-8.

At present we are living, according to the prophetic witness of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, in the last period of the history of the Church on earth, the age of the Antichrist.

Now recent and contemporary history is the most difficult kind of history, lacking as it does the long hindsight that helps to pick out the critical events and tendencies in the past. However, our analysis of the nature of the Church would be incomplete and lacking an essential dimension if it did not attempt to evaluate that aspect of the Church's reality which the twentieth century has brought to the fore, especially since it is precisely this aspect which it is most essential for contemporary Christians to understand. Moreover, just as, in a classical tragedy, it is the last act of the drama which illuminates and puts into its fitting place every element that has preceded it, so it is the last phase in the history of the Church, as she stands on the edge of eternity waiting for the Coming of Her Divine Bridegroom, which reveals the true significance of all that has gone before.

And what is the truth about the Church which this terrible century has revealed? The truth that without faithfulness to Christ, without the Head that holds the whole Body together, nothing in the Church, neither her hierarchy, nor her kings, nor her elders, nor her temples, nor her theology, nor her art, nor her services, have any value, but can even serve as a snare and a temptation in the way of salvation. This truth has been revealed through the unparalleled destruction of the external Church that has taken place in this century, so that believers have indeed been stripped, at times, of all these things, but have managed to preserve faithfulness and mystical communion with Christ, and therefore the essence of the Church herself. Thus has the premonition of Hieromartyr Damascene, Bishop of Glukhov, been fulfilled: "Perhaps the time has come when the Lord does not wish that the Church should stand as an intermediary between Himself and the believers, but that everyone is called to stand directly before the Lord and himself answer for himself as it was with the forefathers!"

At the same time, the "Catacomb Church" or "True Orthodox Church", as the confessing Church of our time has come to be called, has been faithful to

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143 Quoted in E.L., Episkopy-Ispovedniki (Bishop Confessors), San Francisco, 1971, p. 92 (in Russian).
all the traditions of historical Orthodoxy, those traditions which the
Protestants tend to dismiss as inessential, "mere externals". She has witnessed
to the truth and holiness of all the preceding stages in the history of the
Church, including those of the Imperial and National Churches. In so doing
she has both fulfilled the apostolic command: "Keep the traditions" (II
Thessalonians 2.15) and witnessed that only the Church that keeps the
traditions is capable of escaping the nets of the Antichrist and riding high
above the universal flood of evil of the last times.

The Jewish-Russian Revolution

The twentieth century began in a strikingly significant manner: with the
martyrdom, in the capital of the greatest and least christianised of all the
pagan empires, China, of 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians. 144 This clearly
indicated that the twentieth century was to be not only an age of martyrdom,
but also of mission, in which the last parts of the world which had hitherto
been deprived of the preaching of the Gospel would be given the opportunity
to enter the Christian family of nations, in accordance with the Lord's word:
"This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached throughout the whole world,
as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come" (Matthew 24.14).
And if this ecumenical harvest has as yet only been foreshadowed - by the
worldwide mission of the Russian Church Abroad - and not yet fully reaped,
we must believe that it will soon take place as a consequence of the
unparalleled spilling of martyrlic blood in our time, in accordance with the
saying: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians".

The main source both of the martyrdom and of the mission of the Church
in this century has been Russia. The twentieth century has indeed been, both
for better and for worse, the Russian century; while the contributions of other
national Churches, such as the Greek, the Serbian and the Romanian, have
been far from insignificant, nevertheless the fortunes of Orthodoxy as a whole
have followed the fortunes of Russia. Thus the fall-out from the Russian
revolution has impacted on all the Orthodox Churches; and there can be little
doubt that the future of Orthodoxy depends on the ability of the Russian
people finally to break free from the paralysing influence of the revolution
and revolutionary ways of thinking, and return, in penitence and joy, to the
traditions of pre-revolutionary Russia.

But what was the Russian revolution? Much more than a political event. In
essence, it was the culmination of a historical process that began with the
falling away of the Roman papacy in the eleventh century and which
consisted, first, in an attack on the traditional concept of the Church, replacing
it with the essentially political concept of an organisation subject in all things
to an infallible imperator-pontifex maximus, and then in an attack on the
concept of Tradition as the source of truth not only in the Church, but in all

branches of knowledge. Thus Papism led to Scholasticism and Humanism, then Protestantism, Scientism, Deism, Materialism, Romanticism, Hegelianism, Darwinism, Marxism, Freudianism, Ecumenism and, most recently, New-Ageism. Underlying this revolution in all its stages was a single antichristian, antitheist, man-centred philosophy which can be summarised as follows:

Man is his own master. If there is a God, then he is a God in man's own image, perhaps even of man's own making; and man does not depend on Him to learn the truth, for his own unaided mind is capable of that. The wisdom of the ages is a myth; tradition is a brake on progress. As man is a product of evolution from the lower animals, so his social and religious and political institutions are in a process of constant upward evolution. Therefore there is no such thing as absolute truth, no sacred, unchanging, God-given authority. Everything is in flux, therefore everyone must change. The only unchanging, ineluctable fact is the fact of the revolution - the social revolution, the political revolution, the religious revolution, and above all the scientific revolution upon which all the other revolutions are based. Therefore the only unforgivable sin (if it is not simply a kind of illness, which can be treated by drug-therapy in a psychiatric hospital) is the sin of counter-revolution, the sin of being bigoted, intolerant of change, out-of-date. Everything is permitted - the craziest of beliefs, the most deviant of life-styles - so long as it does not stand in the way of the revolution, that revolution which is making man master of himself and of his environment. But for those who stand in the way of "progress", there will be no mercy; they will be cast onto the rubbish heap of history like the extinct species of Darwinian pre-history. For nothing must stand in the way of man's ascent to godlike status. Just as in physics the anthropic principle "seems to be on the verge of substituting man for God, by hinting that consciousness, unbound by time's arrow, causes creation"145, so in life based on the scientific revolution man must substitute himself for God, removing all those constraints associated with the Divine Creator...

After a couple of "trial runs" in the English and French revolutions, the revolution received its most complete incarnation in the Russian revolution of 1917, which at the same time overthrew the primary stronghold of traditional thinking in the world. Just as all the apostate trends of European history from the eleventh century onwards lead up to, and find their culmination in, the Russian revolution, so all world history since 1917 has evolved from it and under its shadow.

Now it is commonly thought that the anti-communist coups of 1989-91 brought this phase of history to a close. But this is a mistake. If some of the economic ideas of the revolution have been discredited, its fundamental concepts - the replacement of the Christian Church by the atheist State, God by the people, Tradition by science, Spirit by matter - remain as firmly

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145 Marek Kohn, "Joyfully back to Church?", *New Statesman and Society*, May 1, 1992, p. 32.
entrenched as ever. The Russian revolution was like a nuclear explosion, splitting the elements not only of religious, but also of all cultural and social life; it attempted to destroy the faith, the family, the nation and the individual.\textsuperscript{146} And just as the fall-out from a nuclear explosion is felt over a wide area and over a long period of time, so has it been with the fall-out from the Russian revolution. For as the hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad said in their epistle of October, 1991: "If the results of the Chernobyl catastrophe are still making themselves known in the bodies of the children of the surrounding region, the spiritual catastrophe of all Russia will show its effects for a far longer period of time. Just as Chernobyl's radiation will continue for many years to annihilate the lives of the children of our land with its sinister, invisible fire, it is clear that the consequences of the spiritual catastrophe will not quickly depart from us."\textsuperscript{147}

Now the Russian revolution has its roots, not only in the European revolutions of the past one thousand years, but also in the Jewish revolution that took place one thousand years before that. This perception is not a manifestation of "anti-semitism", as the West would have it. It is the product of the simple, but basic and incontrovertible fact that the Russian revolution in its initial phase was the work mainly of Jews inspired by a philosophy of history that is in essence Jewish; and that the later revolutionary leaders continued to be motivated by essentially Jewish ideas.

When Abraham left his earthly homeland in search of a promised land in which God alone would be King, world history began a series of violent oscillations between the two poles: Zion and Babylon, the God-Man and the man-god, theocracy and satanocracy.

Two thousand years later, the God-Man Himself visited His Kingdom, and a second series of violent oscillations took place. First, the kings of the East came to worship Him - Babylon bowed down before Zion. Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain, the temple itself was destroyed and the people of God were scattered over the face of the earth - Zion became spiritually Babylon, and in the Babylonian Talmud the Jews worked out the apostate creed of Zionism. But then the new Israel, "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6.16), the Church of Christ, was born in Zion, and the former children of wrath from the Babylon of the West, the pagan Greeks and Romans, came to bow down at her feet. And when Constantine became king of Old Rome, even the pivot and crown of the Babylonian system, the worship of the god-man-emperor, was transformed into its opposite; the God-fighting satanocracy of Old Rome became the God-loving theocracy of the New Rome.


\textsuperscript{147} \textit{Orthodox Life}, vol. 41, no. 6, November-December, 1991, p. 10.
Now, nearly two thousand years after Christ, we are in the middle of the third great series of violent oscillations in world history. For in 1917 the God-loving theocracy of the Third Rome, Russia, was transformed into the God-hating satanocracy of the new Babylon, the Soviet Union. And the apostate Jews took revenge on the Third Rome for the destruction of their State by the First, Old Rome.

That this was indeed the significance of the Russian revolution was demonstrated by an extraordinary "coincidence" that has been little noted. On November 9, 1917, the London *Times* reported two events in the same column of newsprint: above, the Bolshevik revolution in Petrograd, and immediately below it, the British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour's promise of a homeland to the Jews in Palestine.

To the unbeliever, the two events seem to have no relation to each other; the fact that they happened at exactly the same time, and under the leadership of men from the same race and class and locality - the Jewish intelligentsia of Western Russia and Poland - seems purely coincidental. To the believing eye, however, they are two aspects, in two geographical areas, of one and the same event - the event called in the Gospel "the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24.8), in the epistles of St. Paul - "the removal of him that restraineth" (II Thessalonians 2.7), and in the Apocalypse of St. John - "the releasing of the beast from the abyss" (Revelation 20.3). For 1917 marked the end of the age of the Orthodox Christian empires which began with St. Constantine the Great in 312 and the beginning of the age of the Antichrist.

Now if we look at the event from its Jewish aspect, it looks like the triumph of a purely national movement - Zionism. From the Russian aspect, on the other hand, it looks like a purely political-social coup motivated by a purely secular vision of world history - Marxism-Leninism. In truth, however, Zionism and Marxism-Leninism are two aspects of a single movement which is neither purely nationalist nor purely political in essence, but religious - or rather, demonic.

This is most clearly seen in the killing of the Tsar on July 4/17, 1918. On the wall of his death-chamber was found an inscription which fittingly sums up the deed from the point of view of the Jewish revolution. It was a quotation from the German Jewish poet Heine, slightly altered to bring out the word "tsar" and identifying the tsar with Belshazzar:

*Belsatzar ward in selbiger Nacht*  
*Von seinen knechten umgebracht.*  
*On the same night Belshazzar*  
*Was killed by his own slaves.*

148 See Nicholas Kozlov, *Krestnij Put'* (The Path of the Cross), Moscow, 1993; Enel, "Zhertva" ("The Sacrifice"), *Kolokol'* (The Bell), Moscow, 1990, N 5, pp. 17-37, and Michael Orlov,
But the truth was quite the opposite. Belshazzar hated the people of God, and his removal opened the way for the rebuilding of the Temple of God in Zion by Zerubbabel (which means "alien to Babylon, or confusion"). The killing of Tsar Nicholas, on the other hand, opened the way to the destruction of Orthodox Russia and its transformation into Babylon; and it was the Jews, taking the place of Belshazzar, who feasted in the looted chalices of God's Temple.

As Winston Churchill wrote: "It would almost seem as if the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of anti-Christ were designed to originate among the same people; and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the Divine and the diabolical... From the days of 'Spartacus' Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembourgh (Germany) and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Nesta Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognizable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the nineteenth century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America have gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire. There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews. It is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others."


Churchill, Illustrated Sunday Herald, February 8, 1920; quoted in Douglas Reed, The Controversy of Zion, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978, pp. 272-273. Reed proved this point with some statistics: "The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin) and 9 Jews. The next body in importance, the Central Committee of the Executive Commission (or secret police) comprised 42 Jews and 19 Russians, Letts, Georgians and others. The Council of People's Commissars consisted of 17 Jews and five others. The Moscow Che-ka (secret police) was formed of 23 Jews and 13 others. Among the names of 556 high officials of the Bolshevik state officially published in 1918-1919 were 458 Jews and 108 others. Among the central committees of small, supposedly 'Socialist' or other non-Communist parties... were 55 Jews and 6 others" (p. 274). Even Lenin was partly Jewish. His grandfather was called Israel before his baptism by an Orthodox priest, and his father's name was Moishe Blank. See Lina Averina, "Evrejskij koren'" ("The Jewish Root"), Nasha Strana (Our Country), January 22, 1997 (in Russian). Even the "pro-Semite" historian Richard Pipes admits: "Jews undeniably played in the Bolshevik Party and the early Soviet apparatus a role disproportionate to their share of the population. The number of Jews active in Communism in Russia and abroad was striking: in Hungary, for example, they furnished 95 percent of the leading figures in Bela Kun's dictatorship. They also were disproportionately represented among Communists in Germany
Of course, the Jewish Bolsheviks were not religious Jews, and were in fact as opposed to Talmudic Judaism as any other segment of the population. Moreover, as Pipes points out, "the results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly indicate that Bolshevik support came not from the region of Jewish concentration, the old Pale of Settlement, but from the armed forces and the cities of Great Russia, which had hardly any Jews". So blame for the Russian revolution must fall on Russians as well as Jews; and in fact hardly any of the constituent nations of the Russian empire can claim to have played no part in the catastrophe. Nevertheless, the extraordinary prominence of Jews in the revolution is a fact that must be related, at least in part, to the traditionally anti-Russian and anti-Christian attitude of Jewish culture. For, as Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, wrote, the atheist Bolshevik Jews and the theist Zionist Jews often came from the very same families; so that his mother was able to witness her sons' triumph in both Bolshevik Moscow and Zionist Jerusalem.

Moreover, so complete was the Jewish domination of Russia as a result of the revolution that it is really a misnomer to speak about the "Russian" revolution; it should more accurately be called the anti-Russian, or Russian-Jewish revolution. Indeed, the Russian revolution may be regarded as one branch of that general triumph of Jewish power which we observe in the twentieth century in both East and West, in both Russia and America and Israel. It is as if, by God's permission and for the chastisement of the sins of many nations, there arose in the Pale of Settlement an avenging horde that swept away the last major restraining power and ushered in the era of the Apocalypse.

The great saints of the nineteenth and early twentieth century foresaw all this, which is why they insisted on the necessity - the religious necessity - of faithfulness to the Tsar. Thus St. Seraphim of Sarov said that after Orthodoxy, faithfulness to the Tsar was "our first Russian duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety". Again, St. John of Kronstadt said: "The autocracy is the sole condition of the piety of Russia; if there is no autocracy, there will be

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150 However, that it was quite possible for a leading communist to be at the same time a rabbi is shown by the example of Moses Rozen, who became a member of the Romanian Communist Party after the Second World War, and continued to serve the Romanian Communists even after becoming Chief Rabbi of Romania in 1948, and continued to have a strong influence after the fall of Ceausescu in 1989. See Piatnitsa (Friday) (Israel), N 69, January 22, 1997, p. 8 (in Russian).
151 Pipes, op. cit., p. 113.
153 Quoted in Serge Fomin, op. cit., 1993, p. 100.
no Russia; power will be taken by the Jews, who greatly hate us..."¹⁵⁴ And Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, the apostle to the Altai, said: "You don't want your own Russian authority, so you will have a foreign power over you."¹⁵⁵

**The Moscow Council and the Civil War**

The Masonic democratic revolution of February, 1917, which was the essential pre-condition for the Bolshevik totalitarian revolution of October, met with a muted response from the Church. There was no general mourning for the passing of the Lord's Anointed, and much rejoicing at the advent of "freedom". Among the hierarchs, only Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow refused to recognize the new Provisional Government, for which he was uncanonically removed.¹⁵⁶

Soon, however, the hierarchs realized that the revolution could sweep them away, too. A series of diocesan assemblies demanded the removal of several canonical hierarchs (and some uncanonical ones, such as Rasputin's nominee, Pitirim of Petrograd). The winter session of the Holy Synod, presided over by the venerable metropolitan of Kiev and first bishop-martyr of the Soviet yoke, Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky), refused to sanction the results of the elections, because they recognized, correctly, that whatever the immediate good results, the spirit behind these changes was the spirit of the revolution. This led the new procurator of the Holy Synod appointed by the Provisional Government, Prince V.N. Lvov, to petition for the early disbanding of the Synod and the appointment of a new Synod for the summer session. Only two members of the old Synod - Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Vladimir and the Exarch of Georgia, Metropolitan Platon - agreed to serve in the new Synod; and ten years later, as we shall see, Sergius became the main architect of the Sovietization of the Russian Church, while Platon became the architect of the schism of the American Metropolia...¹⁵⁷

The new Synod presided over by Metropolitan Platon sanctioned all the changes that had taken place in the Church administration as a result of the revolution from below. And it helped organize the convening of a Church Council, the first in the history of the Russian Church since 1666, which assembled in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow on August 15/28. This Council, which was convened under the influence of a tide of

¹⁵⁴ Fomin, ibid.
¹⁵⁵ Fomin, ibid.
revolutionary feeling in the Church, was composed of 564 delegates, including 350 laymen. The liberals in it hoped that it would push through reforms which, as well as sealing the break with the pre-revolutionary past, would bring the Russian Church into the mainstream of twentieth-century ecclesiastical life, by which they meant, in effect, her protestantisation. But in this hope they were to be disappointed...

Now that the State's hold on the Church was broken, the traditionalists hoped that the Council would restore the patriarchate, which Peter the Great had uncanonically abolished. Paradoxically, the liberals opposed this, considering it a reflection of "episcopal monarchism". However, on November 21 / December 4 Metropolitan Tikhon (Bellavin) of Moscow was enthroned as Patriarch of Moscow and all the Russias.

This spiritual triumph seemed to give new strength to the Council, which proceeded to rejected the new Bolshevik government's decrees nationalising Church property and schools and secularising births, deaths, marriages and divorces. On January 19, 1918 the Patriarch anathematised Soviet power, commanding the faithful "not to commune with such outcasts of the human race in any matter whatsoever." In other words, the government were to be regarded, not only as apostates from Christ, but also as having no moral authority, no claim to obedience whatsoever - an attitude taken by the Church to no other government in the whole of Her history.

The Council endorsed the Patriarch's anathema, declaring: "The Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia in his epistle to the beloved in the Lord archpastors, pastors and all faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ has drawn the spiritual sword against the outcasts of the human race - the Bolsheviks, and anathematized them. The head of the Russian Orthodox Church adjures all her faithful children not to enter into any communion with these outcasts. For their satanic deeds they are cursed in this life and in the life to come. Orthodox! His Holiness the Patriarch has been given the right to bind and to loose according to the word of the Saviour... Do not destroy your souls, cease communion with the servants of Satan - the Bolsheviks. Parents, if your children are Bolsheviks, demand authoritatively that they renounce their errors, that they bring forth repentance for their eternal sin, and if they do not obey you, renounce them. Wives, if your husbands are Bolsheviks and stubbornly continue to serve Satan, leave your husbands, save yourselves and your children from the soul-destroying infection. An Orthodox Christian cannot have communion with the servants of the devil... Repent, and with burning prayer call for help from the Lord of Hosts and thrust away from yourselves 'the hand of strangers' - the age-old enemies of the Christian faith, who have declared themselves in self-appointed fashion 'the people's power'... If you do not obey the Church, you will not be her sons, but participants in the cruel and satanic deeds wrought by the open and secret enemies of
Christian truth... Dare! Do not delay! Do not destroy your soul and hand it over to the devil and his stooges."¹⁵⁸

Although, as we have said, it was unprecedented for a Local Church to anathematize a government, there have been occasions in the history of the Church when individual hierarchs have not only refused to obey or pray for a political leader, but have actually prayed against him. Thus in the fourth century St. Basil the Great prayed for the defeat of Julian the Apostate, and it was through his prayers that the apostate was killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia. This and other examples show that, while the principle of authority as such is from God (Romans 13.1), individual authorities or rulers are often not from God, but are only allowed by Him, in which case the Church must offer resistance to them out of loyalty to God Himself.¹⁵⁹

On January 23, the Bolsheviks issued their "Decree on the Freedom of Conscience". This was the Bolsheviks' fiercest attack yet on the integrity of the Church; for it forbade religious bodies from owning property, from levying dues, from organizing into hierarchical organizations, and from teaching religion to persons under 18 years of age. Thus, far from being a blow struck for freedom of conscience, it was, as the Council put it, a decree on freedom from conscience, and an excuse for large-scale pillaging of churches and murders, often in the most bestial manner.¹⁶⁰ The Council forbade the faithful to help in the publication or realisation of this decree in any way whatsoever, on pain of excommunication from the Orthodox Church. Thus the decrees of the Bolshevik State followed by the counter-decrees of the Orthodox Church established a state of war between the two institutions.

The Bolsheviks' destruction of the Church continued throughout the Civil War period. Thus by 1921, according to Bolshakov, 637 out of 1,026 monasteries had been liquidated. And in 1918-19, according to Ermhardt, 28 bishops and 1,414 priests were killed; while by the end of 1922, according to Shumilin, 2233 clergy of all ranks and two million laymen had been executed.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Professor Ivan Andreyev, "The Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union", Orthodox Life, March-April, 1951. For details of the destruction wrought against the Church in these years, see Vladimir Rusak, Pir Satany (The Feast of Satan), London, Canada: Zarya, 1991 (in Russian).
¹⁶¹ Gustavson, op. cit., p. 34.
The Patriarch continued his condemnation of the regime for a time. Thus in March, 1918 he condemned the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which handed over vast areas of Russian territory to the Germans, and in July he condemned the killing of the Tsar and his family. In October, 1919, in an epistle to the Council of People's Commissars, he more or less openly declared that Soviet power was not a legitimate authority in the Apostle Paul's use of the word (Romans 13.1).

The murder of the Tsar brought home to all right-believing Christians what a great treasure the nation and the world had lost when it overthrew the last Orthodox Autocrat in the name of "democracy". Now, as Trotsky said, there was no going back: ahead lay only a savage war with the collective Antichrist, which had been brought to power by the removal of "him that restraineth". The main achievements of the Tsar-Martyr consisted in his resisting the resurgent power of the Jews and Papists, and in his overcoming, in his own person, of the caesaropapist legacy of the 18th century. Of course, his 19th century predecessors paved the way for the restoration of true symphony in Church-State relations. However, it was Tsar Nicholas II who showed the most exceptional devotion to the Church, building churches, glorifying saints and, most significantly, approving the restoration of the patriarchate.

The fact that the patriarchate was not restored during his reign, but some months later, was not his fault, but the fault of those who, having inwardly broken their ties with the Church, were trying to undermine the foundations of the State as well. Some claimed that it was the overbearing power of the monarchy which inhibited the restoration of the patriarchate, which therefore became possible only after the monarchy's fall. But this was not in fact the case: rather, it was the weakness of the Church, especially in its more educated strata, that undermined the strength of the monarchy, which in turn necessitated the restoration of the patriarchate if Christian society was to have a clear focus of unity and leadership. For, as one peasant delegate to the Local Council of 1917-18 put it: "We have a Tsar no more; no father whom we love. It is impossible to love a synod; and therefore we, the peasants, want a Patriarch." Indeed, the restoration of the patriarchate may be seen as the first-fruits of the shedding of the Tsar-Martyr's blood.

For a time the Patriarch carried the colossal burden of representing and defending the Christian people in the absence of a tsar. This inevitably involved certain quasi-political acts, such as the anathematization of Soviet power and the condemnation of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. However, the accusation of "politicking" that was hurled against the Patriarch was misplaced, not only because these acts were necessary in the interests of the Church, and were therefore within the Patriarch's competence, but also because, in the absence of a tsar, someone had to bear the cross of witnessing to the truth and condemning the revolution publicly and on the world stage.
Nevertheless, the strain of this unnatural situation began to tell, and the witness of the Church against the revolution began to grow muted. Again, this was not so much the fault of the Patriarch as of the whole of Christian society; for just as the Tsar could not govern if nobody obeyed him, the Patriarch could not witness effectively if civil society pursued other ideals. Thus he felt unable to give his unequivocal blessing to the leaders of the White armies, probably because "the spirit was not right," as Elder Aristocleus of Moscow said\textsuperscript{162} - many of them were aiming, not at the restoration of the Romanov dynasty, but at the reconvening of the Constituent Assembly or the restoration of the landowners' lands.\textsuperscript{163}

Thus by the end of the Civil War the spirit of Orthodox Monarchism, without which the restoration of Holy Russia was inconceivable, had been driven largely underground and overseas. From this time open opposition of the Church in Russia to the Bolshevik regime ceased - with disastrous consequences, as we shall see. Outright opposition in the spirit of the 1918 Council continued only in Underground or "Catacomb" Orthodoxy, which began to be formed from the early 1920s, and in the Russian Church in Exile, which in its Council in Karlovtsy, Serbia in 1921 called for an armed crusade against the Bolsheviks and the restoration of the Romanov dynasty.\textsuperscript{164} The children of the New Israel, having betrayed the Lord's Anointed and compromised with the Antichrist, were now condemned to wander for much more than forty years in the desert of Sovietism. For, as the Lord said through the Prophet: "They have made themselves kings, but not by Me... Therefore shall they be delivered up to the nations.. And they shall cease for a little to anoint a king and princes..." (Hosea 8.4,10).

\textit{The Living Church}

In 1921 a terrible famine broke out in the Volga region. The Bolsheviks seized on this to demand that the Church hand over her valuables to a State

\textsuperscript{162} Quoted in Sergius Fomin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 229.

\textsuperscript{163} Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev wrote: "Unfortunately, the most noble and pious leader of this [the White] army listened to those unfitting counsellors who were foreign to Russia and sat in his Special council and destroyed the undertaking. The Russian people, the real people, the believing and struggling people, did not need the bare formula: 'a united and undisputed Russia'. They needed neither 'Christian Russia', nor 'Faithless Russia', nor 'Tsarist Russia', nor 'the Landowners' Russia' (by which they will always understand a republic). They needed the combination of the three dear words - 'for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland'. Most of all, they needed the first word, since faith rules the whole of the state's life; the second word was necessary since the tsar guards and protects the first; and the third was needed since the people is the bearer of the first words" ("Tserkovnost' ili politika?" ("Churchness or Politics?")}, \textit{Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Rus')}, N 1558, May 1/14, 1996, p. 4 (in Russian)).

commission so that they could be sold and the proceeds given to the starving. The Church was, of course, by no means unwilling to help the starving and had already sent out appeals both within and outside the country: but she preferred that her own servants should distribute the aid. But the Bolsheviks insisted, and early in 1922 the Patriarch compromised: he agreed that the proceeds from the sale of church valuables should be given to the Bolsheviks, but on condition that those valuables did not include the most sacred vessels used in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Most commentators have interpreted this as a wise compromise on the part of the Patriarch. However, this was not the opinion of no less an authority than the holy Elder Nectarius of Optina, who said: "You see now, the patriarch gave the order to give up all valuables from the churches, but they belonged to the Church!"165

It is easy to see why the elder was right and the patriarch wrong in this matter. First, the money gained from the sale of the valuables did not go to feed the poor, but to promote the socialist revolution worldwide. Secondly, the patriarch's decision placed the parish priests in the very difficult situation of having to choose between disobedience to the patriarch and cooperating in what many of them must have considered to be a near-sacrilegious stripping of the churches for the benefit of the collective Antichrist. And thirdly, the patriarch's decision did not in any case prevent bloodshed, as he had hoped. Thus according to one estimate, 2,691 married priests, 1,962 monks, 3,447 nuns and an unknown number of laymen were killed on the pretext of resistance to the seizure of church valuables in the country as a whole.166 In fact, the patriarch's decision fell between two stools. It neither saved the lives of the starving, on the one hand, nor protected the churches from attack, on the other.

Soon after making this decision, the patriarch made another disastrous concession: on April 22 / May 5, 1922, at the insistence of the Bolsheviks, he convened a meeting of the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council, at which he declared (decree no. 342) that "neither the epistle, nor the address of the Karlovtsy Synod [to the Genoa conference] express the voice of the Russian Church". And he ordered the dissolution of the Church in Exile's Higher Church Administration and the transfer of all power over the Russian refugees in Europe to Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris. Although all the emigre hierarchs (including Metropolitan Eulogius) agreed that the decree was issued under duress and was therefore not binding, it was later used by pro-Soviet hierarchs to cause serious divisions in the Russian Church in Exile.

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166 Gregory Ravich, “Ograblennij Khristos, ili brillianty dlya diktatury proletariata” (Christ Fleeced, or Diamonds for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat”), Chas-Pik (Rush Hour), no. 18, p. 26 (in Russian). According to another estimate, the anti-Church campaign cost the lives of 28 bishops and 1,215 priests - over 8000 people altogether (Pipes, op. cit., p. 355).
Nor did the Bolsheviks show gratitude to the patriarch; for only a few days later, he was placed under house arrest. This gave the chance to a group of modernizing, pro-Soviet priests to seize control of the administrative machinery of the Church, which gave the renovationist heretics the chance to seize control of the administrative machinery of the Church. The renovationists, or "Living Church", as the heretics were called, received the full support of the Bolsheviks, and soon many leaders of the Patriarchal Church were languishing in prison or exile.

At one time the "Living Church" controlled about two-thirds of the churches in Russia, and large numbers of bishops joined the movement either voluntarily or under coercion. However, the majority of the people never supported the movement, mainly because of its modernist innovations, such as married bishops and the new calendar. And when the Patriarch was released from prison in June, 1923 in exchange for renouncing all opposition to the Soviet regime, renovationism went into sharp decline.

However, while the Church triumphed over this first attempt by the Bolsheviks to destroy her from within, the cost was high - specifically, the abandonment of the Church's uncompromising position in relation to the Antichrist and the introduction of an element of ambiguity and politicking in her relationship with the authorities. The people remained loyal to the Patriarch because they recognized that he had made compromises, not in order to save his own skin, but under the most intense moral pressure and in order to save the lives of his flock. But the bitter fact is that, from about the beginning of 1922, the Church inside Russia began to negotiate with Soviet power, attempting to win concessions from the anathematized authorities on the basis of precisely that decree on freedom of conscience whose application the Council of 1917-18 had declared to be irreconcilable with membership of the Orthodox Church!

That is why the Church began to falter in her struggle. In fact, the concessions won by the Church were negligible, while the concessions she made to the Bolsheviks were major and very damaging. They delayed but did not prevent the Church's eventual descent into the catacombs, which is the only place that the Church can survive in the time of the Antichrist. And they made that descent more difficult and more costly than it would otherwise have been. However, by God's Providence this led to the greatest and most glorious outpouring of sanctity, in the form of the holy new martyrs of Russia, in the whole history of the Church...

The New Calendar Schism

The fall of the Russian Empire soon began to have adverse effects on the Church outside Russia. In the Ukraine, while many bishops remained loyal to the Patriarch, nationalist elements created a "Ukrainian Autocephalous
Church" which united with the Russian renovationists and was eventually closed down by Stalin. In Georgia, too, the Church declared herself independent; but in 1921 the Bolsheviks invaded and overthrew the Menshevik government, and in 1924 they crushed a general resurrection in which the Church took part.

In Constantinople, meanwhile, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, gripped by a nationalist fever that wished to profit from the Turks' defeat in the Great War and realize the "great idea" of the restoration of the Byzantine Empire, simultaneously broke relations with the Sublime Porte and made overtures for union with the western heretics. Thus in 1920, the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Dorotheus, and his Synod issued an encyclical which explicitly recognized the Catholics and Protestants as "co-heirs of God in Christ" with the Orthodox, and called for a number of measures to facilitate union with the heretics, notably the introduction of the new, Gregorian calendar which was used by the West. This encyclical marks the introduction into the life of the Orthodox Church of the heresy of ecumenism, which may defined as the doctrine that there is no essential difference between the Orthodox and the heretics, that the Church embraces both truth and heresy, and that there is, in effect, no such thing as heresy.

Metropolitan Dorotheus died on a trip to England, and was succeeded by the notorious Freemason Meletius Metaxakis, who had already been defrocked by the Church of Greece. Taking advantage of the turmoil in Russia, he proceeded to carve out for himself large territories that belonged to the Russian and Serbian Churches in Western Europe, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Then he entered into communion with the heretical "Living Church" in Russia.

Meanwhile, the Greek invasion of Turkey had collapsed disastrously, and at the Lausanne conference (1922-23) a massive exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey was decided on, which resulted in the virtual elimination of Orthodoxy from the ancient province of Asia Minor. The Turkish representative at the conference secured a commitment from the Greek leader Venizelos that he would persuade Meletius, who had "scandalously mixed his spiritual mission with anti-Turkish politics", to resign from the patriarchate in exchange for the maintenance of the patriarchate as an institution in Constantinople. Meletius agreed to resign, but suggested the postponement of his resignation until the conclusion of the peace negotiations, which took place in June, 1923.

In February Meletius wrote to the Church of Greece urging her to adopt the new calendar in time for the "Pan-Orthodox Council" that he was planning for June. Hardly coincidentally, a few weeks later an ecclesiastical coup took place and Chrysostom Papadopoulos was elected Archbishop of Athens by three out of a specially chosen Synod of only five hierarchs. A few years before Chrysostom had declared that any Church which adopted the new calendar would become schismatic; but he now supported his friend Meletius and in his enthronement speech said that for collaboration with the heterodox "it is not necessary to have common ground or dogmatic union, for the union of Christian love is sufficient".170

Meletius' "Pan-Orthodox Council" proposed the introduction of the new calendar, twice-married clergy and other innovations that were suspiciously similar to those of the Russian "Living Church". Its decrees were rejected by the Churches of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, and by the Russian Church Abroad, and in July Meletius himself was forced to withdraw to Mount Athos. In March, 1924, however, Chrysostom Papadopoulos introduced the new calendar into the Greek Church, and his example was quickly followed by Patriarchs Gregory VII of Constantinople and Myron of Romania.

The new calendar and paschalion was first introduced into the Christian world by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. It was supposedly more correct astronomically, but from a theological point of view it was a disaster, destroying the beautiful harmony between the solar and lunar cycles which the old or Julian calendar established, and contravening the decrees of the First Ecumenical Council convened by St. Constantine the Great in 325. The Eastern Patriarchs had anathematised it in three Pan-Orthodox Councils in 1583, 1587 and 1593, and at the beginning of the twentieth century, at the invitation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, each of the Autocephalous Churches had been invited to examine it but had rejected it.

The effect of its introduction was to create a schism between those Churches following the Old Calendar (the Slavic Churches, Jerusalem, Mount Sinai and Mount Athos) and those which came to accept the new (Constantinople, Antioch, Greece, Romania, Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia and (from 1968) Bulgaria). Eventually, as the Autocephalous Old Calendar Churches themselves came under the control of anti-Orthodox forces, this schism was healed; although the fact that the two groups of Churches celebrate the main feasts (except the Paschal cycle) at different times continues to create tensions.

170 Bishop Photius of Triaditsa, "The 70th Anniversary of the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople", Orthodox Life, no. 1, January-February, 1994, p. 40.
However, in Greece and Romania from 1924 substantial minorities of priests and laymen separated from the official churches in their countries, forming the so-called "Old Calendar" or "True Orthodox" Churches. The Old Calendarists were immediately persecuted by the official churches, but their numbers multiplied, aided by manifest signs from heaven, such as the appearance of a Cross of light over an Old Calendar monastery near Athens on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (Old Calendar), 1925. Moreover, from 1935 (in Greece) and 1955 (in Romania) the Old Calendarists acquired hierarchies which gave them a solid canonical foundation.\footnote{171 On the Old Calendarist movements, see Fr. Basile Sakkas, \textit{The Calendar Question}, Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1973; Metropolitan Calliopius of Pentapolis, \textit{Ta Patria}, Piraeus, published in several volumes in the 1980s (in Greek); The Zealot Monks of Mount Athos, \textit{Syntomos Istoriki Perigraphi tis Ekklesias ton Gnosis Orthodox Khristianon Ellados (A Short History of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece)}, Mount Athos, 1973 (in Greek); George Lardas, \textit{The Old Calendar Movement in the Greek Church: An Historical Survey}, B.Th. thesis, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1983; Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos, "The True Orthodox Christians of Romania", \textit{The Orthodox Word}, vol. 18, no. 1 (102), January-February, 1982; Hieromonk Theodoreitos (Mauros), \textit{Palaion kai Neon: i Orthodoxia kai Airesis? (Old and New and Orthodoxy and Heresy)}, Athens, 1991 (in Greek); Vladimir Moss, \textit{The Sacred Struggle of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece}, 1919-1992, Old Woking, 1992.}

\textit{The Sovietization of the Moscow Patriarchate}

On March 25, 1925 Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow died (he was probably poisoned by Soviet agents). Before he died, and in accordance with a decision taken at the 1917-18 Council, he had drawn up a list of three patriarchal locum tenentes, the senior of whom that was in freedom at the time of the Patriarch's death was to take over the administration of the Russian Church until a canonical Council could be convened. These were: Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, Metropolitan Agathangelus of Yaroslavl and Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa. Since, at the time of the Patriarch's death, both Metropolitan Cyril and Metropolitan Agathangelus were in exile, Metropolitan Peter was duly confirmed as the leader of the Russian Church.

Metropolitan Peter resisted the attempts of the Bolsheviks to make him bring the Church under their power, and in December, 1925 he was imprisoned and sent into exile in Siberia. However, he had appointed deputies, and the senior of them, Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, now took over the administration, fighting off the challenge of a group of bishops called the Gregorians who seem to have had the backing of the Bolsheviks. In April, 1926 the second locum tenens, Metropolitan Agathangelus, returned from exile and tried to take over from Metropolitan Sergius, who, not being a locum tenens himself, should have handed over the reins of power. But Sergius resisted, and Agathangelus, for the sake of peace, yielded to him.
Soon Sergius himself was put in prison, and in the first months of 1927 the Church was ruled by Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich. However, when the Bolsheviks came to remove him, too, and asked Seraphim to appoint a deputy, he refused, saying:

"I lay the Church in the hands of God, our Lord. I am doing this, so that the whole world may know what freedom Orthodox Christianity is enjoying in our free State."\(^{172}\)

This was a decisive moment, for the central hierarch of the Church was effectively declaring the Church’s decentralisation, since the conditions for an effective centralised administration no longer existed.

And not before time. For with the imprisonment of the last of the three possible locum tenentes there was really no canonical basis for establishing a central administration for the Church before the convocation of a Local Council, which was prevented by the communists. The system of deputies of the deputy of the locum tenens had no basis in Canon Law or precedent in the history of the Church. And if it was really the case that the Church could not exist without a first hierarch and central administration, then the awful possibility existed that with the fall of the first hierarch the whole Church would fall, too...\(^{173}\)

The communists also wanted a centralized administration; so Tuchkov now turned to Metropolitan Agathangelus with the proposal that he lead the Church. He refused. Then he turned to Metropolitan Cyril with the same proposal. He, too, refused. The conversation between Tuchkov and Metropolitan Cyril is reported to have gone something like this:-

"If we have to remove some hierarch, will you help us in this?"

"Yes, if the hierarch appears to be guilty of some ecclesiastical transgression... In the contrary case, I shall tell him directly, 'The authorities are demanding this of me, but I have nothing against you.'"

"No!" replied Tuchkov. "You must try to find an appropriate reason and remove him as if on your own initiative."

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\(^{172}\) See N.A., "Nye bo vragom Tvoim tajnu povyem" ("I will not give Thy secret to Thine enemies"), Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsej (Messenger of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad), 1992, no. 1, p. 18 (in Russian).

\(^{173}\) This was a point made in the sixth century by St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome, in his correspondence with the Patriarch of Antioch concerning the title of "ecumenical", that is, "universal" bishop. Cf. Abbe Guettée, The Papacy, New York: Minos, 1866, p. 223.
To this the hierarch replied: "Eugene Nikolaievich! You are not the cannon, and I am not the shot, with which you want to blow up our Church from within!"\(^{174}\)

The battle between the Church and the State had now reached a complete impasse. On the one hand, 117 bishops were in prison or in exile, and the administration of the Church was in ruins. On the other hand, the spiritual authority of the Church had never been higher, church attendance was up, and church activities of all kinds were on the increase.

In the words of E. Lopeshanskaya: "The Church was becoming a state within the state... The prestige and authority of the imprisoned and persecuted clergy was immeasurably higher than that of the clergy under the tsars."\(^{175}\) Only betrayal on the part of the first hierarch could threaten the Church - and that only if the rest of the Church continued to recognize his authority...

But betrayal is exactly what befell the Church now. On March 7/20 Metropolitan Sergius was released from prison, took over from Archbishop Seraphim, and by his actions clearly demonstrated that he was now ready to obey the Bolsheviks in all things. First he appointed a Synod composed of some of the most distrusted bishops in Russia. Then, on July 16/29 he issued his famous "declaration", which declared that the Soviet State's joys were the Church's joys and the State's sorrows - the Church's sorrows. The document as a whole breathed a spirit of complete submission to the militant atheist authorities, and was received in stunned silence by the believers. Meanwhile, a great earthquake took place in Jerusalem, as if to signify that a great spiritual earthquake was not shaking the foundations of the Church of Christ on earth.

At about the same time, Sergius asked the whole Synod of the Russian Church Abroad to sign an act of loyalty to the Soviet Union, threatening them with exclusion from the Patriarchate. With the exception of Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris, who soon went into schism and joined the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Synodal bishops refused, and were supported in their refusal by an epistle of the bishops imprisoned on Solovki, who wrote: "The epistle threatens those church-servers who have emigrated with exclusion from the Moscow Patriarchate on the grounds of their political activity, that is, it lays an ecclesiastical punishment upon them for political statements, which contradicts the resolution of the All-Russian Council of 1917-18 of August 3/16, 1918, which made clear the canonical impermissibility of such

\(^{175}\) E.L., *op. cit.*, p. 70.
punishments, and rehabilitated all those people who were deprived of their orders for political crimes in the past."

Ominously similar events were taking place in Georgia at this time. "Between June 21 and 27, 1927," writes Fr. Elie Melia, "a Council elected as Catholicos Christopher Tsitskichvili. On August 6 he wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch Basil III who replied addressing him as Catholicos. The new Catholicos entirely changed the attitude of the ecclesiastical hierarchy towards the Soviet power, officially declared militant atheist, in favour of submission and collaboration with the Government."176

Towards the end of 1927 opposition to, and separation from, Metropolitan Sergius began to grow within the Russian Church. In Leningrad, opposition centred round Metropolitan Joseph and his vicar, Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov; and the "Josephites", as they were called, linked up with other centres of opposition in Moscow, Tver and Voronezh. In the Urals nearly 90% of parishes rejected Sergius' declaration, and "non-commemorators" sprang up in many parts of the vast country, including about 30% of the bishops, mainly the older and more respected ones. Sergius responded harshly, with bans and defrockings; which gave the OGPU just the excuse they needed to round up the opposition on the charge of rebellion both against Soviet power and against the "canonical" head of the Russian Church. Since Sergius branded those who opposed him as "political criminals", he in effect acted as Judas to the Bolsheviks' Sanhedrin, sending hundreds of thousands of Christians to torture and death.

Among the many who raised their voices in protest was Bishop, later Hieromartyr Victor of Glazov, the first hierarch to break communion with Sergius. He had especially noted the phrase in the declaration: "Only ivory-tower dreamers can think that a society as tremendous as our Orthodox Church, with its whole organization, can exist throughout the country hidden from the authorities of the State." He saw in this the same over-valuation of the Church's external organization at the expense of her inner faithfulness to Christ, as he had detected in a book of Sergius' in 1911, when he said that the time would come when he would shake the Church...177

And to Sergius himself he wrote: "The enemy has lured and seduced you a second time with the idea of an organisation of the Church. But if this organisation is bought for the price of the Church of Christ Herself no longer remaining the house of Grace-giving salvation for men, and he who received the organisation ceases to be what he was - for it is written, 'Let his habitation be made desolate, and his bishopric let another take' (Acts 1.20) - then it were better for us never to have any kind of organisation. What is the benefit if we, having become by God's Grace temples of the Holy Spirit, become ourselves

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177 Melia, op. cit., p. 113.
suddenly worthless, while at the same time receiving an organisation for ourselves? No. Let the whole visible material world perish; let there be more important in our eyes the certain perdition of the soul to which he who presents such pretexts for sin will be subjected." And he concluded that Sergius' pact with the atheists was "not less than any heresy or schism, but is rather incomparably greater, for it plunges a man immediately into the abyss of destruction, according to the unlying word: 'Whosoever shall deny Me before men...' (Matthew 10.33)." ¹⁷⁸

The Church now entered a period unprecedented in her history since the time of Abraham, when most individual believers had to live their faith without reliance on, or obedience to, any of the usual pillars of the Church, whether kings or bishops or elders. As the great collective structures of Church life collapsed in the face of the collective Antichrist, believers had to defend their spiritual freedom, their individualism, to the last drop of blood - but never in an individualist spirit, but rather in mystical communion with the whole Church in heaven and on earth. "It is one or the other," wrote Martyr-Bishop Damascene of Glukhov: "either the Church is truly the immaculate and pure Bride of Christ, the Kingdom of truth, in which case the Truth is the air without which we cannot breathe, or, like the whole world which lies in evil, it lives in lies and by lies, in which case everything is a lie, every word is a lie, every prayer, every sacrament...

And again he wrote: "Let us bring our own little bricks to the unshakable foundation of the Christian Righteousness, Divine Truth, eternal salvation. Without many words, without loud phrases, let us first create a little cell of a few people striving for Christ and ready to begin the realisation of the evangelical ideal in their lives. Unite for grace-filled nourishment around one or other of the worthy pastors and let each person individually and all together prepare themselves for ever-greater service to Christ.. The union even of a few people in such a life already manifests a little Church - the Body of Christ, in which there dwells the Spirit and Love of Christ. ¹⁷⁹

From exile, both Metropolitan Peter, the real canonical leader of the Church, and Metropolitan Cyril, the first locum tenens, tried to bring Sergius to his senses. But the love of power - or the fear of prison - hardened his heart, and the OGPU saw to it that the exhortations of the confessing hierarchs did not reach the broad masses of the people. So these hierarchs were shot, while Sergius built up his position, taking to himself Metropolitan Peter's titles even before his death.

It is sometimes argued that Sergius' compromise was necessary in order to save the Church from extinction. However, quite apart from the deaths of

¹⁷⁹ Andreev, *op. cit.*
hundreds of thousands of "Catacomb" or "True Orthodox" Christians, as the opposition came to be called, it did not save even the "Sergianists", as the members of the Sovietised Moscow Patriarchate came to be called. Thus in the single year of 1937, according to figures recently released by the Russian government, 136,900 clergy were arrested, of whom 85,000 were killed.\textsuperscript{180}

Far from causing the government to look with mercy on the Church, Sergius' betrayal encouraged it to lose all restraint. By the end of the 1930s Stalin's terror had destroyed most of the churches and left only four Orthodox bishops at liberty in the whole of the country. Of the Sergianists it could be said, in the words of the Psalmist, that they fell into the pit which they had dug for their fellow Christians...

As for the True Orthodox Christians - those who were not suffering martyrdom in the camps, - they disappeared from the surface of Soviet life, not partaking in the public worship of the Soviet idols. Priests wandered from one catacomb community to another, performing secret services in the flats of believers, usually at night. Catacomb Church Councils anathematised the 'Soviet church', as Sergius' church organisation was called, in Petrograd in 1928 and in Siberia in 1937. Secret ordinations preserved apostolic succession right up to the end of the Soviet period; but as time passed, and informers caused the liquidation of more and more catacomb communities, the Church grew weaker. Outside Russia, only the Russian Church Abroad kept faith, and a minimal contact, with the catacombs; but this Church, too, was rocked by schisms and weakened by a gradual loss of the eschatological fervour that had united the whole of the confessing Russian Church in the 1920s and 30s.\textsuperscript{181}

\textit{The Rise of Ecumenism and the Fall of Communism}

In 1941 the Nazis invaded Russia. This led to a brief resurrection of Church life in the territories occupied by the Germans, and forced Stalin to make a partial concession to the official church. In exchange for obtaining the church's propaganda support in the struggle with the Germans, the communists allowed the election of a patriarch and the opening of a limited number of churches and seminaries and one church journal.

However, this concession was less real than it seemed. In actual fact, what remained of official Orthodoxy in the Soviet Union came even more securely under the control of the atheists. The ranks of the episcopate were swelled by "penitent" renovationists hand-picked by the GPU, and every aspect of church life was controlled by what came to be called the Council for Religious Affairs.

\textsuperscript{180} E.L., \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 83-84.
\textsuperscript{181} Source\textit{ Orthodoxe de Presse}, 204, January, 1996, p. 15 (in French). According to the same source, between 1917 and 1980, 200,000 clergy were executed and 500,000 others were imprisoned or sent to the camps.
After the war, these "KGB agents in cassocks" were sent abroad to convince gullible western Christians to perform various tasks on behalf of world communism. Thus Patriarch Alexis I called on the Greek royalists to surrender to the Greek communists, while Metropolitan Nicholas of Krutitsa and other leading bishops brought large parts of the Russian emigration, and the Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe, within the orbit of the Soviet church. Thus the Serbian patriarchate, which had suffered the loss of 700,000 Christians at the hands of the Croat Catholics in 1941, now suffered a second martyrdom at the hands of Tito's communists.\(^\text{182}\)

The Greek Old Calendarists, who had grown in numbers during the 1930s in spite of intermittent persecution, were weakened by serious divisions over whether the new calendarist State church still possessed the grace of sacraments, and in 1937 the smaller and stricter group, known as the "Matthewites" after their leader, the great ascetic Bishop Matthew (+1950), separated to form their own Church. After another period of persecution in 1951, the majority found themselves with only one bishop, Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina; and after his death in 1955 this group was forced to turn to the Russian Church Abroad to renew their episcopate. In Romania, in spite of fierce persecutions which destroyed all their churches twice and claimed many martyrs, the Old Calendarist Church flourished under the inspired leadership of Archimandrite, later Metropolitan Glykerie (+1985).

Meanwhile, the greatest heresy of modern times, and perhaps of all times, Ecumenism, was making fresh inroads into the Orthodox. The beginnings of official Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement can be traced to the Ecumenical Patriarchate's encyclical of 1920. However, until well after the Second World War the Slavic Orthodox were hardly affected by the heresy; and at the founding assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948, which was attended by most of the major Protestant and Anglican denominations, the only Orthodox participant was the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Here it was proclaimed that, as Gustav Aulen put it, 'The Church is as it were a synthesis of all churches' - in other words, the Church is not one particular historical confession, such as the Orthodox or the Catholic Church, but a synthesis of all Christian confessions and denominations. This declaration constituted a direct attack on the dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church - but it was accepted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

However, in Moscow in the same year, at a council attended by all the autocephalous Churches except Constantinople, Ecumenism was condemned

as an intrigue hatched by the Vatican and the Anglo-American imperialists - hardly an impressive theological reason for not participating in Ecumenism, but sufficient to put the brakes on it for the time being, at any rate in the Soviet bloc. But Constantinople carried on regardless, and in 1949 the new patriarch, the 33rd degree Mason Athenagoras, declared in his enthronement speech: "We are in error and sin if we think that the Orthodox Faith came down from heaven and that the other dogmas [i.e. religions] are unworthy. Three hundred million men have chosen Mohammedanism as the way to God and further hundreds of millions are Protestants, Catholics and Buddhists. The aim of every religion is to make man better." This astonishing apostasy from the Orthodox Faith roused hardly a murmur of protest from the autocephalous Orthodox Churches...

So far, the Roman Catholics had abstained from participation in the ecumenical movement, but the Second Vatican Council (1958-64) acted as the catalyst for another great wave of ecumenical activity, combined with other, clearly demonic inspirations, such as the so-called charismatic movement, throughout the western world. Barriers between Christian confessions began falling with astonishing rapidity. But, in accordance with the promiscuous morals of the time, these unions were made, not in holiness and truth, but in an adulterous spirit of indifference to the truth and profound disregard of the dogmas and traditions of the Church.

At the same time, the Kremlin saw an opportunity to infiltrate its ecclesiastical agents into the Vatican and other denominations via the ecumenical movement. Thus in September, 1960, during a conference of the Orthodox Churches to establish a catalogue of topics to be discussed at a future Pan-Orthodox Council, the Soviet church's delegates first ensured that no topic which might prove embarrassing to the Soviet government would be discussed, either at any future Pan-Orthodox Council or at any ecumenical meeting - topics such as the struggle against atheism and Freemasonry. Then it supported the conference's decision to seek closer contacts with the Monophysites, Nestorian, Old Catholic, Anglican, Catholic, and Protestant Churches, as well as the World Council of Churches. In other words, the Orthodox henceforth were to abandon the struggle against Atheism, Freemasonry and other false religions, and were to engage in dialogue towards union with all the Christian heretics - while at the same time using ecumenical forums to further the ends of Soviet foreign policy in its struggle with the Capitalist West!

Three months later, the Soviet church joined the WCC at its general assembly of the WCC in New Delhi. The KGB-enforced entry of the Moscow Patriarchate had an immediate and devastating effect on the Orthodox

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position in the WCC. For the Russians not only constituted numerically the largest single Church in the WCC; they also controlled, through the KGB, all the other delegates from behind the iron curtain. Communism and Ecumenism therefore met in an unholy union. As Deacon Andrew Kurayev wrote: "Sergianism and Ecumenism intertwined. It was precisely on the instructions of the authorities that our hierarchy conducted its ecumenical activity, and it was precisely in the course of their work abroad that clergy who had been enrolled into the KGB were checked out for loyalty." 184

While the Russian communists were uniting with the Protestants, the Greek masons were uniting with the Catholics. Thus in 1965 Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras "lifted the anathemas" of 1054 that separated the two Churches. From this time the Ecumenical Patriarchate must be considered to be in effect a uniate church (i.e. a part of the Roman Church with Orthodox rites). In the same year, the Serbian Church entered the World Council of Churches. Only Archimandrite Justin Popovich (+1978) and the Free Serbs of America offered any opposition to this apostasy from within the Serbian Church.

The 1970s witnessed an unholy competition between the leaders of the Greek and Russian Churches to see who could enter into communion with the most heretics. The leader of the Soviet church's ecumenical offensive was Metropolitan Nicodemus of Leningrad, who, as it has now been revealed, was both a major-general of the KGB and a secret bishop of the Catholic Church, whose real loyalties were revealed by his death at the feet of the Pope in 1978. He developed a whole new apostate theology of "Communist Christianity", which was criticised by none of the hierarchs of "World Orthodoxy". Moreover, it was Nicodemus who engineered the creation of the "Orthodox Church of America" in 1970, a schism from the Russian Church Abroad which has not been recognised by any other Orthodox Church. 185

By the early 1980s, when the ecumenical movement was plumbing ever-greater depths of apostasy through official unions at the highest level between all the leading religions of the world, including Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and various kinds of pagans, only the Russian Church Abroad, the Russian Catacomb Church and the Greek and Romanian Old Calendarists still remained outside the WCC. In 1989 the Patriarchate of Jerusalem also withdrew, but remained in communion with the ecumenist Orthodox, including such apostates as Patriarch Parthenius of Alexandria, who declared that Mohammed was an apostle of God! In 1990 the Autocephalous Churches

also signed a concordat with the Monophysites, whereby the anathemas against the Monophysites were lifted without the latter renouncing their heresy.

At this critical moment, communism fell, first in Eastern Europe and then in the Soviet Union. This excited great hopes of a reversal of the anti-Orthodox tide. But it was not to be – for the time being. In Russia, the hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate, although clearly exposed by a parliamentary commission as being active agents of the KGB, retained a firm hold on ecclesiastical power. The Russian Church Abroad opened some parishes on Russian soil; but disagreements with the Catacomb Church, which had not been consulted, and some disastrous episcopal appointments, hindered her witness among the people. The real beneficiary of the fall of communism was the Vatican, which mounted a vigorous offensive for the hearts and minds of the former Soviet peoples, beginning with a more or less complete takeover of the Western Ukraine. Protestant denominations also began to make converts, as did many pagan sects. At the same time, in spite of the lack of truly Orthodox leadership, the polls showed a steady rise in the numbers of those professing to be one or another kind of Orthodox Christians (although the proportions are still very small).

At the time of writing, there is unfortunately no sign of the recovery by the True Orthodox Christians into some kind of organizational unity. Judging from history, such a recovery is unlikely to take place until God grants an Orthodox Tsar. However, the prophecies of the Orthodox Church foresee just such a recovery under a Tsar, who will depose the ecucommunist hierarchs and encourage a final blossoming of the True Faith throughout the world, before another steep decline and the appearance of the personal Antichrist.186

But we must beware of a counterfeit, especially since the false Russian democracy and false Moscow patriarchate is already playing with the idea of creating a puppet “autocracy” that will have the name Romanov but not that family’s piety. For, as a Catacomb priest writes, for the genuine regeneration of Russia, “even if a tsar is elected, he must necessarily belong to the True Orthodox Church. And to this Church must belong all the people who represent the regenerate Russia... The first union of people... can arise at an extremely unpropitious historical and political moment on the territory of Russia or even on some small part of it... It is possible that such a union ‘into Russia’ can encompass only 100-200 people, who can be joined by other people later. At some point an Orthodox Tsar could even be elected in their midst...”187


Only a truly Orthodox tsardom can be a legitimate government for Russia – or a Provisional Government that consciously prepares the way for the return of Autocracy and unambiguously condemns the lawlessness of all that has taken place in Russian governmental life since February, 1917.188

But even if such a recovery is denied us because of our sins, we can be sure that the True Church will survive, albeit in desperately straitened circumstances and numbers, until the end of the world. For as the only Saviour of the Church has said: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her" (Matthew 16.18).

**Towards the Antichrist**

Can we draw any conclusions, from the period of Church history just described, concerning the likely forms of Church life during the reign of the personal Antichrist?

If the period 1453 to 1917 can be described as the period in which the Church became dangerously close to the State, but managed - just - to preserve her integrity, then the period 1917 to the present day can be described as the period in which the relationship between Church and State broke down altogether. The official Orthodox Churches became so close to the States with which they had to deal and their prevailing, antichristian ideology - Communism in the East, Democracy-Ecumenism in the West, that they lost their inner essence, faithfulness to Christ, and became, not simply State Churches, but Churches of and for the State, being servants of, and completely conformed to, the kingdom that is of this world, not the Kingdom of God. Thus in the communist countries the Churches became totalitarian structures serving the world revolution by preaching revolutionary morality and eschatology; while in the countries of the West they became members of a democratic, federal structure called the World Council of Churches, which similarly served the world revolution by preaching the relativity of all religious truth. From the 1960s these two streams of apostate Orthodoxy joined together in "ecucommunism".189 First, the World Council of Churches, led by the Sovietised Moscow Patriarchate, became a mouthpiece of political revolution, funding terrorist movements in Africa and elsewhere; and then, after the fall of communism, Democracy-Ecumenism seized control of the communist heartland, while leaving intact the totalitarian structure and Soviet hierarchies of the communised churches.

188 Alexander Nikitin, “Chto zhe trebuietsa ot pravitel'stva dlia priznania ego perekhodnym k zakonnomu?” Vozvrashchenie, N 2, 1993, pp. 6-8 ©.
The True Church, meanwhile, was forced to flee into the wilderness like the Woman clothed with the Sun of the Apocalypse (chapter 12). In countries within the western orbit, such as Greece, this entailed only intermittent persecution and permitted the Church to lead a semi-legal existence. But in countries that fell within the Soviet sphere of influence, most True Christians had to flee underground, leading an outlawed existence that was characterised as "counter-revolutionary" and subversive by the State.

This elicited a great debate among the Catacomb Christians. What was the nature of the State on whose territory they lived? Its hostility to Orthodoxy was obvious; but was it nevertheless still a power established by God, like the pagan Roman State of the first three centuries, or the Ottoman empire, or was it, in effect, the Antichrist, a power established, not by God, but by the devil (Revelation 13.2) - a power, therefore, which had to be resisted by all means if faithfulness to Christ was to be preserved? The answer given by the Russian Church Council of 1918 was unambiguous: the Soviet State is not established by God, but is the collective Antichrist, the direct forerunner of the personal Antichrist who is still to come and of essentially the same nature as him, to which the faithful must not submit in any way. Unfortunately, Church leaders did not always act consistently with this conciliar decision. Thus in 1922 Patriarch Tikhon compromised with the Soviets over the requisition of church valuables, which gave the opportunity to the renovationists to make the first major breach in the Church's defences. Then, in 1927, Metropolitan Sergius capitulated to Soviet power, which led to the almost complete destruction of the Church in the 1930s.

Thus the main lesson to be learned from this period of Church history is that, having entered the age of the Antichrist, the Church can hope for no support from any worldly power or from any kind of union with the world. Having rejected the power that was truly from God in 1917, the people have come to understand from bitter experience what is the power that is from the devil, and that no union with this power is possible. The unions that have been attempted - with Communism in the East, and with Democracy-Ecumenism in the West - have all ended in disaster, the loss of grace and the shackling of the Church's ability to preach the whole truth and nothing but the truth to a world "which lies in evil" (John 5.19). Moreover, even if the Lord, in response to the prayers of the millions of new martyrs and confessors of our century, and for "a testimony to all nations" of the truth of Orthodoxy (Matthew 24.14), restores the throne of the Orthodox kings for a time, this will not still change the essential nature of our time, which is apocalyptic. Indeed, the main task of such a king will be to warn that that scourge that devastated Russia in the twentieth century is now about to come upon the whole world; he will prepare the Church for the coming of the Antichrist in his last and most terrifying form, the false messiah and king of the Jews, of whom the Lord said: "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5.43).
The struggle against the personal Antichrist will be, if it were possible, even more difficult than that of the Catacomb Church against the collective Antichrist. For he will be - to begin with, at any rate - no crude atheist destroyer, like the Bolsheviks. He will be a genius who will bring peace and prosperity to a world close to despair. He will work false miracles that will dazzle the minds and corrupt the hearts of all but the most sober Christians. He will honour religion (according to St. Seraphim he will be born in Russia, so perhaps he will even be Orthodox), and seem to be a model of true piety.

But halfway through his reign, when he has gathered all power, both political and ecclesiastical, into his hands, he will suddenly tear off his mask of tolerance and goodwill and will declare himself for what he is - the vessel of satan and direct rival to the true God, "opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (II Thessalonians 2.4). Then will begin the last and greatest persecution of the faithful in the whole history of the Church. If already now, in the epoch of Ecumenism, the Grand Rabbi of Israel, Eliahu Baqshi Doron, can declare that "the Christians are idolaters, they commit acts of idolatry in the holy places... The commandment orders the idolaters to be persecuted and driven from the land of Israel"\(^{190}\), what can the Christians expect in those very last days of the existence of the world, when they represent the last remnants of resistance to the complete victory of the Antichrist?

In order to survive spiritually at that time, they will have had to absorb all the lessons of the struggle of the Russian Catacomb Church. That is, no compromise of any kind with the prevailing power will be possible; and the thought of salvaging anything tangible from the general maelstrom - a house, a job, or even a church and the possibility of above-ground services - will be a snare and a delusion. For "then let them which be in Judaea [the Church] flee into the mountains; let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes" (Matthew 24.16-18).

As St. Seraphim of Sarov said of the temptations facing the faithful Christians of these last times: "When this age comes to an end, at first the Antichrist will remove the crosses from the churches and destroy the monasteries... Then life will be short. The angels will scarcely be able to collect the souls... In the days of that great sorrow of which it is said that no flesh could be saved unless, for the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short - in those days the remnant of the faithful are to experience in themselves something like that which was experienced by the Lord Himself when He, hanging on the Cross, being perfect God and perfect Man, felt Himself so forsaken by His Divinity that He cried out to Him: My God, My God, why

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hast Thou forsaken Me? The last Christians also will experience in themselves a similar abandonment of humanity by the grace of God, but only for a very short time, after the passing of which the Lord will not delay immediately to appear in all His glory, and all the holy angels with Him. And then will be performed in all its fullness everything foreordained from the ages in the pre-eternal counsel of the Holy Trinity..."191

The Heavenly Church

As the Church on earth becomes weaker, so the attention of Christians is directed more and more to the Heavenly Church, which becomes daily larger and stronger. "I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountains [the saints of the Heavenly Church] from whence cometh my help" (Psalm 120.1). "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21.28). Our redemption will come when the last member of the Church on earth who is destined to be saved will have finished his earthly course. Then the Body of Christ in heaven and on earth will be united round her Head; for "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.. and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them" (I Thessalonians 4.16-17).

This intimate inter-communion between the Heavenly and Earthly Church is unknown outside Orthodoxy. It is non-existent in Protestantism, which has no communion of saints, no prayer for the dead and very little knowledge of the life after death; and severely distorted in Catholicism, with its false saints, purgatorial fire and system of indulgences dependent on the Pope. In Orthodoxy, on the other hand, the Ascension of Christ and the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost has opened up to us an immediate communion with the Church in heaven which is the very life of the Church on earth. For, as the Apostle Paul says, "if you are risen with Christ, seek that which is heavenly, where Christ sits at the right hand of God; think about that which is heavenly, and not about the earthly. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3.1-3). That is why that which seems childish in Orthodoxy to the wise of this world - stories of the intervention of angels and saints, of miraculous healings, wonder-working icons and relics - so delights us and is so congruent with our faith. For these signs and miracles demonstrate that our faith is based, "not on human wisdom, but on the power of God" (I Corinthians 2.5), and that our Church on earth is in living, and not merely theoretical, contact with the Church in heaven.

For did not the Lord, after the primary sign and foundational miracle of His Resurrection, declare that "these signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will take up snakes; and if they drink something poisonous, it will not

harm them; they will lay hands on the sick, and will be healed" (Mark 16.17-18)? And did not the bones of the Prophet Elisha raise a man from the dead, like the relics of our Orthodox saints? And did not the very shadow of one apostle, and the handkerchief of another, heal the sick, like the wonder-working icons of our Orthodox Church?

Of course, visible signs are not the only demonstration of our faith, and the devil, too, can work miracles. And this should be particularly remembered today, when those servants of God who work miracles are hidden from sight, and when the devil is working all kinds of false miracles to deceive the unwary. However, communion with the Church in heaven in word and deed, in prayer and signs and liturgy, remains as definitive of Orthodoxy as communion with the Pope is of Romanism. For, as Alexei Khomiakov says, "we know that when any one of us falls, he falls alone; but no one is saved alone. He who is saved is saved in the Church, as a member of her, and in unity with all her other members..."

If communion in love with the Heavenly Church is definitive of the life of the Earthly Church, then the faith and hope of the Heavenly Church is definitive of her faith and hope. We have already seen how each new revelation of the nature of God in the Holy Scriptures is related to, and built on, previous revelations, to earlier saints of God. Thus "He Who Is" and appeared to Moses is the same as "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" who spoke to the patriarchs and was confessed by Christ before the Sadducees; and the God Who revealed Himself to the apostles, "the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit", is precisely the God Who spoke through the prophets. This continuity of revelation is stressed also in the New Testament Church at each new stage in the struggle for "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). For our faith is precisely the same faith which was first preached by the apostles, witnessed to by the martyrs, and defined by the fathers at the Seven Ecumenical Councils. It is therefore not something new, but in complete conformity with the faith of all those who have gone before us - patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, fathers - to whom the One God revealed Himself and who now live together with Him in the unwaning light of the Heavenly Kingdom. And if the outward situation of the faithful has changed over the generations - from the tent of Abraham to the palace of Justinian to the cramped apartments of today's Catacomb Christians - its inner essence has in no way changed, being the life in Jesus Christ, Who is "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13.8). And this inner and invisible unity will be revealed outwardly and visibly at the end of the world, "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed)..." (II Thessalonians 1.10).

193 Khomiakov, On Prayer and the Communion of Saints.
It follows that if some new, or apparently new teaching arises, our first reaction is: is this the teaching of the apostles and the fathers, of those whose faith we know for certain was correct, and whom God glorified by manifold signs and wonders (for "whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Romans 8.30))?

Thus when, at the council of Florence in 1438, the Catholics attempted to justify the introduction of the Filioque into the Creed by many subtle arguments, St. Mark of Ephesus refused to enter into these arguments, but first sought agreement on the point which to the Orthodox was essential: had not the fathers of the Third Ecumenical Council forbidden any addition to the Creed? Of course, there are other weighty arguments against the Filioque - for example, that it destroys the unity of origin of the Godhead in the Father alone - and St. Mark later provided them. But the safest course is simply to rely on the authority of the Heavenly Church. And if this seems "stultifying" or "uncreative", so be it: we would rather be "uncreative" with the friends of the Creator than brilliant innovators with His enemies.

It is this life-giving conservatism which explains why the Orthodox refuse to concede on issues which to the heterodox often seem trivial. Take the issue of the new calendar. Why such a fuss, say our opponents, over a mere "thirteen days" difference? Because, we reply, the Apostle Paul said: "Hold the traditions" (2 Thessalonians 2.15), and the tradition of the "old" Orthodox calendar was sealed by the fathers of the First Ecumenical Council and sanctified by many centuries of usage. To change the calendar, therefore, would be to break communion, not only with our brethren who keep the old calendar on earth, but also with all the saints who worship together with us in heaven. And this would be a great crime; for, as St. John Chrysostom says, "exactness in the keeping of times is not as important as the crime of division and schism". For unity in heaven and on earth, in time and in eternity, is the supreme aim of our life in Christ - as the Lord said, "that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17.21); and anything which disrupts that unity is anathema to us. As the Synodicon of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, which is read every first Sunday of the Great Fast in the Orthodox Church, says: "All that was innovated and enacted, or that in the future shall be enacted, outside of Church Tradition and the teaching and institution of the holy and ever-memorable Fathers, Anathema (thrice)".

For we are commanded, as St. Athanasius the Great says, "to keep in step, not with the times, but with God". And as God does not change, - "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law" (Matthew 5.18), - we hold fast to His command. The conservatism of the

Orthodox, therefore, is not a mindless fear of progress, but the wholesome fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom and the only hope of real progress, progress towards the Heavenly Kingdom. This world and everything in it will one day perish in the fire of the Last Judgement; only that will survive which is not of this world, having its foundation in that other world of which this world knows nothing and which it despises.

And so we, "receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire... [And let us not be] carried about with divers and strange doctrines... [But] let us go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." (Hebrews 12.29, 13.9, 13-14)

As the Last Day approaches, the Church on earth will become smaller and smaller. However, St. Ephraim teaches that "many people will be found pleasing to God, for whom it will be possible, in the mountains and desert places, to save themselves by much prayer... For God, seeing their many tears and sincere faith, will have mercy on them, as a tender Father, and will keep them." According to Tertullian, "the Christian society will never be depleted, and will become particularly strong when in its appearance it will seem to wane". It will become particularly strong, as we have seen, because the numbers of intercessors in the Heavenly Church will be greater than ever. In our century alone millions have been added to those martyrs who cry: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Revelation 6.10). "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand..." (Revelation 8.3-4)

And yet, even with this great weakness of the Church on earth by comparison with the Church in heaven, the Lord has ordained that the dependence should not be entirely in one direction. For "they without us cannot attain perfection" (Hebrews 11.40) - that is, the resurrection of the body and the entrance into the Heavenly Bridal Chamber of Christ. It is therefore incumbent on us on earth to hasten that glorious day by filling up the number of those in heaven until it has reached that total pre-ordained in the eternal Counsel of God. Then and only then will He descend to earth with all the heavenly powers, so as to unite the heavenly and the earthly and lead both Churches as one Body into the Bridal Feast of the Kingdom. "And the Spirit and the Bride say: come! And let him who hears say: come! And let him who desires it take of the water of life freely" (Revelation 22.17).

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195 St. Ephraim, Oration on the Coming of the Lord.
196 Tertullian, Liber ad Scapulum, 5.
CONCLUSION. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY AND BRIDE OF CHRIST

This is a great mystery: but I speak of Christ and the Church.

Ephesians 5.32.

We have considered many historical images of the Church: the Family Church, the Imperial Church, the Catacomb Church, etc. But what is the image of the Church as she exists for all time, in eternity? Holy Scripture gives us two images that in fact amount to one: the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5.32). In accordance with this image, Christ and the Church are united in the way that a bridegroom and a bride are united, consubstantial in the way that a Bridegroom and Bride are consubstantial, sharing not only in Christ’s Humanity but also in His Divinity, since Christians are "partakers in the Divine nature", in the Apostle Peter's words (II Peter 1.4) Therefore the attempt to place an unbridgeable gulf in dignity between Christ and the Church that is characteristic of Protestantism and Ecumenism, is contrary to the sacred symbolism of the Holy Scriptures. Let us look at this symbolism a little more closely.

The essential idea of marriage is the creation of unity out of multiplicity; husband and wife "are no more two, but one flesh" (Matthew 19.6). In the Church this unity proceeds in both a vertical and a horizontal direction, as it were, both between Christ and the individual believer, and between the believers. And the foundation and model of both kinds of union is the union between the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Thus the Lord prayed for the unity of the Church during the Mystical Supper - "that they all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one (John 17.21-22).

St. Cyril of Alexandria comments on this passage in an illuminating manner: "Christ, having taken as an example and image of that indivisible love, accord and unity which is conceivable only in unanimity, the unity of essence which the Father has with Him and which He, in turn, has with the Father, desires that we too should unite with each other; evidently in the same way as the Consubstantial, Holy Trinity is united so that the whole body of the Church is conceived as one, ascending in Christ through the fusion and union of two people into the composition of the new perfect whole. The image of Divine unity and the consubstantial nature of the Holy Trinity as a most perfect interpenetration must be reflected in the unity of the believers who are of one heart and mind" - and body, he adds, for this "natural unity" is "perhaps not without bodily unity". 197

It is striking that St. Cyril here refers to the union in one flesh of a Christian marriage not simply as an image of the union of all believers in the Church, but as the base, the lowest cell, as it were, of that union. It is not simply that the Christian family is a "house church", in St. Paul's phrase (Romans 16.4), or a "little church", in St. John Chrysostom's. The Church is both made up of small families, or little churches, and is one big family or Great Church - "the whole family in heaven and on earth" that is named after Christ (Ephesians 3.15). And while, of course, not all Christians are united in the bond of marriage, they are all united, first through the bond of the marriage of Adam and Eve, which created our original, fallen human nature, and then through the bond of the marriage of the new Adam and the new Eve, Christ and His Church, which created the new, redeemed nature of mankind. Thus every Christian is born into the little church through the union in the flesh of his parents, and is reborn into the Great Church through the union in the flesh of his spiritual parents, Christ and the Church.

Indeed, if the union of Adam and Eve was the first "little church", the first unit in, and icon of, the Great Church of all redeemed humanity, we can take that union as defining the nature of the union between Christ and the Church, so that just as Eve was formed from the flesh of Adam, so the new Eve, the Church, was formed from the blood and water that flowed from the side of the new Adam, Christ. As the eighth-century English Orthodox Father, St. Bede the Venerable, writes: "The woman was made out of the side of Adam to show how strong that union must have been. But that it was done in his sleep, and flesh filled up the place whence the bone had been taken, was for a higher mystery. For it signified that the sacraments of salvation would come out of the side of Christ as He slept in death on the cross - that is, the blood and water from which the Church was created as His Bride... It was to typify this same mystery that Scripture says, not 'made' or 'formed' or 'created', as in all the previous works, but 'the Lord God built the rib which He had taken from Adam into a woman', not as if it were a human body, but rather a house, which house we are if we keep our faithfulness and glory of hope right up to a strong end."

Again, the words "It is not good that man should be alone" (Genesis 2.18) indicate, not only that it is not good for fallen man to remain unmarried, but also that it is not good for man to be out of communion with the Church, the new Paradise. And the words "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2.23) signify, not only the oneness of a man and his wife, but the oneness of all Christians through participation in the new tree of life, "the true Vine" (John 15.1) - the Body and Blood of Christ. Finally, the words "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Genesis 1.28) signify, not only that marriage is meant to produce children and thereby

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198 St. Chrysostom, Homily XX on Ephesians, 3.
199 St. Bede, On Genesis, 2.20-22.
populate the whole earth, but also that the union between Christ and His Church is meant to bring forth many new Christians and subdue the whole earth to the teachings and commandments of the Christian faith.

"But now I want to show," continues St. Cyril, "that there is what we might call a unity of nature by which we are bound to one another and are all bound to God... The Only-Begotten, through the wisdom which is His and through the counsel of the Father, found and wrought a means by which we might come into unity with God and with one another - even we ourselves, although by our differences we are separate individuals in soul and body. For by one body, and that His own, He blesses those who believe in Him by a mystical communion and makes them of one body with Himself and one another... For if we all partake of the one loaf, we are all made one body; for it is not possible that Christ be divided. Therefore the Church is called 'the Body of Christ' of which we are individually members, according to Paul's understanding. For we are all united to the one Christ through His holy body, inasmuch as we receive Him Who is one and undivided in our own bodies... Now if we are all of one body with one another in Christ, and not only with one another but with Him Who assuredly is within us through His own flesh, clearly we are all one, both in one another and in Christ. For Christ, Who is both God and man in one person, is the body of unity."

As a contemporary Father, St. John Maximovich, puts it: "For the full sanctification of man, the body of the servant of the Lord must be united with the Body of Christ, and this is accomplished in the mystery of Holy Communion. The true Body and Blood of Christ which we receive, becomes a part of the great Body of Christ... We partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, in the holy Mysteries, so that we ourselves may be members of Christ's Body: the Church."

"Of course," continues St. John, "for union with Christ, the mere conjoining of our body with the Body of Christ does not suffice. The consumption of the Body of Christ becomes beneficial when in spirit we strive toward Him and unite ourselves with Him. Reception of the Body of Christ, with aversion to Him in spirit, is like the approach to Christ of those who struck Him and mocked and crucified Him. Their approaching Him served not for their salvation and healing, but for their condemnation. But those who partake with piety, love and readiness to bring themselves to serve Him, closely unite themselves with Him and become instruments of His divine will."
"With regard to union in the Spirit," writes St. Cyril, "we shall say again that we have all received one and the same spirit, namely the Holy Spirit, and are, so to speak, mingled with one another and with God. For Christ makes the Spirit of the Father Who is also His own Spirit to dwell in each of us individually, many as we are, yet the Spirit is one and undivided; and in that individuality which is His by nature He holds together in unity those spirits which are separated from unity one with another, showing them all to be as one in Himself. For as the power of the holy flesh makes those in whom it may come to dwell to be of one body, in the same way, I hold, the one indivisible Spirit dwells in them all and binds them all into a spiritual unity."

Thus we become one in the Body of Christ by partaking in His Body and Blood in the sacrament of the Eucharist, and we become one in the Spirit of Christ by partaking in His Spirit through being sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit at the sacrament of Holy Chrismation. This essentially sacramental, mystical concept of the Church is opposed both to the Catholic and Sergianist concept, which places organisational unity above sacramental unity, and to the Protestant and Ecumenist concept, which effectively eliminates any notion of sacramental unity and replaces it by a vague notion of faith alone.

Now unity of faith is, of course, fundamental to the Orthodox concept of the Church, and is the first criterion for distinguishing between the One True Church and the many false ones. For, St. Maximus the Confessor declared, “Christ the Lord called that Church the Catholic Church which maintains the true and saving confession of the faith. But faith alone, without participation in the sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation and the Eucharist, that is, without union to Christ in spirit, soul and body, is not enough to make one a member of His Church.

Thus we read in the Life of the fourth-century St. Martin of Tours, that one of his catechumens died while he was on a journey. On returning, St. Martin raised him from the dead and baptised him. Then the catechumen related that “when he left the body he was taken to the court of the Judge and that he heard the grim sentence that he was to be condemned to the dark places [i.e., to hell] and to the hordes of common people. Then two angels pointed out to the Judge that this was the man for whom Martin was praying and so the order was given for him to be taken back the two angels, handed over to Martin and restored to his former life.” Thus true faith, with repentance, makes one eligible for entrance into the Church, enrolling one in the ranks of

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203 St. Cyril, On John, 17.21.
the catechumens; but it is participation in the sacraments that actually effects that entrance; for in a sense the sacraments are the Church - the Body (of Christ in the Eucharist) is the Body (of Christ as the Church).

Thus in order to be united with the Head, which is Christ, it is not enough to believe in Him; one must be united to His Body. As St. Augustine writes: "Our Lord Jesus Christ is as one whole perfect man, both head and body. We acknowledge the Head in that Man who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, from thence we look for Him to come to judge the living and the dead. This is the Head of the Church (Ephesians 5.23). The body of this Head is the Church, not the church of this country only, but of the whole world; not that of this age only, but from Abel himself down to those who shall to the end be born and shall believe in Christ, the whole assembly of Saints belonging to one City, which City is Christ's body, of which Christ is the head."\(^{206}\)

Union with Christ has several degrees, teaches the fourth-century Western Father, St. Hilary of Poitiers. It begins with unity in the one faith, continues with unity in the one baptism, whereby we become "one by regeneration into the same nature", and is consummated by unity in the one Eucharist, which is "the sacrament of perfect unity". "Now how it is that we are in Him through the sacrament of the flesh and blood bestowed upon us, He Himself testifies, saying, '... because I live ye shall live also; because I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you'. If He wished to indicate a mere unity of will, why did He set forth a kind of gradation and sequence in the completion of the unity, unless it were that, since He was in the Father through the nature of the Deity, and we on the contrary in Him through His birth in the body, He would have us believe that He is in us through the mystery of the sacraments?... I have dwelt upon these facts because the heretics [Arians] falsely maintain that the union between the Father and Son is one of will only, and make use of the example of our own union with God, as though we were united to the Son and through the Son to the Father by mere obedience and a devout will, and none of the natural verity of communion were vouchsafed us through the sacrament of the Body and Blood; although the glory of the Son bestowed upon us through the Son abiding in us after the flesh, while we are united in Him corporeally and inseparably, bids us preach the mystery of the true and natural unity."\(^{207}\)

In the light of the above, let us now turn to the particular marks of the Church as listed in the Symbol of Faith: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.


1. The Oneness of the Church. The Church is one both in the sense that there is only one Church, and in the sense that her members are united both with Christ and with each other. This unity is of the closest possible kind, both spiritual and bodily, and analogous to the unity of a man and his wife, being a participation, through the sacraments, in the union effected by Christ with human nature at the Annunciation. Christ is the Head and Bridegroom of the Church, and all the individual members of the Church are united with Him as with their Head and Bridegroom; for as the friend of the Bridegroom said, "I have betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one Husband" (II Corinthians 11.2; cf. John 3.29).

Now the oneness and unifying power of the Church can be derived from the meaning of the word "Church", ἐκκλησία in Greek. For this literally signifies the calling out (ἐκ-κλησία) of those who before were separated into unity with each other. As St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, "it is rightly called 'Church' [ἐκκλησία] because it calls forth and assembles together all men."208

Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) has developed this idea as follows: 'It is very important to understand correctly the derivation and meaning of the word 'Church'. E. Bogdashevsky gives a fine, brief philological explanation of the word: 'By simple philological derivation the Church (in Greek, ecclesia) is an assembly; this word corresponds to the Hebrew qahal. But not every assembly is the Church. An assembly of the most prominent people of the state, officials, consuls, etc., is not the Church (ecclesia), but is termed a synklesia (a convocation). The Athenians distinguished two types of assemblies, the ecclesia and the agora. The former signified a legally empowered assembly of the citizens (i.e. those persons who had to right to participate in the discussion of state affairs) summoned by the authorities through a herald in a lawful manner; the latter were mixed assemblies without any order when a crowd of all sorts of people simply collected together. This philological information leads to the following conclusion:... The members of the ecclesia are members of the same city, ruled by the same laws, having the same religion; the Church is not a spiritual aristocracy, but neither is it a motley crowd; it contains those who have been called or summoned by the grace and power of God' [On the Church, Kiev, 1904, p. 4].

"[Archbishop Ilarion] Troitsky.. adds a profound observation. 'The Hebrew word which signifies ecclesia - Church - is qahal. Qahal is a solemn designation of a religious assembly, of society in its relationship to God. Therefore this name was applied to the Hebrew nation as a whole. The word ecclesia is encountered twice altogether in the Gospel and both times in the Gospel of St. Matthew which was written for the Jews and so clearly reflects the Old Testament world-view. The Gospel says only that Christ will found His Church, and not just a Church. The fact that from the very beginning the

208 St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures, XVIII.
term which was chosen to designate the Christian Church was this very word *ecclesia*, which has a close connection with Old Testament terminology, speaks of the consciousness of unity which imbued the early Church. In the Old Testament there was a single *qahal*, the people of the Lord or the commonwealth of the Lord (*Numbers* 16.3; 20.2-4, 9). Equally in the New Testament there also is a single Church of God* [New Testament Teaching on the Church, St. Petersburg, 1904, p. 15].

"To this one can add Bolotov's observation: 'The circumstance that Christ called the society He founded an *ecclesia* has a special polemical significance against Protestantism. The Protestant conception is obsessed with an invisible Church. But the concept of the *ecclesia* includes a strong element of visibility. Therefore the expression 'invisible Church' contains a *contradictio in adjecto* (internal contradiction). There cannot be any sort of invisible Church. One can participate only spiritually in the invisible, but in the *ecclesia* not otherwise than with the body.' [Lectures on the History of the Early Church, part I, Introduction, St. Petersburg, 1907, p. 13]."

But if the Church is one, how are we to understand the divisions in the Church? These are of two major kinds: the more easily comprehensible divisions that have taken place from the unity of the Church (the heresies, schisms, unlawful assemblies, etc.), when a group has been officially cut off from the unity of the Church by an act of the Church herself; and the more puzzling kind of divisions that have taken place within the unity of the Church, when communion in the sacraments has been broken, but the conscience of the Church recognises that both sides still remain within the Body of Christ. The latter kind of division is puzzling because if the Church is one, and her unity is an organic and visible unity created by unity of faith and participation in the sacraments, it is difficult to see how there could be such a thing as a division *within*, as opposed to *from*, the Church. Is Christ divided? Can there be more than one body rightly calling itself the Body of Christ?

In considering this problem, it is useful to examine a distinction made by the Russian New Martyr (perhaps Martyr-Bishop) Mark (Novoselov) between the Church as organism and the Church as organisation: "It is necessary to distinguish between the Church-organism and the Church-organisation. As the apostle taught: 'You are the Body of Christ and individually members of it' (*I Corinthians* 12.27). The Church-organism is a living person, and just as the cells of our body, besides having their own life, have the life that is common to our body and links between themselves, so a man in the Body of Christ begins to live in Church, while Christ begins to live in him. That is why the apostle said: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me' (*Galatians* 2.20).

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"The basis for the affirmation of the Church-organism is love for Christ. The Lord Himself saw the basis of His Church precisely in love for Him. He asked Peter: did he love Him? And He added: 'Feed My sheep'. The Church of Christ is the union of mutual love of the believers ('United by the bond of love and offering themselves to Christ the Lord, the apostles were washed clean', Canon of Holy Thursday). Only in the Church organism can true democratism, equality and brotherhood come into being; we are equal and brothers only if we are parts of one and the same living body. In the organisation there is not and cannot be organisational equality and brotherhood."  

In other words, the unity of the Church is organic rather than organisational. Divisions from the Church constitute divisions from both the organism and the organisation of the Church. Divisions within the Church, on the other hand, are divisions within the organisation only; the organism remains undivided.

Now this distinction might seem to recall the Protestant definition of the Church as "the invisible community of all believers". However, if the Church-organism is defined in terms of participation in the sacraments, it is no less visible than the Church-organisation; for participation in the sacraments is a visible act. Moreover, there can be no participation in the sacraments, and therefore no Church-organism, where there is no priesthood, i.e. no Church-organisation. Therefore, as Hieromartyr Mark goes on to say, the Church as organisation and the Church as organism are in the end inseparable.

Nevertheless, discerning whether a man is communing of the True Body and Blood of Christ is not a discerning of the fleshly eyes, but of the mind enlightened by grace. Therefore, like everything else in the spiritual life, we must conclude that the unity of the Church is both visible and invisible. Or rather, just as many of those who saw Christ walking in the flesh upon earth "seeing [Him] did not see" and "hearing [Him] did not hear", so it is with the Church, which is the continuation of His Body in space and time: many see it and yet do not see it, for they do not see the Body and Blood in the bread and the wine, or the fire of the Divinity in the flesh of the Humanity. We, however, as Christians "henceforth know no man after the flesh: yea, though we have know Christ after the flesh: yet now henceforth know we Him [and His Body, the Church] no more [in this manner]" (II Corinthians 5.16).

Whether a man is a member of the Church-organism depends, ultimately, on whether he continues to commune of the true Body and Blood of Christ. Such communion does not exist outside the single, undivided Church-organism, and does not exist in heretical bodies which have been expelled from the Church organism by a lawful act of the Church hierarchy. But it can continue to exist outside a particular Church-organisation, as has been shown

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many times in history when saints have appeared in different Church organisations having no communion with each other.

Bishop Ignatius (Brianchaninov) compared the organisational divisions within the Church of the last times to the different parts of a shipwreck: "God desires and seeks the salvation of all. And He is always saving all who wish to be saved from drowning in the sea of life and sin. But He does not always save in a boat or in a convenient, well-equipped harbour. He promised to save the holy Apostle Paul and all his fellow-travellers, and He did save them. But the Apostle and his fellow-passengers were not saved in the ship, which was wrecked; they were saved with great difficulty, some by swimming and others on boards and various bits of the ship's wreckage."\(^{211}\)

Elder Anatolius (Potapov) of Optina used the same analogy to describe the divisions within the True Church of Russia after 1917: "There will be a storm. And the Russian ship will be destroyed. Yes, it will happen, but, you know, people can be saved on splinters and wreckage. Not all, not all will perish..." But he also prophesied that canonical unity would be restored: "A great miracle of God will be revealed. And all the splinters and wreckage will, by the will of God and His might, be gathered together and united, and the ship will be recreated in its beauty and will go along the path foreordained for it by God. That's how it will be, a miracle manifest to all..."\(^{212}\)

2. The Holiness of the Church. The Church of Christ is One because the Body of Christ is One, and all Christians partake in this unity through the sacraments. In the same way the Church of Christ is Holy because the Body of Christ is Holy, and all Christians partake in this holiness through the sacraments.

The distinction between the Church as organism and the Church as organisation is useful again here. Thus Hieromartyr Mark writes: 'Only to the Church-organism can we apply such titles as we meet in the Word of God, for example: 'glorious, holy, spotless' (Ephesians 1.4); 'the Bride of the Lamb' (Revelation 19.7; 21.9); 'the Body of Christ' (Ephesians 1.23; Colossians 1.24); 'the pillar and ground of the truth' (I Timothy 3.15). These concepts are inapplicable to the Church-organisation (or applicable only with great qualifications); they lead people into perplexity and are rejected by them. The Church-organisation is the pure 'Bride' of Christ (Revelation 21.2), but the Church-organisation has all the faults of human society and always bears the marks of human infirmities... The Church-organisation often persecutes the saints of God, but the Church-organism receives them into her bosom... The Church-organisation rejects them from its midst, deprives them of episcopal sees, while they remain the most glorious members of the Church-organism. It is possible to belong externally to the visible Church (organisation), while


one belongs only inwardly to the Body of Christ (organism), and the measure of one's belongingness is determined by the degree of one's sanctity."

Thus the Church as organism is one and holy, while the Church as organisation is often divided and impure. As an image of this distinction let us consider the two Marys, Mary the Mother of God and Mary Magdalene, who went together to the tomb to meet the Risen Lord (Matthew 28.1). The one Mary, the Mother of God, is already "holy and without blemish", "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Ephesians 5.27); while the other, Mary Magdalene, is "black, but comely" (Song of Songs 1.5), being not yet completely purified through repentance. The one represents the Church Triumphant, already "full of grace" (Luke 1.28) and crowned with the Bridegroom at the right hand of the Father; while the other is the Church Militant, still having to struggle with sin both within and outside her.

Mary Magdalene mistakes Christ for the gardener - we remember that the first Adam was a gardener. But like Eve after the Fall Mary is not yet allowed to touch the Tree of Life: "Touch Me not, for I have not yet ascended to My Father" (John 20.17). The other myrrhbearers, however, "took hold of His feet and worshipped Him" (Matthew 28.9). Again we have a distinction between two kinds of believers: those who through purity and repentance have been initiated into the mysteries and can enter into full union with the Bridegroom, and those whose thoughts have not yet ascended far enough above earthly things to grasp the Divinity of Christ, seated at the right hand of the Father. For now, in the light of the Resurrection, it is no longer permitted to love the Lord as a man only. As St. Ephraim the Syrian writes: "As long as He was a servant, all men had power over His Body, since publicans and sinners came to touch Him. But once He was established as Lord, the fear which He inspired was the fear of God."

Just as, in a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever, the unbelieving partner is sanctified through the union with the believer, and their children, too, are sanctified (I Corinthians 7.14), so in the marriage between God and man that takes place in the Church, man is sanctified through his union with God. St. John Chrysostom puts it as follows: "God desired a harlot... and has intercourse with human nature, [whereby] the harlot herself... is transformed into a maiden." Again, Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich writes: "It is a great mystery when a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife. The Apostle himself, who has been raised to the third heaven and beheld many heavenly mysteries, calls the marriage of natural man on earth a great mystery. It is the mystery of love and life, and the only mystery that exceeds it is the mystery of Christ's bond with His Church. Christ calls Himself the Bridegroom and the Church His Bride. Christ

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213 Novoselov, _op. cit._, letter 18.
215 St. Chrysostom, _On Eutropius_, II, 2.
so loves the Church that He left His heavenly Father for her - though remaining equal with Him in unity of essence and divinity - and came down to earth and clave to His Church. He suffered for her sake that He might, by His Blood, cleanse her from sin and from all impurity and make her worthy to be called His Bride. He warms the Church with His love, feeds her with His Blood, and enlivens, enlightens and adorns her with His Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{216}

The Church remains holy as long as she remains faithful to her Bridegroom. The holiness of the Church which is communicated through the sacraments is not tarnished by the personal sinfulness of the priest who administers them as long as he remains within the Body. But immediately he steps outside the Body and commits spiritual adultery with a heretical body, he ceases to be a channel of holiness, and the so-called "sacraments" he administers are not a source of holiness, but of defilement. Thus, as the Martyr-Bishop Cyprian of Carthage wrote in the third century: "Whoever breaks with the Church and enters on an adulterous union cuts himself off from the promises made to the Church; and he who turns his back on the Church of Christ will not come to the rewards of Christ: he is an alien, a worldling, an enemy. You cannot have God for your Father if you no longer have the Church for your mother. If there was any escape for one who was outside the ark of Noah, there will be as much for one who is found to be outside the Church. The Lord warns us when He says: 'He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth'. whoever breaks the peace and harmony of the Church acts against Christ; whoever gathers elsewhere than in the Church, scatters the Church of Christ."\textsuperscript{217}

The individual Christian participates in the holiness of the Church as long as he remains faithful to her and does not enter into communion with heretics. Thus St. John the Almsgiver writes: "If, having legally married a wife in this world of the flesh, we are forbidden by God and by the laws to desert her and be united to another woman, even thought we have to spend a long time separated from her in a distant country, and shall incur punishment if we violate our vows, how then shall we, who have been joined to God through the Orthodox Faith and the Catholic Church - as the Apostle says: 'I have espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ' (II Corinthians 11.2) - how shall we escape from sharing in that punishment which in the world to come awaits heretics, if we defile the Orthodox and Holy Faith by adulterous communion with heretics?\textsuperscript{218} For the heretical communions “have ceased to be holy Churches,” writes Nicetas of Remesiana, “inasmuch as they have been deceived by doctrines of demons,

and both believe and do otherwise than is required by the commands of Christ the Lord and the traditions of the Apostles.\textsuperscript{219}

This teaching is confirmed by all the Fathers of the Church. Thus St. John of Damascus writes: "With all our strength let us beware lest we receive Communion from or give it to heretics. 'Give not what is holy to the dogs', says the Lord. 'Neither cast ye your pearls before swine', lest we become partakers in their dishonour and condemnation."\textsuperscript{220} St. Theodore the Studite writes: "Chrysostom calls enemies of God not only the heretics, but also those who communicate with such people."\textsuperscript{221} And again: "Some have suffered complete shipwreck in the faith. But others, even if they have not drowned in their thoughts, nevertheless perish through communion with heresy."\textsuperscript{222} As we chant in the Divine Liturgy: "Holy things to the holy!"

3. The Catholicity of the Church. The word "Catholic" comes from the Greek καθολικός, "according to the whole". It expresses a quality of wholeness whereby each part of the Church contains the whole within itself, and the whole is expressed in every part. Like the Holy Trinity, of which she is in this respect the image, the nature of the Catholic Church is contained undivided in each of the persons that compose her, in spite of their many differences, so that in her "there is neither Greek nor Jew, nor circumcision nor uncircumcision, nor Barbarian nor Scythian, nor bond nor free, but Christ is all in all" (\textit{Colossians} 3.11). As St. Maximus the Confessor defines it: "Men, women and children, profoundly divided as to race, nation, language, manner of life, work, knowledge, honour, fortune... are all recreated by the Church in the Spirit. To all equally she communicates a divine aspect. All receive from her a unique nature which cannot be broken asunder, a nature which no longer permits one henceforth to take into consideration the many and profound differences which are their lot. In that way all are raised up and united in a truly catholic manner."\textsuperscript{223}

This understanding of Catholicity was developed especially by Russian Slavophile theologians, especially Alexis Khomiakov. They saw in Cyril and Methodius' translation of the Greek word καθολικός by the Slavonic word sobornaia a divine inspiration illuminating the meaning of the Greek original. For sobornaia is derived from sobor, meaning "council" or a large church with two or three altars; and the Slavophiles saw in the Church's "catholicity" or sobornost - her conciliarity, the vital quality that distinguishes her from Roman pseudo-Catholicism and Protestantism. Now, as Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky points out, "in Greek there is no philological or linguistic connection between the concepts "catholic" and "council"

\textsuperscript{219} Nicetas, \textit{De Symbolo}, 10.  
\textsuperscript{220} St. Damascene, \textit{Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith}, IV, 13.  
\textsuperscript{221} St. Theodore, \textit{P.G.} 99, 1049 A.  
\textsuperscript{222} St. Theodore, \textit{P.G.} 99, 1164 A.  
(ecumenical). A council of the Church is called in Greek Συνοδος, and an ecumenical council, οικουμενική Συνοδος." Nevertheless, the lack of a philological connection does not exclude a deep semantic or theological connection, a connection which Saints Cyril and Methodius saw when they chose this translation.

Khomiakov’s argument was as follows: "'Sobor' expresses the idea of a gathering not only in the sense of an actual, visible union of many in a given place, but also in the more general sense of the continual possibility of such a union. In other words: it expresses the idea of unity in multiplicity. Therefore, it is obvious that the word καθολικός, as understood by the two great servants of the Word of God sent by Greece to the Slavs, was derived not from κατά and ολα, but from κατά and ολον; for κατά often has the same meaning as our preposition 'according to', for instance: κατά Ματθαίον, κατά Μαρκον, 'according to Matthew', 'according to Mark'. The Catholic Church is the Church according to all, or according to the unity of all, καθ’ολον των πιστευοντων, the Church according to complete unanimity, the Church in which all peoples have disappeared and in which there are no Greeks, no barbarians, no difference of status, no slave-owners, and no slaves; that Church about which the Old Testament prophesied and which was realised in the New Testament - in one word, the Church as it was defined by St. Paul."225

The essential difference between Orthodoxy and the West, according to Khomiakov, consists in Orthodoxy's possession of Catholicity, whereas the Papists have substituted for it Romanism, mechanical obedience to the Pope, and the Protestants - the papism of each individual: "The Apostolic Church of the ninth century (the time of Saints Cyril and Methodius) is neither the Church καθ’ εκαστόν (according to the understanding of each) as the Protestants have it, nor the Church κατά των επισκοπών της Ρώμης (according to the understanding of the bishop of Rome) as is the case with the Latins; it is the Church καθ’ ολον (according to the understanding of all in their unity), the Church as it existed prior to the Western split and as it still remains among those whom God preserved from the split: for, I repeat, this split is a heresy against the dogma of the unity of the Church."226

Among the Papists, the Church is expressed by the fiat of one man, which guarantees external unity, but no inner consensus. Among the Protestants, however, every man believes as he thinks fit, which guarantees neither unity nor consensus. Only among the Orthodox is there true Catholicity, which is expressed in Councils that express the Consensus of the Church, not only in the present, but in all generations. For, as Fr. Michael Pomazansky writes, "Catholicity refers to the fact that the Church is not limited to space, by

226 Khomiakov, op. cit., p. 313.
earthly boundaries, nor is it limited in time, that is, by the passing of generations into the life beyond the grave. In its catholic fullness, in its catholicity, the Church embraces both the Church of the called and the Church of the chosen, the Church on earth and the Church in Heaven.”

According to another Slavophile, Khomiakov’s friend Ivan Kireyevsky, just as, in a marriage, separation or divorce takes place when one partner asserts his or her self against the other, so in the Church schisms and heresies take place when one party asserts itself over against catholic unity. Thus the Roman patriarchate tore itself away from the unity and catholicity of the Church by an unbalanced, self-willed development of its own particular strength, the logical development of concepts. It introduced the Filioque into the Symbol of the Faith against the theological consciousness of the Church as a whole, and was then compelled to justify it by other false dogmas, such as the infallibility of the Pope, thereby destroying her catholicity - but not the catholicity of the Eastern Patriarchates that remained faithful to the Truth. As Khomiakov put it: "having appropriated the right of independently deciding a dogmatic question within the area of the Ecumenical Church, private opinion carried within itself the seed of the growth and legitimation of Protestantism, that is, of free investigation torn from the living tradition of unity based on mutual love.”

Or, as Kireyevsky put it: "In the ninth century the western Church showed within itself the inevitable seed of the Reformation, which placed this same Church before the judgement seat of the same logical reason which the Roman Church had itself exalted... A thinking man could already see Luther behind Pope Nicolas I just as... a thinking man of the 16th century could foresee behind Luther the coming of 19th century liberal Protestantism...”

4. The Apostolicity of the Church. The Unity of the Church is in the image of God's absolute Unity, her Holiness - in the image of His Holiness, her Catholicity - in the image of His Unity-in-Trinity. However, it is possible for a community to be one, holy and catholic in this way only if it also apostolic. For it is through the Apostles and the Apostolic Teaching that individual believers and communities are betrothed to Christ; as the Apostle Paul says: "I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one Husband" (II Corinthians 11.2).

Now apostolicity is not acquired, as the Protestants think, by a quasi-archaeological restoration of the faith and worship of the Early Church, but rather through a literal grafting-in to the True Vine (John 15), the Natural Olive Tree (Romans 11) of the Orthodox Church. This Church does not need

227 Pomazansky, op. cit., p. 49.
229 Kireevsky, quoted by Fr. Alexey Young, A Man is His Faith: Ivan Kireyevsky and Orthodox Christianity, London: St. George Information Service, 1980.
to be "resurrected" or "recreated" because she has always existed in unbroken succession from the time of the Apostles and will continue to exist to the end of time (Matthew 16.18, 28.20). The grafting-in to the Church is accomplished, not through faith alone, but through the participation in the sacraments, the "oil and wine" which "the Good Samaritan", Christ Himself, gives to the faithful through the Apostles and their lawfully ordained successors, which are maintained by strict adherence to the Holy Scriptures and Tradition of the Church, the "two pence" which Christ entrusted to the "innkeeper", the priesthood (Luke 10.29-37), and which will not fail even in the times of the Apocalypse (Revelation 6.6).

Those who assert that it is possible to be joined to the Apostolic Church - even "resurrect" the Apostolic Church - without being organically joined to that Church which has existed since the time of the Apostles, are like those who say that it is possible to be married to someone without having participated in the sacrament of marriage. Their claim to be already united to Christ will be seen by Him, the True Bridegroom, as spiritual fornication; for they have united themselves, not with Christ, but with a figment of their imagination, or with a demon posing as Christ. For, as St. Basil the Great says, "fornication is not marriage, nor even the beginning of marriage".  

It is impossible for a believer to be united in spiritual marriage with Christ if he has not been joined to him by the Apostles or their lawful successors, having first studied and fully accepted the teaching of the Apostles and Fathers of the Church. The West's superficial and flippant attitude towards apostolicity, and therefore to all those schisms and heresies which violate apostolicity, is a consequence of its essentially amoral attitude to sexual relations in general. For now that fornication is hardly considered to be a sin, and even homosexuality is deemed acceptable, it is hardly surprising that spiritual fornication and the wholesale spiritual promiscuity and perversity of such organisations as the World Council of Churches are also condoned.

For spiritual chastity is required in order to perceive the spiritual beauty of Christ's marriage to His Church. And only when chastity has been regained through repentance, the recognition that the years of wandering outside the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Unity of the Church have been barren and fruitless, will the individual soul or community be able to say: "I will go and return to my first husband; for then it was better for me than now" (Hosea 2.6).

Therefore just as a bridegroom has only one bride, with whom he lives in an unbroken spiritual and physical union through the grace given them in the sacrament of marriage and their determination to remain faithful to each other, so the Apostolic Church is that one Church which has lived in an unbroken spiritual and physical union with Christ through the grace of the Spirit that was bestowed upon her at Pentecost and the determination to

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remain faithful to the teaching of the Apostles to the end of the age. This One Apostolic Church is the Orthodox Church. For, as Bishop Theophanes the Recluse writes: "There is no truth outside the Orthodox Church. She is the single faithful keeper of all that was commanded by the Lord through the holy Apostles, and she is for that reason the only really Apostolic Church. The others have lost the Apostolic Church, and since according to their Christian conscience they have the conviction that only the Apostolic Church can faithfully keep and point to the truth, they have thought of constructing such a church themselves, and they have constructed it, and given this name to it. They have given the name, but the essence they have not been able to communicate. For the Apostolic Church was created in accordance with the good will of the Father by the Lord Saviour with the grace of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles. It is not form men to create such a thing. Those who think to create such a thing are like children playing with dolls. If there is no true Apostolic Church on earth, then there is no point in wasting effort on creating her. But thanks to the Lord, He has not allowed the gates of hell to prevail over the Holy Apostolic Church. She exists and will continue to exist, in accordance with His promise, to the end of the age. And this is our Orthodox Church. Glory to God!\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{231} Bishop Theophan, \textit{Mysli na Kazhdij Den’ Goda (Thoughts for Every Day of the Year)}, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1982 (in Russian).
APPENDIX 1. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

The Father of the Faithful

Chapters 12 to 22 of *Genesis* represent, in symbolic and prophetic form, a brief but fully adequate summary of the central message of the Christian life. It is the story of Abraham, the man of faith - whose faith, however, had to be purified and strengthened through a series of trials, in each of which he was called to obey God by performing a *work* of faith. For in him “faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect” (*James* 2.22). These works of faith included: *exile from his native land* (Chaldea), *separation from his relatives* (Lot), *struggle against the enemies of the faith* (the four kings headed by the king of Babylon), *struggle against his fallen desires* (Pharaoh, Hagar) and, finally, *the complete sacrifice of the heart to God* (Isaac). To strengthen him on this path, Abraham was given bread and wine, a figure of the Body and Blood of Christ, by the priest-king Melchizedek, who was a type of Christ.\(^{232}\) The strengthening of faith and the sharpening of hope that came from successfully passing these trials was crowned by the joy of love in the vision of God: “Abraham rejoiced to see My day: He saw it, and was glad” (*John* 8.56). And as a seal of the truth of this vision, which made the man of faith “an Israelite indeed”, that is, one who sees God, he received circumcision, a foretype both of Baptism by water and the Spirit, whereby all previous sins are washed away, and of the circumcision of the heart, whereby the desire to sin again in the future is cut off.

All this was made possible by faith: faith in God’s promise to Abraham that from his seed would come the *Seed*, the Messiah and Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ (*Galatians* 3.16), in Whom all the nations of the world would be blessed. This meant, as St. Theophan the Recluse explains, that “the blessing given to him for his faith would be spread to all peoples, but not because of Abraham himself or all of his descendants, but because of One of his descendants – *his Seed*, Who is Christ; through Him all the tribes of the earth would receive the blessing.”\(^{233}\) The supreme demonstration of Abraham’s faith was his belief that “God was able to raise [Isaac] from the dead” (*Hebrews* 11.19), which was a type of the Resurrection of Christ. Finally, Abraham is not only a model of the man of faith and the physical ancestor of Christ: he is spiritually the father of all the faithful, being a foretype of the

\(^{232}\) However, Mar Jacob considered it to be no figure of the Eucharist but the Eucharist itself: “None, before the Cross, entered this order of spiritual ministration, except this man alone. Beholding the just Abraham worthy of communion with him, he separated part of his oblation and took it out to him to mingle him therewith. He bore forward bread and wine, but Body and Blood went forth, to make the Father of the nations a partaker of the Lord’s Mysteries.” (“A Homily on Melchizedek”, translated in *The True Vine*, Summer, 1989, no. 2, p. 44)

\(^{233}\) St. Theophan, *Tolkovanie na Poslanie k Galatam* (Interpretation of the Epistle to the Galatians), 3.16 (in Russian).
Apostles, who are “in labour again until Christ is formed” in every Christian (Galatians 4.19).

**The Peoples of the Covenant**

God’s promises to Abraham, which are known as the *Abrahamic Covenant*, were so important that they were proclaimed in at least eight different versions, or “drafts” *(Genesis* 12.1-3, 12.7, 12.13,14-17, 14.18-20, 15.1-19, 16.10-12, 17.1-22, 22.17-18). Each successive draft makes the Covenant a little more precise and far-reaching, in response to Abraham’s gradual increase in spiritual stature. Of particular interest in the context of this article are the promises concerning the relationship between the two peoples who descend from the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac is the true heir of Abraham, the freeborn son of Sarah, who inherits the promises and blessings given to Abraham in full measure, being also a man of faith of whom it is also said that in his Seed, Christ, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed *(Genesis* 26.3-4). Ishmael is the son of a slave, Hagar, and does not inherit those blessings, although he does receive the promise that his heirs will be strong and numerous.

Now according to the popular conception, Isaac is the ancestor of the Jews, and Ishmael – of the Arab peoples. Certainly, the description of Ishmael’s race as “wild” and given to warfare that is given by the Angel of the Lord to Hagar in the desert *(Genesis* 16.10-12) appears to correspond closely, as St. Philaret of Moscow points out, to the character and life-style of the Arabs until Mohammed and beyond, who were constantly fighting and lived “in the presence of their brethren” – that is, near, or to the east of, the descendants of Abraham from his other concubine, Hetturah – the Ammonites, Moabites and Idumeans.234 Moreover, a similar interpretation of the typology appears to stand true for the next generation, to Isaac’s sons Jacob and Esau, who are said to correspond to the Jews (Jacob), on the one hand, and the Idumeans (Esau), on the other. For this interpretation fits very well with the Lord’s words to Isaac’s wife Rebecca, that “two nations are in thy womb... and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder [Esau] shall serve the younger [Jacob]” *(Genesis* 25.23), insofar as the Jews, from Jacob to David to the Hasmonean kings, almost always showed themselves to be stronger than the Idumeans and often held them in bondage. It was only towards the Coming of Christ that an Idumean, Herod the Great, reversed the relationship by killing the Hasmoneans and becoming the first non-Jewish king of Israel – the event which, according to the prophecy of Jacob, would usher in the reign of the Messiah *(Genesis* 49.10).

In fact, however, the racial interpretation of the two peoples of the Covenant has only limited validity before the Coming of Christ, and none at

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234 St. Philaret, *Zapiski rukovodstvuiuschia k osnovatel'nomu razumeniu Knigi Bytia* (Notes leading to a Basic Understanding of the Book of Genesis), Moscow, 1867, part 2, p. 98 (in Russian).
all after. For, according to the inspired interpretation of the Apostle Paul, the two peoples – or two covenants, as he calls them - represent, not racial, but spiritual categories: “Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar – for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.” (Galatians 4.22-26). In other words, Isaac stands for the Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, while Ishmael stands for the Jews who reject Christ. For the Christians, - and this includes the Jews before Christ who believed in His Coming, - become through faith in Christ the freeborn heirs of the promises made to Abraham and Isaac, whereas the Jews, by remaining slaves to the Law of Moses and refusing to believe in Christ, show themselves to be the children of the bondwoman, and therefore cannot inherit the promises together with the Christians. Moreover, it can be said of the Jews, as of the men of Ishmael’s race, that ever since they rejected Christ they have become “wild”, with their hands against all, and the hands of all against them, always striving for “freedom” but remaining voluntarily in slavery to the Law (and to their own kahal).\textsuperscript{235} It may therefore be that the age-old phenomenon of mutual enmity between the Jews and the Gentiles, of anti-semitism and anti-Gentilism, is prophesied in these verses.

That Isaac is the ancestor of Christ and the Christians is indicated also by his choice of wife, Rebecca, who signifies the Bride of Christ, or the Church. Rebecca is freeborn, being of the family of Abraham, and is an even closer image of the Church than Sarah; for she is Isaac's only wife as the Church is Christ’s only Bride. Moreover, the Holy Fathers see in the story of the wooing of Rebecca a parable of Christ's wooing of the Church, in which Eleazar, signifying the Holy Spirit, conveyed Isaac's proposal to her at the well, which signifies Baptism, and gave her gifts of precious jewels, signifying the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed at Chrismation.\textsuperscript{236} Ishmael, on the other hand, receives a wife from outside the holy family – from Egypt. And she is chosen for him, not by a trusted member of the family, but by his rejected mother, the slavewoman Hagar.

The relationship between Isaac and Ishmael is almost exactly mirrored in the relationship between Isaac’s two sons, Jacob and Esau. Thus St. Philaret comments on the verse: “The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, Israel for His own possession” (Psalm 134.4), as follows: “This election refers in the first place to the person of Jacob, and then to his descendants, and finally and most of all to his spirit of faith: for ‘not all [coming from Israel] are of Israel’ (Romans 9.6). The two latter elections, that is, the election of the race of Israel,
and the election of the spiritual Israel, are included in the first, that is, in the personal election of Jacob: the one prophetically, and the other figuratively.

“The reality of this prefiguration in Holy Scripture is revealed from the fact that the Apostle Paul, while reasoning about the rejection of the carnal, and the election of the spiritual Israel, produces in explanation the example of Jacob and Esau (Romans 9), and also from the fact that the same Apostle, in warning the believing Jews against the works of the flesh, threatens them with the rejection of Esau (Hebrews 12.16, 17).

“And so Jacob is an image, in the first place, of the spiritual Israel, or the Christian Church in general, and consequently Esau, on the contrary, is an image of the carnal Israel.

“Esau and Jacob are twins, of whom the smaller overcomes the larger: in the same day the spiritual Israel was born together with the carnal, but, growing up in secret, is finally revealed and acquires ascendancy over him.

“Isaac destines his blessing first of all to Esau, but then gives it to Jacob: in the same way the carnal Israel is given the promises from the Heavenly Father, but they are fulfilled in the spiritual [Israel].

“While Esau looks for a hunting catch in order to merit his father’s blessing, Jacob, on the instructions of his mother, to whom God has revealed his destinies, puts on the garments of the first-born and seizes it before him. While the carnal Israel supposes that by the external works of the law it will acquire the earthly blessing of God, the spiritual Israel, with Grace leading it, having put on the garments of the merits and righteousness of the First-Born of all creation, ‘is blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ’ (Ephesians 1.3).

“The sword of battle and continuing slavery is given to the rejected Esau as his inheritance. And for the carnal Israel, from the time of its rejection, there remained only the sword of rebellion, inner enslavement and external humiliation.

“The rejected Esau seeks the death of Jacob; but he withdraws and is saved. The rejected old Israel rises up to destroy the new; but God hides it in the secret of His habitation, and then exalts it in strength and glory…”

As for the wives of Jacob, they also, like Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau, signify the spiritual Israel of the Church and the carnal Israel of the non-believing Jews. Thus Leah, whom Jacob married first, signifies with her weak eyes and fertile womb the weak faith of the carnal Israel and its abundant offspring. (It is precisely blindness that “shall befall Israel until the fullness of

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the Gentiles shall come in” (Romans 11.25)). But Rachel, whom he married later but loved first and most strongly, signifies the New Testament Church, which the Lord loved first but married later; for the Church of the Gentiles, that of Enoch and Noah and Abraham before his circumcision, existed before that of Moses and David and the Old Testament Prophets. Moreover, Rachel brought forth her children in pain because the New Testament Church, brought forth her first children in the blood of martyrdom, and is destined to inherit spiritual blessedness only through suffering – “we must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God” (Acts 14.22).

The Judaizing of Christianity

Since the two peoples of the covenant come from the same father, there is a family likeness between them, their destinies in history are intertwined, and the transition of individuals and groups from one people to the other is easier than to any third category or people outside the covenant (pagans or atheists). Thus the conversion of the Arabs, the original physical Ishmaelites, to Orthodox Christianity in the early Christian centuries (before Mohammed) is an example of transition from the spiritual category of unbelieving Ishmael to the spiritual category of believing Israel. Again, while the Jews have never converted en masse to Christianity, there have been individual conversions throughout the centuries.

More common, alas, has been the reverse movement, the falling away of Christians into various forms of Judaizing heresy. We see this already in the Early Church – St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians is essentially a tract against the Judaizing of Christianity – and explicitly or implicitly Judaizing movements in Christianity have appeared many times since then. Again, we see many Judaizing traits in Islam. In fact, when Christians fall away from the True Faith, if they do not become complete pagans or atheists, they usually acquire traits of Judaism; for, as an anonymous Russian Christian writes, “Christianity without Christ reverts to Judaism”.238

We see this, for example, in Roman Catholicism: at the time of the falling away of the Roman Church in the eleventh century, the Romans adopted wafers – that is, unleavened bread (azymes) - in the liturgy instead of the leavened bread of the Orthodox – a relapse from the New Testament to the Old. Thus St. Nicetas Stethatos, a monk of the Studite monastery in Constantinople, wrote to the Latins: “Those who still participate in the feast of unleavened bread are under the shadow of the law and consume the feast of the Jews, not the spiritual and living food of God... How can you enter into

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238 “How to understand the Jews as being a chosen people”, Orthodox Life, vol. 41, no. 4, July-August, 1991, pp. 38-41.
communion with Christ, the living God, while eating the dead unleavened dough of the shadow of the law and not the yeast of the new covenant...?\textsuperscript{239}

The same Judaizing process is still more evident in Protestantism. Thus the Protestants adopted as their Old Testament Bible, not the Septuagint until then in use throughout the whole of Christendom, but the Massoretic text of the Jewish rabbis. Again, the Protestants' chapel worship is similar to the Jews' synagogue worship: in both we find the exaltation of Scripture reading and study above liturgical worship (although this is more principled in Protestantism – in Judaism it is necessitated by the destruction of the Temple in which alone, according to the Law, liturgical worship can take place).

Again, the relationship between Church and State in many Calvinist communities was modelled on the Old Testament Israel in the period of Moses and the Judges. Thus A.P. Lopukhin writes: "On examining the structure of the Mosaic State, one is involuntarily struck by its similarity to the organisation of the state structure in the United States of Northern America." "The tribes in their administrative independence correspond exactly to the states, each of which is a democratic republic." The Senate and Congress "correspond exactly to the two higher groups of representatives in the Mosaic State - the 12 and 70 elders." "After settling in Palestine, the Israelites first (in the time of the Judges) established a union republic, in which the independence of the separate tribes was carried through to the extent of independent states." \textsuperscript{240} Indeed, for the Pilgrim Fathers, their colonisation of America was like Joshua's conquest of the Promised Land. Just as the Canaanites had to be driven out from the Promised Land, so did the Red Indians from America. And just as Church and State were organically one in Joshua's Israel, so it was in the Pilgrim Fathers' America.

Protestantism, especially in America, also acquired the distinctly Judaistic trait of the deification of materialism, the pursuit of material prosperity, not simply for its own sake, but as a proof that God is with you. "This Jewish materialistic approach," writes the anonymous Russian Christian, "openly or more subtly, under the appearance of various social theories and philosophical systems, encroaches upon the consciousness of Christians, breaking down the Christian nations. In particular the penetration into the Christian consciousness of this Judaistic idea explains many heresies, the rise of Islam, the substitution of Christianity with humanism, altruism, Marxism and separatist nationalism. Nationalism, which at times takes on an anti-Semitic character, at other times ends up in union with Judaism; in any event it is the reverse side of Jewish philosophy. A nation is truly attractive only in that part of it which is Christian. On the other hand, separatist nationalism,


that is the extolling of a nation because it is a particular nation, refers back to
the incorrect and prideful Jewish understanding of their chosenness, when
they boast, ‘We are the children of Abraham’.

“This activity of Judaistic philosophy is responsible for the striving
towards the worldly in Christian societies, the wasting of spiritual talents for
the worldly, that is, the burying of them, which explains the direction of
present-day civilization towards ‘progress’, the ruining of our planet, modern
pagan art, and so on.

“Thus the Jews may obtain supremacy, resulting from the breakdown of
the Christian peoples, that is, from an open or subtle falling away from
Christianity, which can be viewed as a direct influence of Jewish philosophy.
In the end they will bring forth from their midst the Antichrist, their messiah,
upon whom they hope…”241

In still more recent times, Western Christianity as a whole has adopted
another, still more fundamental trait of Judaism: its 
\textit{adogmatic} character, making it, like Judaism, a religion, not so much of faith, as of works. Thus L.A.
Tikhomirov writes: “It is now already for nineteen centuries that we have
been hearing from Jewish thinkers that the religious essence of Israel consists
not in a concept about God, but in the fulfilment of the Law. Above were cited
such witnesses from Judas Galevy. The very authoritative Ilya del Medigo
(15th century) in his notable \textit{Test of Faith} says that ‘Judaism is founded not on
religious dogma, but on religious acts’.

“But religious acts are, in essence, those that are prescribed by the Law.
That means: if you want to be moral, carry out the Law. M. Mendelsohn
formulates the idea of Jewry in the same way: ‘Judaism is not a revealed
religion, but a revealed Law. It does not say ‘you must believe’, but ‘you must
act’. In this constitution given by God the State and religion are one. The
relationships of man to God and society are merged. It is not lack of faith or
heresy that attracts punishment, but the violation of the civil order. Judaism
gives not obligatory dogmas and recognizes the freedom of inner conviction.’

“Christianity says: you must believe in such-and-such a truth and on the
basis of that you must do such-and-such. New [i.e. Talmudic] Judaism says:
you can believe as you like, but you have to do such-and-such. But this is a
point of view that annihilates man as a moral personality…”242

Of course, the works prescribed by Talmudic Judaism are very different
from those prescribed by Christ: the one kind enslaves and debases while the
other liberates and exalts. However, in the last resort works without faith,

\footnotesize{241 “How to understand the Jews as being a chosen people”, op. cit.

242 Tikhomirov, \textit{Religiozno-filosofskie Osnovy Istorii} (The Religio-Historical Foundations
of History), Moscow, 1997, pp. 379, 380 (in Russian).}
according the Gospel, are useless; for works are only valuable as the expression of faith, faith in the truth - it is the truth that sets man free (John 8.32). So contemporary Christians' adoption of the Jewish ethic of works, and loss of zeal for dogmatic truth, is a kind of slow but steady spiritual suicide…

The logical conclusion of the apostasy of the Christian world and its reversion to Judaism will be, as St. Paul prophesies, the appearance of “the man of sin”, the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.3). He will become the king of the Jews, will rebuild the Temple and reintroduce the Mosaic Law and Temple worship in its fullness, with the worship of himself as Messiah and God as its centre and culminating point. And so Judaism will finally acquire a positive dogma, that the Antichrist is God, to supplement its negative dogma, that Jesus Christ is not God; and the Christian world, the spiritual Israel, will finally dissolve into the carnal Israel - with the exception, however, of a heroic “remnant of Israel”, the core of whom, according to Church Tradition, will be of the Jewish race...

The Christianizing of Judaism

Although the spiritual Israel is blessed, while the carnal Israel is accursed, still an important promise is given to the carnal Israel: that it will live in accordance with Abraham’s petition: “Let this Ishmael live before Thee” (Genesis 17.18). This life cannot be spiritual, because that is promised only to the spiritual Israel. So it must be carnal - physical survival and worldly power. At the same time, St. Ambrose admits the possibility that Abraham’s powerful petition could win spiritual life for some of the Jews - but only, of course, if they cease to belong to the carnal Israel and join the spiritual Israel through faith in Christ. For “it is the attribute of the righteous man [Abraham] to intercede even for sinners; therefore, let the Jews believe this too, because Abraham stands surety even for them, provided they will believe…”243

The promise of physical life and prosperity has certainly been fulfilled in the extraordinary tenacity of the Jewish race, its survival in the face of huge obstacles to the present day, and - since its gradual emancipation from the ghetto in the nineteenth century, - its domination of world politics and business in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. However, the successes of the Jews in worldly terms have been so great that many Evangelical Protestants have been tempted to ascribe it, not to God’s promise to Ishmael, but to his promise to Isaac. Reversing the interpretation of the Apostle Paul, they have made of the carnal Israel “the chosen people”, “the blessed seed” - and this in spite of the fact that this “chosen people” not only does not believe in Christ, but has been the foremost enemy of those who do believe in Christ for the last two thousand years!

243 St. Ambrose, On Abraham, 88.
In fact, “it may be,” as the anonymous Russian writer has suggested, “that the very preservation up until now of the Jewish people is a result not of their being ‘chosen’, but as a result of their apostasy”. For, having renounced their birthright, the Kingdom of God, they have received a “mess of pottage” instead – the promise of physical survival and worldly power. “If the Jews, having repented of the crime committed on Golgotha, would have become Christian, then they would have made up the foundation of a new spiritual nation, the nation of Christians. Would they have begun to strive in this case to preserve their nationality and government? Would they not have dispersed among other nations as the missionaries of Christianity just as the Apostles? Would they not have been strangers in a foreign land, not having a fatherland, like unto Abraham, but in this case with a higher spiritual meaning? All this happened with the Jews, that is, they became wanderers, not in a positive spiritual sense, but due to a curse, that is, not of their own will, but due to the will of chastising Providence since they did not fulfil that which God intended for them. Would they not have been exterminated en masse during persecutions as the main preachers of Christianity? Would they not have been assimilated among other peoples, so that the very name ‘Jew’, ‘Hebrew’, as a national name, would have disappeared and would have only remained in the remembrance of grateful nations as the glorious name of their enlighteners? Yes, and the very Promised Land and Jerusalem were given to the Hebrews not as a worldly fatherland, for which they are now striving, but as a prefiguration of the Heavenly Kingdom and the Heavenly Jerusalem, as a token of which Abraham and through him all the Hebrew nation coming out of Haran, renounced their earthly fatherland. For this reason the very significance of Jerusalem and the idea as a prefigurement would have passed away for the Jews, as soon as the Kingdom of God and the Heavenly Jerusalem would have become obtainable for them and would have become for them, as they are now for us, Christian holy places.”

By elevating the carnal Israel into the spiritual Israel, the Protestants fill up a major spiritual and emotional gap in their world-view; for, having rejected both the concept of the Church, and the reality of it in Orthodoxy, they have to find a substitute for it somewhere else. And so we have the paradoxical sight of the State of Israel, one of the main persecutors of Christianity in the contemporary world, which forbids conversions of Jews to Christianity and has driven out the majority of the Orthodox Christian population, being ardently supported by the Evangelical Protestants of the Anglo-Saxon countries. There have even been several attempts by Evangelicals to blow up the mosque of the Dome of the Rock, in order to make it possible for the Jews to build their Temple again – the Temple of the Antichrist!

However, before dismissing this delusion out of hand, we need to study the arguments that the Evangelicals produce in favour of it. And one of the most important of these is that Israel’s success has been prophesied and

244 “How to understand the Jews as being a chosen people”, op. cit.
blessed by God in the Abrahamic Covenant. In particular, they argue that God promised to the descendants of Abraham the whole land of Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates, which promise has been almost fulfilled since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, and that this would be their heritage forever (Genesis 13.15, 15.18).

In reply to this argument, we may note the following:-

1. God’s prophecies are never fulfilled approximately, but always exactly. The prophecy of the Jews’ winning control of the whole area from the Nile to the Euphrates was fulfilled exactly in the time of Kings David and Solomon (II Kings 8.3, II Chronicles 9.26). But the modern-day Jews have not emulated this feat: they reached the Suez Canal, but not the Nile very briefly in 1967, and have never reached the Euphrates.

2. Even if the boundaries of the State of Israel were to extend this far at some point in the future, this would still be an achievement of the carnal Israel (unless Israel would have been converted to Christ by that time), and therefore would not be something to rejoice in as if it were blessed by God, but rather to be bemoaned as an extension of the kingdom of the Antichrist.

3. According to St. Philaret of Moscow, the Hebrew word translated as forever (I will give it to thee and to thy seed forever” (13.15)) can mean no more than an indefinite period of time. Even if we accept St. John Chrysostom’s interpretation, that it means in perpetuity, this can only mean until the end of the world. For it is only “the meek” – that is, the Christians - who “will inherit the earth” in the age to come...

However, this is not the only argument of the Evangelicals. They also point to the many Biblical prophecies that speak of the return of the Jews to the land of Israel and their conversion to Christ. Some Orthodox Christians reject the Evangelical interpretation of some of these passages on the grounds that all the as-yet-unfulfilled Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel in fact refer to the New Testament Israel, the Church. However, it is impossible to allegorize these prophecies to such an extent that all references to the race of the Jews and to the physical land of Israel are excluded. In any case, even if, as I shall argue, some of these prophecies do refer to the return of the Jews to the Holy Land and their conversion to Holy Orthodoxy, they do not justify the Evangelicals’ positive attitude to the carnal Israel that remains unrepentant and unbelieving. So let us now examine these prophecies:-

1. Malachi 4.5, 6: “I will send you Elijah the Tishbite, who will restore the heart of the father to the son, lest I come and utterly smite the earth”. That this passage indeed refers to the conversion of the Jews through the Prophet Elijah

245 St. Philaret, Zapiski, p. 69.
246 St. John Chrysostom, Homily 34 on Genesis, 9. The Greek phrase from the Septuagint is: eis ton aiona, literally: “to the age”.
is confirmed by Christ Himself: “Elijah is indeed coming first and restores all things” (Mark 9.12) as one of the two witnesses against the Antichrist (Revelation 11). And St. John Chrysostom explains that the reason for Elijah’s coming is that “he may persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, so they may not all utterly perish at His coming... Hence the extreme accuracy of the expression: He did not say ‘He will restore the heart of the son to the father’, but ‘of the father to the son’. For the Jews being father to the apostles, His meaning is that He will restore to the doctrines of their sons, that is, of the apostles, the hearts of the fathers, that is, the Jewish people’s mind.”

2. Ezekiel 36-39. In chapter 36 the Prophet Ezekiel describes how the Jews will be gathered back into the land of Israel, and there converted and baptized: “For I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you [baptism], and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses... And you shall be My people, and I will be your God” (36.24-25, 28). Then comes the famous vision of the dry bones (ch. 37), which is an allegorical description of the resurrection of the Jews to true faith when they appeared to be completely devoid of it. Then comes the invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog (ch. 38), and the description of how the Jews will spend seven months clearing up after the destruction of the invaders (ch. 39). And then the Prophet says: “All the nations shall know that the house of Israel was led captive because of their sins, because they rebelled against Me, and I turned My face from them, and they all fell by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I deal with them, and I turned My face from them. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Now will I turn back captivity in Jacob, and will have mercy on the house of Israel, and will be jealous for the sake of My holy name” (39.23-25).

3. Jeremiah 3.16-18: “Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days, says the Lord, that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the Lord’. It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore. At that time Jerusalem shall be called the Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. Nor more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers.”

4. Zephaniah 3.10-13, 18-20: “From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My suppliants, the daughter of My dispersed ones, shall bring Me offering. On that day you shall not be put to shame because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against Me; for then I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones, and you shall no longer be haughty in My holy

247 St. John Chrysostom, Homily 57 on Matthew, 1.
mountain. For I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, those who are left in Israel... I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors, and I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gathered you together; yea, I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.”

5. Zechariah 12-14. In chapters 12 and 13 the Prophet Zechariah appears to describe how the Jews come to a profound repentance for their apostasy from Christ: “I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and compassion; and they shall look on Me Whom they pierced” (i.e. the Crucified Christ), “and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns over a first-born” (12.10). “In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness [baptism]” (13.1). In chapter 14 a great disaster overtakes the people, and “half the city shall go into captivity” (14.2). But the Lord will fight for Israel, and finally, after a great war, “it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (14.16). Now the mention of the feast of Tabernacles may lead to the thought that this is a Judaic feast, and so the context is the whole world going up to Jerusalem to pray at the Judaic feast – perhaps even to worship the Antichrist! However, in the context it is much more natural to interpret this as being a true, Christian feast, probably the Christian fulfilment of the feast of Tabernacles.

6. Romans 11.15, 25-27: “For if their [the Jews’] being cast away is the reconciling of the world [the Gentiles’ conversion], what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?... For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved.”

Origen explains this passage well: “Now indeed, until all the Gentiles come to salvation, the riches of God are concentrated in the multitude of [Gentile] believers, but as long as Israel remains in its unbelief it will not be possible to say that the fullness of the Lord’s portion has been attained. The people of Israel are still missing from the complete picture. But when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and Israel comes to salvation at the end of time, then it will be the people which, although it existed long ago, will come at the last and complete the fullness of the Lord’s portion and inheritance.”

248 Origen, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans.
For, as St. Cyril of Alexandria says, “Although it was rejected, Israel will also be saved eventually... Israel will be saved in its own time and will be called at the end, after the calling of the Gentiles.”

What does “all Israel” mean in this context? Blessed Theodoret of Cyr says: “All Israel’ means all those who believe, whether Jews... or Gentiles.” So when “the fullness of the Gentiles” has been gathered into the granary of the Church, and then “the fullness of the Jews”, we will be able to say that “all Israel” has been saved – that is, the whole of “the Israel of God” (Galatians 6.16), the Church of Christ.

7. Revelation 3.8: “Behold, says the Lord to the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and make obeisance before they feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”

Holy New Hieromartyr Mark (Novoselov) comments on this: “[St. John] with complete clarity speaks about the conversion of the God-fighting people to the Church of Christ, when she, few in numbers and powerless from an external point of view, but powerful with an inner strength and faithfulness to her Lord (Revelation 3.8) will draw to herself the ‘remnant’ of the God-fighting tribe.

"Gazing with the eye of faith at that which the Lord has done before our eyes, and applying the ear of our heart and mind to the events of our days, comparing that which is seen and heard with the declarations of the Word of God, I cannot but feel that a great, wonderful and joyous mystery of God's economy is coming towards us: the Judaizing haters and persecutors of the Church of God, who are striving to subdue and annihilate her, by the wise permission of Providence will draw her to purification and strengthening, so as ‘to present her [to Christ] as a glorious Church, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but so that she should be holy and blameless’ (Ephesians 6.27).

"And in His time, known only to the One Lord of time, this, according to the son of thunder's strict expression ‘synagogue of Satan’ will bow before the pure Bride of Christ, conquered by her holiness and blamelessness and, perhaps, frightened by the image of the Antichrist. And if the rejection of the Apostle Paul's fellow-countrymen was, in his words, ‘the reconciliation of the

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250 Blessed Theodoret of Cyr, Interpretation of the Letter to the Romans, P.G. 82: 180. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) interprets this passage to mean that all of the Jews will be saved: “Not of a single people - not of the Russians, or of the Greeks - has it been said that all of their descendants will be saved in due time, as this is said of the Jews” (“Sermon on the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing women”, 1903; Living Orthodoxy, N 83, vol. XIV, no. 5, September-October, 1992, p. 37). But this is surely a mistake. We know that the Antichrist, for one, will be a Jew and will not be saved.
world [with God], what will be their acceptance if not life from the dead?’ (Romans 11.15).\textsuperscript{251}

The famous monarchist writer Lev Tikhomirov agrees with this interpretation: “Is this conversion of the Jews that salvation of ‘all Israel’ which the Apostle Paul foretold? In the Apocalypse it is said that the saved will come ‘of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie’. But not the whole of the ‘synagogue’ will come, but only ‘of the synagogue’, that is, a part of it. But even here, where the Apostle Paul says that ‘the whole of Israel will be saved’, he means only a part: ‘for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel... They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed’ (Romans 9.6,8).

“...The opinion is widespread among us that the conversion of the Jews will take place at the very appearance of the Saviour, when they shall cry out: ‘Blessed is He That cometh in the name of the Lord’. But this is not evident from the Apocalypse. But if the Philadelphian conversion will bring ‘all Israel’ that is to be saved to Christ, then this will, of course, be a great event, fully explaining the rejoicing of the Heavens. Israel is a chosen people with whom it will not be possible to find a comparison when he begins to do the work of God. The Jews will, of course, multiply the forces of Christianity for the resistance against the Antichrist. ‘If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,’ says the Apostle Paul, ‘what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?’ (Romans 11.15).”\textsuperscript{252}

7. Revelation 7.4: “And I heard the number of those who were sealed; and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.” “This sealing,” writes Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Jordanville, “will begin with the Israelites, who before the end of the world will be converted to Christ, as St. Paul predicts (Romans 9.27, 11.26). In each of the twelve tribes there will be twelve thousand sealed, and 144,000 in all. Of these tribes only the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, because from it, according to tradition, will come the Antichrist. In place of the tribe of Dan is mentioned the priestly tribe of Levi which previously had not entered into the twelve tribes. Such a limited number is mentioned, perhaps, in order to show how small is the number of the sons of Israel who are saved in comparison with the uncountable multitude of those who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ from among all the other formerly pagan people of the earth.”\textsuperscript{253}

\textsuperscript{251} Hieromartyr Mark, Pisma k Druziam (Letters to Friends), Moscow, 1994, p. 125 (in Russian). See also pp. 103-104.

\textsuperscript{252} Tikhomirov, Religioznie-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii (The Religious-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, p. 570 (in Russian).

So the carnal Israel can and will be saved. But only, it must be emphasized again, by ceasing to be the carnal Israel and becoming part of the spiritual. For the carnal and the spiritual Israels, though related through their common father, and constantly intertwined in history, are mutually incompatible...

**Conclusion**

We are now in a better position to understand the relationship between the two "great nations" who come from Abraham and who are given promises in the Abrahamic Covenant. For clarity’s sake we shall refer to two covenants, or promises, the one referring to the spiritual Israel and the other to the carnal Israel. The two covenants are both complementary and contrary to each other. The spiritual Israel is promised spiritual blessings: *salvation and the Kingdom of Heaven*, while the carnal Israel is promised carnal blessings: *survival and the kingdom of this world*; for this is what the Jews confessed that they belonged to when they declared to the ruler of this world: “We have no other king than Caesar” (John 19, 15). And so it has turned out in history: the children of the spiritual Israel, consisting of people from many nations, both Jews and Gentiles, have been given salvation in Christ, while the children of the carnal Israel, having lost salvation, have nevertheless survived many centuries of oppression and humiliation, and have achieved worldly power – and power over the spiritual Israel, too. The worldly power of the carnal Israel is destined to reach its peak at the end of the world, in the time of the Jewish Antichrist. At the same time, however, or perhaps before – the spiritual Israel will achieve her greatest victory – the conversion of many, perhaps most of the children of the carnal Israel to Christ.

Since the carnal Israel is promised physical life and power, it is no wonder that since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, and especially since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, it has regained power over the land of Israel, driving out most of the Christians in the process, and may well recapture all the land from the Nile to the Euphrates, as was promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. But it is important to understand that such a reconquest, if it takes place, will not be by virtue of the Jews being the chosen people, as they and their Evangelical allies believe, but by virtue of the exact opposite: of their being the accursed people. For the people that is carnal is given physical gifts that are appropriate to its carnal desires, and to compensate for its alienation from the true, spiritual gifts.

But in the final analysis it is the meek – that is, the Christians, the spiritual Israel - who will inherit the earth. Only it will be given to them only after this present world has perished in its present form, and has been renewed and transformed into the conditions of the original Paradise. Moreover, since corruptible “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom” (I Corinthians 15.50), they will receive it, not in their present corruptible bodies, but in that “earth”, the glorious body of the resurrection, which they will inherit at the
Coming of Christ...

St. Seraphim of Sarov prophesied that at the end of the world there would be only two important nations: the Russians and the Jews, and that the Antichrist would be a Jew born in Russia. However, the Russians and the Jews will not be strictly racial but spiritual categories, corresponding to the categories of the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael. The Russians will be the leading Christian nation, and any other Christian nation that does not want to be destroyed spiritually by being merged into Judaism will have to follow the lead of Russia (Isaiah 60.12). And the Jews will be the leading antichristian nation, to which all those nations who have fallen away from Christianity will submit. How fitting, then, if the Russian nation which has suffered most from the antichristian Jews in the terrible Russian-Jewish revolution, should finally convert them to Christianity, so that the former bitter enemies, reconciled in the Body of Christ, should fight together against the Russian-Jewish Antichrist!


Pentecost.
APPENDIX 2. PATRISTIC TESTIMONIES ON THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

St. Ignatius of Antioch. “They abstain from the Eucharist and prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.” (To the Smyrnaeans, 8).

St. Justin the Martyr. “As Jesus Christ our Saviour was made flesh through the word of God, and took flesh and blood for our salvation; in the same way the food over which thanksgiving has been offered by the prayer of the word which came from Him – the food by which our blood and flesh are nourished through its transformation – is, we are taught, the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ Who was made flesh.” (First Apology, 65-66).

St. Irenaeus of Lyons. “As the bread, which comes from the earth, receives the invocation of God, and then it is no longer common bread but Eucharist, consisting of two things, an earthly and a heavenly; so our bodies, after partaking of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the eternal resurrection.” (Against Heresies, IV, 18).

St. Irenaeus of Lyons. “If this flesh is not saved, then the Lord has not redeemed us by His Blood, and the bread which we break is not a sharing in His Body. For there is no blood except from veins, and from flesh, and from the rest of the substance of human nature which the Word of God came to be, and redeemed by His Blood, as His Apostles also says: ‘In Him we have redemption through His Blood, and the forgiveness of sins’ (Col. 1.14). And since we are His members, and are nourished through creation – the creation He furnishes for us, causing the sun to rise and rain to fall as He pleases – He declared that the cup, which comes from His creation, is His own Blood, from which He strengthens our blood; and He affirmed that the bread, which is from creation, is His very own Body, from which He strengthens our bodies. Since, therefore, both the mixed cup and the prepared bread receive the Word of God, and become the eucharist of Christ’s Body and Blood, from which the substance of our flesh is strengthened and established, how, then, can they say that the flesh, which is fed on the Body and Blood of the Lord, and is one of His members, is incapable of receiving the gift of God which is everlasting life? As the blessed Paul also says in the Letter to the Ephesians: ‘We are members of His Body, from His Flesh and from His Bones’ (Eph. 5.30), saying this not about some kind of spiritual and invisible human nature, for a spirit has neither flesh nor bones, but about that arrangement which is authentic human nature, which consists of flesh and sinews and bones, and is fed from the cup, which is His Blood, and is strengthened by the bread, which is His Body” (Against Heresies, V, 2, 3).

St. Cyril of Jerusalem. “Once, in Cana of Galilee, He changed water into wine (and wine is akin to blood); is it incredible that He should change wine into
Therefore with complete assurance let us partake of those elements as being the Body and Blood of Christ… so that by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ you may be made of the same Body and Blood with Him. For in this way we become Christ-bearers, since His Body and Blood are distributed in the parts of our body. Thus, as blessed Peter says, we ‘become partakers of the Divine nature’… Do not think, then, of the elements as mere bread and wine. They are, according to the Lord’s declaration, body and blood. Though the perception suggests the contrary, let faith be your stay. Instead of judging the matter by taste, let faith give you an unwavering confidence that you have been privileged to receive the Body and Blood of Christ” (Catechetical Discourses, IV, 6).

**St. Hilary of Poitiers.** “Christ gives evidence of this natural unity in us: ‘He who eats My Flesh, and drinks My Blood, dwells in Me, and I in him’. For no one will be in Christ, unless Christ is in him, unless he has taken into himself the Flesh of Christ, Who took man’s flesh… He ‘lives through the Father’: and as He lives through the Father, so we live through His Flesh… This is the cause of our life, that we have Christ dwelling in our fleshly nature, in virtue of His Flesh, and we shall live through Him in the same way as He lives through the Father. We live through Him by nature, according to the flesh, that is, having acquired the nature of the flesh. Then surely He has the Father in Himself according to the Spirit, since He lives through the Father. The mystery of the real and natural unity is to be proclaimed in terms of the honour granted to us by the Son, and the Son’s dwelling in us through His Flesh, while we are united to Him bodily and inseparably.” (On the Trinity, 8.16, 17).

**St. Gregory the Theologian.** “Do not hesitate to pray for me, to be my ambassador, when by your word you draw down the Word, when with a stroke that draws no blood you sever the Body and Blood of the Lord, using your voice as a sword.” (Letter 171).

**St. Gregory of Nyssa.** “The subsistence of every body depends on nourishment… and the Word of God coalesced with human nature and did not invent some different constitution for man’s nature when He came in a Body like ours. It was by the usual and appropriate means that He ensured the Body’s continuance, maintaining its subsistence by food and drink, the food being bread. Now in our case one may say that when anyone looks at bread he is looking at a human body, for when the bread gets into the body it becomes the body. Similarly in the case of the Word of God, the Body which received the Godhead, when it partook of nourishment in the form of bread, was in a manner of speaking identical with that bread, since the nourishment was transformed into the natural qualities of the body… the Body which by the indwelling of the God the Word was transmuted to the dignity of Godhead. If this is so, we are right in believing that now also the bread which is consecrated by the Word of God is transmuted into the Body of God the
Word... It is not a matter of the bread’s becoming the Body of the Word through the natural process of eating: rather it is transmuted immediately into the Body through the Word, just as the Word Himself said, ‘This is My Body’... The God Who was manifested mingled Himself with the nature that was doomed to death, in order that by communion with the Divinity human nature may be deified together with Him. It is for this purpose that by the Divine plan of His grace He plants Himself in the believers by means of that Flesh.” (The Great Catechism, 37).

St. Ambrose of Milan. “Whenever we take the sacraments, which through the mystery of the sacred prayer are transfigured into His Flesh and Blood, we ‘proclaim the Lord’s death’.” (On the Faith, 4.125).

St. Ambrose of Milan. “First of all, I told you about the saying of Christ, whose effect is to change and convert the established kinds of nature. Then came the saying of Christ, that He gave His Flesh to be eaten, and His Blood to be drunk. His disciples could not stand this, and they turned away from Him. Only Peter said: ‘You have the words of eternal life; how I take myself away from you?’ And so, to prevent others from saying that they are going away, because of a horror of actual blood, and so that the grace of redemption should continue, for that reason you receive the sacrament in a similitude, to be sure, but you obtain the grace and virtue of the reality. ‘I am,’ He says, ‘the living Bread Who came down from heaven.’ But the Flesh did not come down from heaven; that is to say, He took flesh from a virgin. How, then, did bread come down from heaven – and bread that is ‘living bread’. Because our Lord Jesus Christ shares in both Divinity and body: and you, who receive the Flesh, partake of His Divine substance in that food.” (On the Sacraments 6.3,4).

St. Ambrose of Milan. “It is clear, then, that the Virgin gave birth outside the order of nature. And this Body which we bring about by consecration is from the Virgin. Why do you look for the order of nature here, in the case of the Body of Christ, when the Lord Jesus Himself was born of a virgin outside the natural order? It was certainly the genuine Flesh of Christ that was crucified, that was buried: then surely the sacrament is the sacrament of that Flesh. The Lord Jesus Himself proclaims, ‘This is My Body’. Before the blessing of the heavenly words something of another character [alia species] is spoken of; after consecration it is designated ‘Body’. He Himself speaks of His Blood. Before consecration it is spoken of as something else; after consecration it is named ‘Blood’.” (On the Mysteries, 54).

St. Ephraim the Syrian. “He stretched forth His hand and gave them the bread which His right hand had sanctified: ‘Take, eat, all of you of this bread which My word has sanctified. Do not regard as bread what I have given you now... Eat it, and do not disdain its crumbs. For this bread which I have sanctified is My Body. Its least crumb sanctifies thousands of thousands, and it is capable of giving life to all that eat it. Take, eat in faith, doubting not at all
that this is My Body. And he who eats it in faith eats in it fire and the Spirit. If anyone doubts and eats it, it is plain bread to him. He who believes and eats the bread sanctified in My name, if he is pure, it will keep him pure, if he is a sinner, he will be forgiven. He, however, who despises it, or spurns it, or insults it, he may be sure that he is insulting the Son Who has called the bread His Body, and truly made it so.” (Station of the Night of the Fifth of Passion Week)

**St. John Chrysostom.** “Because the earlier nature of flesh, that which had been formed from the earth, had become dead through sin and was devoid of life, He brought in an another sort of dough and leaven, so to speak, His own Flesh, *by nature the same*, but free from sin and full of life... What the Lord did not endure on the cross [the breaking of His legs] He now submits to in His Sacrifice for His love of you: He permits Himself to be broken in pieces that all may be filled... *What is in the chalice is the same as that which flowed from Christ’s side. What is the bread? Christ’s Body.*” (Homily 24 on I Corinthians).

**St. John Chrysostom.** “Not only ought we to see the Lord: we ought to take him in our hands, put out teeth into His Flesh, and unite ourselves with Him in the closest union. ‘I shared in flesh and blood for your sake. I have given back again to you the very flesh and blood through which I became your kinsman.’” (Homily 46 on John).

**St. John Chrysostom.** “Moses in his account of the first man has Adam say: ‘Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh’, hinting to us of the Master’s side. Just as at that time God took the rib of Adam and formed a woman, so Christ gave us blood and water from His side and formed the Church... Have you seen how Christ unites to Himself His Bride? Have you seen with what food He nurtures us all? It is by the same food that we have been formed and are fed. Just as a woman nurtures her offspring with her own blood and milk, so also Christ continuously nurtures with His own Blood those whom He has begotten” (Baptismal Instructions, III, 18,19).

**St. Augustine of Hippo.** “How was He ‘carried in His own hands’? When He gave His own Body and Blood, He took in His own hands what the faithful recognize; and, in a manner, He carried Himself when He said, ‘This is My Body’.” (On Psalm 32, 2.2).

**The Anaphora of St. Mark.** “This is in truth the Body and Blood of Emmanuel our God, Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe and I confess unto the last breath that this is the vivifying Flesh which Thine Only-Begotten son our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ took of the Lady of us all, the holy Theotokos Mary.”

**St. Cyril of Alexandria.** “We shall see that the flesh united with Him has life-giving power; it is not alien flesh, but flesh which belonged to Him Who can life to all things. Fire, in this world of the senses, can transmit the power of its
natural energy to any materials with which it comes into contact; so that it can change even water, which is in its own nature a cold substance, to an unnatural condition of heat. This being so, is it strange or in any way incredible that the very Word from God the Father, Who is in His own nature life, should give to the Flesh united to Himself this life-giving property? For this Flesh belongs to the Word; it does not belong to some other being than Himself Who may be thought of separately as another member of the human race. If you remove the life-giving Word of God from this mystical and real union with the body, if you completely set Him apart, how are you to show that Body as still life-giving? Who was it Who said, ‘He who eats My Flesh, and drinks My Blood, remains in Me, and I remain in Him’? If it was a man who was born in his own separate nature; if the Word of God did not come to be in our condition; then indeed what is performed is an act of cannibalism, and participation in it is of no value at all. I hear Christ Himself saying, ‘The flesh is of no value; it is the Spirit that gives life.” (Against Nestorius, 4.5).

St. Cyril of Alexandria. “We approach the consecrated Gifts of the sacrament, and are sanctified by partaking of the holy Flesh and the precious Blood of Christ, the Saviour of us all. We do not receive it as common flesh (God forbid!), nor as the flesh of a mere man...; we receive it as truly life-giving, as the Flesh that belongs to the Word Himself. For as being God He is in His own nature Life, and when He became one with the Flesh which is His own, He rendered it life-giving.” (Epistle 17).

St. Cyril of Alexandria. “He said quite plainly This is My Body, and This is My Blood, so that you may not suppose that the things you see are a type; rather, in some ineffable way they are changed by God, Who is able to do all things, into the Body and Blood of Christ truly offered. Partaking of them, we take into us the life-giving and sanctifying power of Christ. For it was necessary for Him to be present in us in a Divine manner through the Holy Spirit: to be mixed, as it were, with our bodies by means of His holy Flesh and precious Blood, for us to have Him in reality as a sacramental gift which gives life, in the form of bread and wine. And so that we should not be struck down with horror at seeing flesh and blood displayed on the holy tables of our churches, God adapts Himself to our weakness and infuses the power of life into the oblations and changes them into the effective power of His own Flesh, so that we may have them for life-giving reception, and that the Body of Life may prove to be in us a life-giving seed.” (On Luke 22.19).

St. Cyril of Alexandria. “It was necessary that not only the soul be recreated into the newness of life through the Holy Spirit, but that this gross and earthly body be sanctified and called to incorruptibility by a grosser and kindred participation” (On John 6.54).

St. Cyril of Alexandria. “We have Him in us sensibly and mentally and intellectually. He dwells in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, and we share
in His holy Flesh, and are sanctified in a double manner” (On I Corinthians 6.15).

**St. John of the Ladder.** “The blood of God and the blood of His servants are quite different – but I am thinking here of the dignity and not of the actual physical substance” (The Ladder, 23.20).

**St. John of Damascus.** “The bread and wine are not merely figures of the Body and Blood of Christ (God forbid!) but the deified Body of the Lord itself: for the Lord has said, ‘This is My Body’, not ‘this is a figure of My Body’; and ‘My Blood’, not ‘a figure of My Blood’. And on a previous occasion He had said to the Jews, ‘Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood ye have no life in you. For My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed’.” (On the Orthodox Faith 4.13).

**The Synodicon of Orthodoxy.** To those who do not partake of His holy and immortal Mysteries with fear, since they consider them to be mere bread and common wine rather than the very flesh of the Master and His holy and precious blood shed for the life of the world; to such men be Anathema.

**St. Nicetas Stethatos.** Those who accept unleavened wafers remain under the shadow of the law and eat the Jewish meal, and not the rational and living God, [which is] superessential (επιοσσιν) and consubstantial with us, the faithful. We have received the superessential bread from the heaven, for what is that which is superessential if not that which is consubstantial with us? But there is no bread that is consubstantial with us besides the Body of Christ, which is consubstantial with us according to His human flesh.” (Dialexis (1054), to Cardinal Humbert).

**St. Nicetas Stethatos.** “Performing on Himself the sacred mystery of our recreation, the Word offered up Himself on our behalf on the Cross, and He continually offers Himself up, giving His immaculate Body to us daily as a soul-nourishing banquet, so that by eating it and by drinking His precious Blood we may through this participation consciously grow in spiritual stature. Communicating in His Body and Blood and refashioned in purer form, we are united to the twofold Divine-human Word in two ways, in our body and in our soul; for He is God incarnate Whose flesh is the same in essence as our own. Thus we do not belong to ourselves, but to Him Who has united us to Himself through this immortal meal and has made us by adoption what He Himself is by nature.”

**St. Theophylact of Bulgaria.** “By saying, ‘This is My Body’, He shows that the bread which is sanctified on the altar is the Lord’s Body Itself, and not a symbolic type. For He did not say, ‘This is a type’, but ‘This is My Body’. By an ineffable action it is changed, although it may appear to us as bread. Since
we are weak and could not endure raw meat, much less human flesh, it appears as bread to us although it is indeed flesh” (On Matthew 26.26).

**St. Nicholas Cabasilas.** “If we speak of re-creation, it is from Himself and from His own Flesh that He restored what is necessary, and He substituted Himself for that which had been destroyed.” (The Life in Christ, 17).

**St. Nicholas Cabasilas.** “So precisely does He conform to the things which He assumed, that, in giving these things to us which He has received from us, He gives Himself to us. Partaking of the body and blood of His humanity, we receive God Himself in our souls – the body and blood of God and the soul, mind and will of God – not less than His humanity.” (The Life of Christ, 4)

**St. Gregory Palamas.** “The Body of Christ is truly the Body of God and not a symbol.” (Against Akindynos, VII, 15).

**St. Gregory Palamas.** “In His incomparable love for men, the Son of God did not merely unite His Divine Hypostasis to our nature, clothing Himself with a living body and an intelligent soul, ‘to appear on earth and live with men’, but, O incomparable and magnificent miracle! He unites Himself also to human hypostases, joining Himself to each of the faithful by communion in His holy Body. For he becomes one Body with us, making us a temple of the whole Godhead – for in the very Body of Christ ‘the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells corporeally’. How then would He not illuminate those who share worthily in the Divine radiance of His Body within us, shining upon their souls as He once shone on the bodies of the apostles on Tabor? For as this Body, the source of the light of grace, was at that time not yet united to our body, it shone exteriorly on those who came near it worthily, transmitting light to the soul through the eyes of sense. But today, since it is united to us and dwells within us, it illumines the soul interiorly.” (Triads I, 3, 38).

**Encyclical of the Eastern Patriarchs (1848).** “We believe that in this sacred rite our Lord Jesus Christ is present not symbolically [typikos], not figuratively [eikonikos], not by an abundance of grace, as in the other Mysteries, not by a simple descent, as certain Fathers say about Baptism, and not through a ‘penetration’ of the bread, so that the Divinity of the Word should ‘enter’ into the bread offered for the Eucharist, as the followers of Luther explain it rather awkwardly and unworthily – but truly and actually, so that after the sanctification of the bread and wine, the bread is changed, transubstantiated, converted, transformed, into the actual true Body of the Lord, Which was born in Bethlehem of the Ever-Virgin, was baptized in the Jordan, suffered, was buried, resurrected, ascended, sits at the right hand of God the Father, and is to appear in the clouds of heaven; and the wine is changed and transubstantiated into the actual true Blood of the Lord, which at the time of His suffering on the Cross was shed for the life of the world. Yet again, we believe that after the sanctification of the bread and wine there remains no
longer the bread and wine themselves, but the very Body and Blood of the Lord, under the appearance and form of bread and wine.”

**St. John of Kronstadt.** "What a wonderful creation of God is man! God has wonderfully placed in the dust His image, the immortal spirit. But marvel, Christian, still more at the wisdom, omnipotence and mercy of the Creator: He changes and transforms the bread and wine into His most pure Body and into His most pure Blood, and takes up His abode in them Himself, by His most pure and Life-giving Spirit, so that His Body and Blood are together Spirit and Life. And wherefore is this? In order to cleanse you, a sinner, from your sins, to sanctify you and to unite you, thus sanctified, to Himself, and thus united to give you blessedness and immortality. 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!' (Rom. 11:33)." (My Life in Christ: Part 1, Holy Trinity Monastery, p. 100)

**St. John Maximovich.** “Bread and wine are made into the Body and Blood of Christ during the Divine Liturgy... How is the Body of Christ at the same time both the Church and the Holy Mystery? Are the faithful both members of the Body of Christ, the Church, and also communicants of the Body of Christ in the Holy Mysteries? In neither instance is this name ‘Body of Christ’ used metaphorically, but rather in the most basic sense of the word. We believe that the Holy Mysteries which keep the form of bread and wine are the very Body and the very Blood of Christ... For the full sanctification of man, the body of the servant of the Lord must be united with the Body of Christ, and this is accomplished in the mystery of Holy Communion. The true Body and the true Blood of Christ which we receive, becomes a part of the great Body of Christ... Christ, invisible to the bodily eye, manifests Himself on earth clearly through His Church just as the unseen human spirit manifests itself through the body. The Church is the Body of Christ both because its parts are united to Christ through His Divine Mysteries and because through her Christ works in the world. We partake of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Mysteries, so that we ourselves may be members of Christ’s Body: the Church.” (“The Church as the Body of Christ”, Orthodox Life, no. 5, 1981).

**Archbishop Averky of Jordanville.** “‘It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh profiteth little. The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and life.’ This means that the words of Christ must be understood spiritually, and not in a crudely sensual way, that is, as if He offered His Flesh for eating like the meat of animals, being consumed for the satisfaction of a carnal hunger. It is as if the Lord says, ‘My teaching is not of meats, nor of meals that nourish the bodily life, but of the Divine Spirit, of grace and eternal life, which are established in people by grace-filled means.’ ‘The flesh profiteth little’ – He by no means said this of His own Flesh, but about those who understand His words in a carnal manner. What does understanding carnally mean? ‘To look on things in a simple manner without representing anything more – that is what understanding carnally means. We should not judge in this manner
about the visible, but we must look into all its mysteries with internal eyes. That is what understanding spiritually means’ (Chrysostom). The Flesh of Christ separated from His Spirit could not give life, but it is understood, of course, that in the words of Christ He is not talking about His soulless, lifeless Flesh, but about His Flesh, indivisibly united with His Divine Spirit... All three Synoptics describe this in approximately the same way. The Lord ‘received’ that is, ‘took’ bread and blessed and broke it, and distributed it to the disciples, saying: ‘Take, eat; this is My Body’. ‘Bread’ here is ‘artos’ in Greek, which means ‘risen bread’, leavened with yeast, as opposed to ‘aksimon’, which is the name for the unleavened bread used by the Jews for Pascha. One must suppose that such bread was deliberately prepared at the command of the Lord for the institution of the new mystery. The significance of this bread lies in the fact that it is as it were alive, symbolizing life, as opposed to unleavened bread, which is dead bread. ‘He blessed’, ‘He gave thanks’, refer to the verbal expression of gratitude to God the Father, as it was, for example, at the moment of the resurrection of Lazarus: that which was asked was fulfilled at the very moment of asking, which is why at that same moment it became an object of thanksgiving. What the Lord said here is exceptionally important: ‘This is My Body’: He did not say ‘this’ [in the masculine gender], that is: ‘this bread’, but ‘this [in the neuter gender], because at that moment the bread had already ceased to be bread, and had become the genuine Body of Christ, having only the appearance of bread. The Lord did not say: ‘This is an image of My Body’, but ‘This is My Body’ (St. Chrysostom, St. Theophylact). In consequence of the prayer of Christ, the bread acquired the substance of Body, preserving only the external appearance of bread. ‘Since we are weak,’ says Blessed Theophylact, ‘and could not endure raw meat, much less human flesh, it appears as bread to us although it is indeed flesh’. ‘Why,’ asks St. Chrysostom, ‘were the disciples not disturbed on hearing this? Because before that Christ had told them much that was important about this mystery (we recall His conversation about the bread that comes down from heaven) (John 6).’ By the ‘Body of Christ’ is understood the whole physical substance of the God-man, inseparably united with His soul and Divinity.” (Guide to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament, vol. I, 1954, pp. 156, 275).
APPENDIX 3. TESTIMONIES FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND THE HOLY FATHERS ON THE NECESSITY OF HAVING NO COMMUNION WITH HERETICS AND SCHISMASTICS

“And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: This is the law of the Passover: no stranger shall eat of it. And every slave or servant bought with money – him thou shalt circumcise, and then shall he eat of it. A sojourner or hireling shall not eat of it. In one house shall it be eaten.” (Exodus 12.43-46).

St. Apraphat of Syria writes that the “one house” in which the Passover is to be eaten is “the Church of Christ”, and that just as the slave could not eat the Passover unless he was circumcised, so the sinner “comes to Baptism, the true Circumcision, and is joined to the People of God, and communicates in the Body and Blood of Christ”. (Demonstrations 12, 525.8, 525.12).

St. John Chrysostom writes: “Let no-one communicate who is not of the disciples. Let no Judas receive, lest he suffer the fate of Judas… I would give up my life rather than impart of the Lord’s Blood to the unworthy; and I will shed my own blood rather than give such awful Blood contrary to what is right.” (Homilies on Matthew, 83.6).

St. Ephraim the Syrian writes: “Just as he who worships idols does not worship wood or stone, but demons, so he who prays with the Manichaeans prays with Satan, and he who prays with the Marcionites prays with Legion, and he who prays with the followers of Bardaisan prays with Beelzebub, and he who prays with the Jews prays with Barabbas the robber.” (Fifth Discourse against False Teachings).

St. Gregory of Nyssa writes: “I affirm that it is a lawful thing to hate God’s enemies, and that this kind of hatred is pleasing to our Lord: and by God’s enemies I mean those who deny the glory of our Lord, be they Jews, or downright idolaters, or those who through Arius’ teaching idolize the creature, and so adopt the error of the Jews”. (Letter XVII to Eustathia, Ambrosia and Basilissa).

St. John the Almsgiver said: “We shall not escape sharing in that punishment which, in the world to come, awaits heretics, if we defile Orthodoxy and the holy Faith by adulterous communion with heretics.” (The Life of St. John the Almsgiver).

St. John of Damascus writes: “With all our strength let us beware lest we receive Communion from or give it to heretics. ‘Give not what is holy to the dogs,’ says the Lord. ‘Neither cast ye your pearls before swine’, lest we become partakers in their dishonour and condemnation.” (Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, IV, 13).
“Holy things to the holy!” (The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom).

“And the Lord said to Joshua, Rise up: why hast thou fallen upon thy face? The people has sinned, and transgressed the covenant which I made with them; they have stolen from the accursed things (Greek: anathema), and put it into their store. And the children of Israel will not be able to stand before their enemies, for they have become an accursed thing (anathema); I will no longer be with you, unless ye remove the accursed thing (anathema) from yourselves.” Joshua 7.10-11.

“Let any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon that merely joins in prayer with heretics be suspended, but if he has permitted them to perform any service as clergymen, let him be deposed.” (Apostolic Canon 45).

“Let any clergyman or layman who enters a synagogue of Jews, or of heretics, to pray be both deposed and excommunicated.” (Apostolic Canon 65).

“Concerning the necessity of not permitting heretics to come into the house of God, so long as they persist in their heresy.” (Canon 6 of the Council of Laodicea).

“That one must not accept the blessings of heretics, which are rather misfortunes than blessings.” (Canon 32 of the Council of Laodicea).

“That one must not join in prayer with heretics or schismatics.” (Canon 33 of the Council of Laodicea).

St. Maximus the Confessor said: “Even if the whole universe holds communion with the [heretical] patriarch, I will not communicate with him. For I know from the writings of the holy Apostle Paul: the Holy Spirit declares that even the angels would be anathema if they should begin to preach another Gospel, introducing some new teaching.” (The Life of St. Maximus the Confessor).

St. Theodore the Studite said: “Chrysostomos loudly declares not only heretics, but also those who have communion with them, to be enemies of God.” (Epistle of Abbot Theophilus)

St. Theodore the Studite said: “Guard yourselves from soul-destroying heresy, communion with which is alienation from Christ.” (P.G. 99.1216).

St. Theodore the Studite said: “Some have suffered final shipwreck with regard to the faith. Others, though they have not drowned in their thoughts, are nevertheless perishing through communion with heresy.”
“The divine and sacred canons say: ‘He who has communion with an excommunicate, let him be excommunicated, as overthrowing the rule of the Church.’ And again: ‘He who receives a heretic is subject to the same indictment...’ The great apostle and evangelist John says: ‘If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching with him, do not greet him and do not receive him into your house; for he who greets him communicates with his evil deeds’ (II John 10-11). If we are forbidden merely to greet him on the way, and if inviting him into our house is prohibited, how can it be otherwise not in a house, but in the temple of God, in the sanctuary at the mystical and terrible Supper of the Son of God... Whoever belches out the commemoration of him who has been worthily cut off by the Holy Spirit for his arrogance towards God and the Divine things, becomes for that reason an enemy of God and the Divine things.” (From an Epistle of the Martyred Fathers of the Holy Mountain to Emperor Michael Palaeologus against the heretical Patriarch John Beccus of Constantinople).

St. Mark of Ephesus said: “All the teachers of the Church, and all the Councils, and all the Divine Scriptures advise us to flee from the heterodox and separate from their communion.”

“Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.” (II Corinthians 6.14-16). 

“Come out of her, My people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues.” (Revelation 18.4).
APPENDIX 4. AN OPEN LETTER ON CYPRIANISM

TO ARCHBISHOP CHRYSOSTOMOS OF ETNA AND BISHOP AUXENTIOS
(OF THE SYNOD OF METROPOLITAN CYPRIAN OF FILI)

Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

Your Graces,

Already some years ago, I tried to enter into dialogue with you on the question of Grace, but you refused. More recently, you have made it clear in communications to others that you still do not want a dialogue. So be it. Nevertheless, you have continued very fiercely to attack my writings and my person in correspondence with other people. I am therefore taking the opportunity presented by the internet to answer your attack in an open letter; for while your opinion of me as a person is unimportant, the question of Grace continues to be, in my opinion, very important, and I believe that your arguments in defence of your point of view are faulty and misleading.

But first let me deal with some of the less important points you raise. You criticise me, first, for calling you “Cyprianites”. If, as it appears, you have felt insulted by this term, then I am sorry. But let me assure you that no insult was meant. It is just a matter of convenience, a way of avoiding needless confusion in the midst of our jurisdictional chaos. How, for example, are you going to distinguish all the various men who call themselves “Archbishop of Athens” without using some such epithets?

Secondly, you say that I call Archbishop Mark a heretic. That is not true. He has called me a heretic - without indicating what my heresy might be. I have said that he is in communion with heresy, and that his recent relations with “Patriarch” Alexis of Moscow constitute a betrayal of the Church. (Incidentally, our parish priest, too, has publicly declared that Archbishop Mark is a traitor, and Metropolitan Vitaly has recently declared that Mark has lost the gift of the discernment of spirits.) If you counter that that is more or less equivalent to heresy, then I would not argue with you. But since you seem to be somewhat of a stickler for detail with regard to my representation of you, I would ask you to be more careful in representing my point of view.

Thirdly, you say that I have said that the Romanian Old Calendarists receive new calendarists by baptism. That is quite untrue. I have said, repeating the words of the secretary of the Romanian Synod, Archimandrite Cyprian, to me in August, 1994, that the Romanian Old Calendarists receive new calendarists by chrismation. You assert that they do this for complex pastoral reasons - because some of the priests may have been agents, baptisms
may have been incorrectly done, chrismation was a “safeguard”, etc. I do not deny any of that. I simply state the fact - and a very significant fact it is - that the Romanian Old Calendarists receive new calendarists by chrismation.

Now let us turn to the basic issue. And here I want to make clear what I mean by “Grace”. I mean the Grace of sacraments. I do not deny, and never have denied, that God may give Grace to people outside the Church. Cornelius received the Grace of the Holy Spirit before he was baptised. Everyone who is converted to the truth of Orthodoxy and becomes a catechumen has already been enlightened by Grace to some degree. But those outside the Church do not have the Grace of sacraments.

I am also prepared to admit the possibility that even when a community has been anathematised by a true and valid anathema, God may still protect certain individuals within that community from the full force of the anathema for a longer or shorter period. I would only argue that if God, Who is the Sovereign and Maker of the law, makes exceptions to His law, that is no reason for us, who are not privy to His secret judgements, not to keep the law. And the law was stated by the Lord Himself as follows: “If he shall neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (Matthew 18.17-18). In other words, we should treat those anathematised by the Church as outside the Church and not deserving the honour of Christians (which is not to say, of course, that we should not pray for their eventual return). And Holy Tradition makes it crystal clear that those cast out in this way have no sacraments (Apostolic canons 46 and 47).

Let me now state my basic argument briefly (since you have heard this already) before turning to a consideration of your arguments. Those local Orthodox Churches that have joined the ecumenical movement and the World Council of Churches (I will call them “World Orthodoxy” for short) are outside the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and do not have the Grace of sacraments because they “openly and with bared head” confess the pan-heresy of ecumenism and have been anathematised for this by the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad in 1983 in the following words: “To those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ’s Church is divided into so-called branches which differ in doctrine and way of life, or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future, when all branches or sects or denominations, and even religions, will be united into one body; and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation; therefore, to those who knowingly have communion with these aforementioned heretics or who advocate, disseminate or defend their new heresy, commonly called ecumenism, under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, Anathema, anathema, anathema!”
I am confining myself here to discussion of this conciliar decision alone, since it is the closest to us and comes from a Church body whose canonicity we both accept; but it needs to be borne in mind that there are other conciliar decisions - notably those of the True Orthodox Church of Greece in 1935, 1950, 1974 and 1991, and less well documented ones of the Catacomb Church of Russia - which also condemned different parts of the body of World Orthodoxy, declaring that they have no Grace of sacraments.

This is a simple argument and quite adequate for the simple believer who simply wants to obey the Church, and accepts, as both you and I do, that the Russian Church Abroad is a true Church. But you keep saying that the situation is actually much more complex than I make it out to be. Well, then, let us turn to the complexities you point to - but without forgetting that at the end of the day, when we have discussed all these complexities, the question is quite simple: is the Russian Church Abroad’s anathema against ecumenism and the ecumenists valid or invalid?

1. You state: “Some modernists and New Calendarists have fallen wholly to this spiritual disease [ecumenism]. Others have not. Identifying the disease does not immediately identify those afflicted with it.”

It is, of course, true that in almost every community that the Church has declared heretical there have been individual differences in the acceptance of the heresy in question. There are some papists who accept the full papist position, and others who do not. There are extreme monophysites and moderate monophysites, liberal ecumenists and conservative ecumenists. The Church calls on the liberals to repent, and on the conservatives to “come out from among them” and “not be unequally yoked with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6.14). And as long as the leadership of the Church is still Orthodox, judgement is delayed. But as far as the ecumenists and sergianists are concerned, their leadership has been heretical already for many years. It is as the Lord said: “I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she repented not” (Revelation 2.21). Therefore the ultimate penalty - “I will remove thy candlestick out of its place” (Revelation 2.5), which signifies “the deprivation of Divine Grace”, according to St. Andrew of Caesarea - has been applied. We can have different opinions about just when it was applied. But for those loyal to the Councils of the Russian Church Abroad, the cut-off point came at the latest in 1983, when, in response to the unprecedented horrors of World Orthodoxy’s union with paganism at the Vancouver General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, the Church pronounced her anathema...

Your own metropolitan, in his recent correspondence with Natalya Nedashkovskaya, very aptly quotes St. Theodore the Studite: “Chrysostom loudly calls ‘enemies of God’ not only heretics, but also those who remain in communion with heretics” (P.G. 99, 1049A). The latter are called enemies
because, although they agree with the teaching of the Church and disagree with the teaching of their own hierarchs, they remain where they are. As St. Chrysostom points out in his homily on the rebellion of Core, their agreement with the Church gives them even less excuse for remaining outside her, where they mislead others. For people wondering which way to turn say: “Look, the Orthodox theologian X stays with [the heretical] Synod Y, which means that the latter is still accepted by God.”

The approach of the early Synods to heresy and heretics was much simpler than yours. If hierarch X proclaimed heresy “publicly and with bared head”, a Council was immediately convened to condemn him. Consider how quickly Pope St. Celestine responded to the heresy of Nestorius, writing *within one year* of its first appearance to St. Cyril of Alexandria: “Either he [Nestorius] shall *within ten days*, counted from the day of your notice, condemn in writing this wicked preaching of his,… or if he will not do this… he will know that he is in every way removed from our body as not being willing to accept the care lavished on him by those wishing to heal him, and as hastening on a destructive course to his own perdition and to the perdition of all entrusted to him.” (*Epistle 11*)

At the beginning of our present time of troubles the same urgency was felt. Thus renovationism and newcalendarism were quickly condemned by truly Orthodox Synods in the 1920s and 30s; and their verdicts were confirmed by great miracles of God (for example, the appearance of the sign of the Cross over Athens in 1925). The heretics responded by betraying the confessors to cruel deaths in prisons and camps and blasphemously trampling on their holy things.

But as renovationism was metamorphosed into sergianism, and newcalendarism into ecumenism (although ecumenism was in fact officially proclaimed as early as 1920), the condemnations became fewer and less categorical - while the heretics, especially from the 1960s, became still more brazen and extreme. And now, in 1997, *generations* after the first appearance of the heresies, when hundreds of thousands of martyrs have died rather than in any way condone the heretics, we still cannot decide whether they are in the Church or not! We hesitate, and then we start condemning “extremists” who are loyal to the Councils of the Church more than the extremist heretics themselves!

Why is this? Is ecumenism any less serious than the earlier heresies? No - Metropolitan Cyprian calls it “pan-heresy”, and Metropolitan Vitaly - “the heresy of heresies”. Are communications more difficult now so that it is more difficult to obtain information and convene Synods? Of course not - such an excuse might have some weight in Catacomb Russia, but not in the West where communications are incomparably easier and faster than in the Early Church.
I believe that the real reason for our hesitations and doublemindedness lies in a general loss of zeal and weakening of faith in the dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Those who continue to believe that there is only One Church, and only One Baptism and Eucharist, and that those who confess heresy are outside the One Church, are described as “unscholarly”, “immature”, “extremist” and “silly” (to use some of your less violent epithets). They are called “naive” when they take the official declarations of the Church at their face value, and “ignorant” because they fail to see how the public, official declarations of a whole Synod of bishops can have less weight than the privately expressed doubts of one of those bishops.

2. “It seems unnecessary to note, since it is so obvious, that to condemn a heresy is not to condemn individuals and Churches.”

I have in front of me the special office of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, including all the anathemas. Every single one of the anathemas is hurled against individuals, usually beginning with the phrase: “To those who...” True, no specific name is mentioned. But you are surely not going to claim that because no specific name is mentioned, therefore no individual falls under the anathemas?! Hierarchs who condemn heresies while refusing to condemn the heretics that preach them are like the watchmen condemned by the Prophet Isaiah, “dumb dogs that cannot bark” (Isaiah 56.10). They are like judges who convict a man of murder and then let him go scot-free.

The Holy Fathers were not like that. The sword of their anathema struck down both heresies and heretics. Thus Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov in his famous essay “Christians! You must know Christ!” quotes the Fourth Ecumenical Council’s very powerful, very specific anathema of the heretic Eutyches. And our service books (for example, the service to the Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils) are likewise not coy in declaring that Arius, Eutyches, Nestorius, etc. have been anathematised “and inherited the substance of eternal fire”. Closer to our time, the Russian Church condemned both Tolstoyism and Tolstoy. And in 1923 Patriarch Tikhon condemned both renovationism and the renovationists, declaring all their sacraments to be invalid...

3. “It is to a general synod, and a ‘unifying’ one, that we turn for final adjudication, not wishing to condemn anyone prematurely.”

All of us look forward to the convening of a general synod which would, God willing, unify those heretics who repent with the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. But we must be clear about what such “unification” does and does not entail - and I suspect that your concept of a “unifying” Council would not be recognised by the Fathers of the Councils. For those heretics who were united to the Church during the Councils were united only
after formal renunciation of their heresy and only on the clear understanding that they were outside the Church as long as they confessed their heresy.

In any case, the importance of general synods should not lead us to cast doubt on local councils' authority to expel heretics from the Church. Otherwise, we would be forced to conclude that the Roman Catholics are still inside the Church (since they were expelled by a merely local Council in 1054)! Many of the heretics of the early centuries were first cast out of the Church by local Councils. For example, Arius was cast out by a local Council presided over by St. Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, and the Monothelites and Iconoclasts were first cast out by local Councils convened in Rome. When the heretical bishop Theodosius in conversation with St. Maximus the Confessor disputed the validity of the local Council under the Orthodox Pope St. Martin that condemned the Monothelites on the grounds that it was not convened by an emperor, St. Maximus replied that the validity of a Council depended on its recognising “the true and immutable dogmas”, not on who convened it or how general it was.

The Ecumenical Councils confirmed the decisions of many earlier local councils, treating those condemned by the latter as already outside the Church. In this connection I should like to cite from an unpublished work by Hieromonk Nectarius (Yashunsky) from St. Petersburg entitled “Ecclesiological Antitheses”, in which he subjects Metropolitan Cyprian’s well-known work Ecclesiological Theses to criticism. First he quotes from one of Metropolitan Cyprian’s theses: “Towards a union council. Insofar as the Church of Greece today is divided, a Sacred Council of the united Greek Church... cannot be convened.... The convening of such a Council would become possible only when the divided unite in Orthodoxy.

“During the dominance of the iconoclast heresy, for example, it was impossible to convene an Orthodox Council of the whole Church. Only when the iconoclast heresy was no longer in power, in 787, was the Seventh Ecumenical Council of union convened.... It took place in order that the scattered parts of the Church - divided at that time into iconoclasts who disagreed with the Orthodox faith, and Orthodox who resisted the iconoclast heresy - were united within Orthodoxy” (p. 8).

Then Fr. Nectarius presents his antithesis: “Here it is proclaimed that a Council could not be convened for the condemnation of any heresy without the participation of the heretics themselves (in accordance with the terminology of the given text: ‘members of the Church who were weak in faith’). Moreover, the Council could be convened only for the union of the divided parts of the Church, being at the same time a fruit of this union. Below, on page 9 each Ecumenical Council from the First to the Seventh is called ‘unifying’, from which it logically follows that the heretics condemned at them - the Arians, Nestorians, Monophysites and others - were also
members of the Church weak in faith’! Pursuing this logic further, we shall have to recognize the Roman Catholics and Protestants as ‘as yet uncondemned members of the Church’, because since the time of their separation there has not been (and until ‘their union in Orthodoxy’ there cannot be) a Council of the united (undivided Universal Church) in common with them! That is precisely what the ecumenists say in their attempt to prove that the Latins belong to the Church.

“The existence of heresies condemned by the Ecumenical Councils many years after them, and some even to the present day (for example, Monophysitism and Nestorianism) historically proves the groundlessness of the understanding of the Councils as exclusively ‘unifying’. Moreover, we know from history that the Second, Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils took place without the participation of heretics. As far as the Seventh Council is concerned, not only did it not consider the iconoclasts to be a part of the Church, but they themselves did not pretend to be such.”

In support of this last statement, Fr. Nectarius quotes from the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. “These are the words of the uniting iconoclasts. Thus Basil, bishop of Ancyra, said: ‘As far as I was able, I investigated the question of the icons and converted to the Holy Catholic Church with complete conviction.’ Theodore, bishop of Myra, said: ‘... I beseech God and your holiness to unite me, the sinful one, to the Holy Catholic Church.’ (pp. 41, 43) And here are the witnesses of the holy Fathers of the Council: “His Holiness Patriarch Tarasius said: 'What is now to be our relationship to this heresy that has again arisen in our time?' John, the most beloved of God, locum tenens of the apostolic throne in the east, said: 'Heresy divides every man from the Church.' The Holy Council said: 'That is evident.' The Holy Council said: 'Let the bishops who are standing before us read their renunciations, insofar as they are now converting to the Catholic Church.'” (p. 48).

If your reasoning on Councils were correct, we should have to draw the following conclusions: (1) The decisions of all the local Councils convened to condemn heretics and schismatics since the early 1920s to the present day have no more than a provisional character, since they have not been validated by a general Council. (2) Both Orthodox and heretics are within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church until the convening of a general Council, in spite of the fact that, as St. Maximus the Confessor says, “the Lord Christ called the Catholic Church that which contains the true and salvific confession of the faith”. (3) A general Council can be convened only with the participation of the heretics, who constitute one part of the divided Church. Therefore (4) since it has been impossible to convene a general Council with the heretics, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church for most of the 20th century has been deprived of her God-given authority to bind and to loose, to decree who is within her sacred enclosure and who is outside. And (5) the conclusion of the general Council and the “Triumph of Orthodoxy”
consists, not in the converting of the heretics to the Catholic Church through the renunciation of their heresy, but in the overcoming of the external, purely organisational divisions in the Church so as to reveal the internal sacramental unity between the Orthodox and the heretics, a unity that has always existed but is only now clearly manifested.

I know that some have called this teaching “ecclesiological heresy”, akin to the “branch theory” which the ecumenists espouse and for which they have been anathematised. I take their point, but I wouldn’t go so far as that. I would simply call it a violation of Apostolic Canon 46: “We order that any Bishop or Presbyter that has accepted any heretics’ Baptism or Sacrifice, to be deposed; for ‘what agreement hath Christ with Beliar? Or what part hath the believer with an infidel?’”

4. “A desire to cut off others from salvation, a sectarian notion that only a few million people on earth (if not a few hundred thousand) are in possession of the salvific Grace of Orthodoxy - even if correct in form, it is wrong in spirit. What mature Christian wishes for such a scenario? Indeed, our fight against religious relativism should NOT constitute an endorsement of sectarianism, personal hatred, and intolerance.”

Forgive me, Fathers, but where did you glean that I desire to cut off others from salvation?! God forbid that I should ever desire such a thing! My father died an Anglican, but I did not wish him to die in that state, I did my utmost to help him out of it. He cut himself off from salvation; I did not desire that, but greatly lament it. I have exactly the same attitude to the heretics of World Orthodoxy.

And what makes you think that it is sectarian to believe that “only a few million people on earth (if not a few hundred thousand) are in possession of the salvific Grace of Orthodoxy”? Are we not constantly reminded by the Church that ours is the “little flock”, and that in the last times (as indeed in earlier times) there will be few that follow the narrow path of the Orthodox confession? Is it “sectarianism” to obey the conciliar decisions of the Church into which I was baptised? Is it “personal hatred” to believe that a man who declares that Mohammed is an apostle of God is no longer a Christian (“Patriarch” Parthenius of Alexandria)? Is it “intolerance” to believe that a man who has worked zealously for over 40 years for the KGB, whose ecumenism is so extreme as to embrace non-Christian religions, and who recently broke down the doors of a monastery of the Russian Church Abroad in Hebron with the aid of Muslims who then rang the bells exultantly - is an enemy of God (“Patriarch” Alexis of Moscow)? Perhaps it is. But then I would say that the Lord Himself praised such intolerance when He said: “But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate” (Revelation 1.6).
I consider it love, not hatred, to tell people the truth about their situation provided it is “in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6.1). If your argument with me was that I lack meekness, then I would accept what you say, considering your rebuke to be to my profit. But what you are really saying is something different; you are saying that I am objectively wrong in considering the heretics of World Orthodoxy to be outside the Church. And such a charge I will resist with all my strength. For it is counter to the teaching, not only of the bishop who baptised me and accepted my confession of faith when I came over from the Moscow Patriarchate, but also of the whole Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad in 1983, whose anathema against ecumenism has never been repealed by any competent authority - and could never in fact be repealed, since it is based firmly on the eternal truth of Holy Tradition.

I would like to make one more point. Suppose I - or rather, the official teaching of the Church to which I belong - were wrong, and the heretics of World Orthodoxy, such as “Patriarchs” Alexis of Moscow and Bartholomew of Constantinople, were in fact still members of the One, Holy, Catholic Church. Then we have a truly awful scenario: that many hundreds of thousands, perhaps even millions of people who confess or condone the ecumenist heresy are receiving the sacraments of Christ to their condemnation! This is not just my personal opinion. In the letter written by Hieromartyr Cyril, Metropolitan of Kazan, in 1934, which your colleagues often cite in support of your position because he (very tentatively) expressed the opinion that the sergianist clergy (more precisely: those who had been ordained by non-sergianists) still had valid sacraments, the hieromartyr says that those clergy and laymen who receive the sacraments in sergianist churches while knowing the unrighteousness of the sergianist position, receive those sacraments to their condemnation.

The situation now, in 1997, is very substantially worse than in 1934. (And Metropolitan Cyril had already considerably hardened his position by the year 1937.) In particular, there are no clergy who have been ordained by non-sergianists in the Moscow Patriarchate (except for a handful of renegades from the Russian Church Abroad), and the evil of sergianism has been compounded by the horrors of ecumenism - the sin of Judas by the sin of Pilate.

Now let me put this question to you: would not deprivation of the Grace of sacraments be a mercy for the World Orthodox? Would it not be an act of the loving kindness of the Saviour, Who does not wish people to be burdened with the extra condemnation of receiving His sacraments while preaching or condoning heresy? And is this not in fact the basic reason why the Lord deprives people of His Grace - so that they should not be scorched by It because of their unworthiness?
APPENDIX 5. DO HERETICS HAVE THE GRACE OF SACRAMENTS?

No question divides contemporary True Orthodox Christians more than whether or not the ecumenist Orthodox, i.e. those Orthodox who are members of Churches belonging to the World Council of Churches, possess the grace of sacraments. Some have argued that “the question of grace” is a secondary issue. The important thing, they say, is to agree that Ecumenism is a heresy and flee from communion with the heretics. However, a moment’s thought will demonstrate that there can hardly be a more important question than that whether some millions of people calling themselves Orthodox Christians have the grace of sacraments and are therefore members of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church having a good hope of salvation, or, on the contrary, do not have the grace of sacraments and are therefore outside the Church and on the path to destruction. Hard as one may try, it is impossible to escape this question; for the answer one gives to it affects in a significant way one’s attitude to the ecumenist Orthodox. Are they like the people of whom the Apostle Jude says: “On some have compassion, making a difference” (v. 22), since their sin is not a sin unto death, a sin that estranges them completely from the Church? Or are they like those of whom he says: “Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (v. 23), because their sin is not only a sin unto death, estranging them completely from the Church, but also contagious, liable to contaminate us if we are not extremely careful in our relations with, and attitude towards them?

For many years, this question was hotly debated in the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR), but no official statement was issued that decided the matter once and for all. In 1983, however, in the wake of the horrific apostasy of the ecumenist Orthodox at the Vancouver General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, the Synod of ROCOR formally anathematized the ecumenist Orthodox, declaring: “To those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ’s Church is divided into so-called ‘branches’ which differ in doctrine and way of life, or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future when all ‘branches’ or sects or denominations, and even religions will be united in one body; and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation; therefore to those who knowingly have communion with these aforementioned heretics or advocate, disseminate, or defend their new heresy of Ecumenism under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, Anathema.”

It should be noted that this anathema condemns not only Ecumenism and the ecumenists in a general sense, but also all those “who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation”. In other words, if it is accepted that the ecumenists are heretics, it is no longer permissible to say that their priesthood and mysteries are the priesthood and mysteries of the One, True Church.

In 1984, the year after this anathema was delivered, the Greek Old Calendarist hierarch, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili, issued a challenge to its validity and teaching without directly naming it. In his “Ecclesiological Position Paper”\(^\text{255}\), he argued that while the new calendarists are ecumenists, they nevertheless have the grace of sacraments because they have not yet been condemned by a “Unifying Council” of the Orthodox Church, and that it is sufficient for the True Orthodox simply to “wall themselves off” from the ecumenists’ errors by refraining from communion with them. Ten years later, in 1994, ROCOR entered into official communion with Metropolitan Cyprian, declaring that her ecclesiology was identical with that of Metropolitan Cyprian. The contradiction between this ecclesiology and that contained in the anathema of 1983 is manifest – but only one ROCOR hierarch, Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), seemed to notice or care about it. In his article “The Dubious Orthodoxy of Metropolitan Cyprian’s Group”, Bishop Gregory wrote: “By not investigating the matter seriously and by forgetting about this previously confirmed anathematizing of the New Calendarists/Ecumenists [in 1983] (or perhaps not venturing to abrogate this resolution) our Sobor, frightful as it may be to admit it, has fallen under its own anathema.”\(^\text{256}\)

The present article presents a critique of Metropolitan Cyprian’s position as presented in his position paper. Since much heat and emotion has been generated by this dispute, I should make it clear at the beginning that I do not consider Metropolitan Cyprian and his followers to be heretics themselves\(^\text{257}\), nor do I (as some have accused me) hate the ecumenist Orthodox or wish their damnation, but rather pray, together with all truly Orthodox Christians, that they come to a knowledge of the truth and be converted to the One True Church.

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\(^{255}\) Translated by Bishop Chrysostomos of Etna with an introductory commentary by Patrick G. Barker in Barker’s \textit{A Study of the Ecclesiology of Resistance}, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1994.

\(^{256}\) Translated from \textit{Tserkovnie Novosti}, no. 5, September-October, 1994, p. 4 (in Russian).

\(^{257}\) The Orthodoxy of Metropolitan Cyprian’s position in relation to the Catholics and Protestants, and to Ecumenism as such, is clear from the many publications of his monastery. See in particular his article, “The Baptismal Theology of the Ecumenists”, translated into Russian in \textit{Pravoslavnia Rus’}, no. 12 (1513), June 15/28, 1994, pp. 5-7, 15.
In order to clarify the argument, I shall consider only those ecumenist Orthodox Churches whose participation in the ecumenist heresy cannot be doubted, such as the Moscow Patriarchate and the new calendarist Greek Patriarchates, leaving aside the doubtful or borderline cases, such as the Jerusalem Patriarchate.

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“The Orthodox Church as a whole is unerring and invincible,” writes Metropolitan Cyprian. “It is possible, however, for Christians and for local Churches to fall in faith; that is to say, it is possible for them to suffer spiritually and for one to see a certain ‘siege of illness within the body of the Church’, as St. John Chrysostom says. It is possible for Christians to separate and for ‘divisions’ to appear within the Church, as the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians. It is possible for local Churches into fall into heresy, as occurred in the ancient Orthodox Church of the West, which fell into the heresies of Papism and Protestantism and finally into the panheresy of ecumenism.

“Spiritual maladies within the Church are cured either by repentance or by judgement. Until the judgement or expulsion of a heretic, schismatic, or sinner – either by the Church or, in a more direct manner, by the Lord –, the opinion of a believer cannot be a substitute for the sentence of the Church and of her Lord, Jesus Christ, even if the resolution of a situation be prolonged until the Second Coming. As is well known, in the Scriptures, the Church is likened to a field replete with ‘wheat’ and ‘tares’, in accordance with Divine and ecclesiastical economy. Sinners and those who err in correctly understanding the Faith, yet who have not been sentenced by ecclesiastical action, are simply considered ailing members of the Church. The Mysteries [sacraments] of these unsentenced members are valid as such, according to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, as, for example, the President of the Synod, St. Tarasios, remarks: ‘[their] Ordination’ ‘is from God’. By contrast, should expositors of heresy punish the Orthodox opposed to them, these punishments are ecclesiastically invalid and groundless ‘from the time their preaching began’ (i.e., from the moment they began preaching heresy), as St. Celestine of Rome wrote and as the Third Ecumenical Synod agreed.”258

When a bishop preaches heresy “publicly” “and bareheaded in the Church”, continues the metropolitan, the Orthodox Christians should immediately separate themselves from him, in accordance with the 31st Apostolic Canon and the 15th Canon of the First-and-Second Synod of Constantinople. Such action by the Orthodox does not introduce schism, but rather serves to protect the Church from schisms and divisions. “He who preaches heresy or he who brings innovation into the Church divides her and

258 Barker, op. cit., pp. 57-58.
abrogates her oneness or unity. He who opposes the preaching of heresy, or who separates himself from it, is eager to save the oneness or unity of the Church. The aim of opposition and separation is the combatting of heresy, the defense of the Orthodox Faith, and the preservation of the unity of the Orthodox Church, indeed of Orthodoxy itself.”

So far so good. However, at this point, as he turns to apply these principles to the heresy of ecumenism and its forerunner, the innovation of the new calendar, the metropolitan makes some distinctly controversial statements. “With regard to the innovation in the festal calendar, Orthodox are divided into two parts: into those who are ailing in Faith and those who are healthy, into innovators and opposers – into followers of innovation, whether in knowledge or in ignorance, and those opposed, who have separated themselves from heresy, in favor of Orthodoxy. The latter are strugglers for oneness among the ‘divided’, as the Seventh Ecumenical Synod calls those who so separated for the Orthodox unity of the Church. The followers of the festal calendar innovation have not yet been specifically judged in a Pan-Orthodox fashion, as provided for by the Orthodox Church. As St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain writes, the violator of established precepts is considered sentenced, insofar as he is judged by ‘the second entity (which is the council or synod).’ Since 1924, the innovators have been awaiting judgement and shall be judged on the basis of the decisions of the holy Synods, both Oecumenical and local, and, to be sure, on the basis of the ecclesiastical pronouncements of the sixteenth century against what were then Papal proposals for changes in the festal calendar. In this respect, those who have walled themselves off from the innovators have actually broken communion ‘before [a] conciliar or synodal verdict,’ as is allowed in the Fifteenth Canon of the First-and-Second Synod. That is to say, the innovators are still unsentenced. Consequently, their Mysteries are valid…”

“Every innovationist member of the divided Greek Church is capable of changing over to opposition against the Ecumenist innovation. This can be accomplished through repentance… A return to Orthodoxy can also take place through a formal renunciation of heresy… Therefore, the Orthodox Tradition of the Holy Oecumenical Synods and of the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church prescribes that that part of the divided Greek Church that is ailing in Faith be received by one of the foregoing means of repentance and returned to the ranks of Orthodoxy. For they are not condemned schismatic or heretical Christians, but members of the Church who have not yet been brought to trial.”

That the innovators “are still unsentenced”, as Metropolitan Cyprian supposes, is a historical mistake. In May, 1935, all the truly Orthodox (i.e. Old

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259 Barker, op. cit., p. 59.  
261 Barker, op. cit., pp. 61, 62.
Calendar) Metropolitans of the Church of Greece came together and synodically condemned the new calendarists as schismatics without the grace of sacraments: “Those who now administer the Church of Greece have divided the unity of Orthodoxy through the calendar innovation, and have split the Greek Orthodox People into two opposing calendar parts. They have not only violated an Ecclesiastical Tradition which was consecrated by the Seven Ecumenical Councils and sanctioned by the age-old practice of the Eastern Orthodox Church, but have also touched the Dogma of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Therefore those who now administer the Greek Church have, by their unilateral, anticanonical and unthinking introduction of the Gregorian calendar, cut themselves off completely from the trunk of Orthodoxy, and have declared themselves to be in essence Schismatics in relation to the Orthodox Churches which stand on the foundation of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Orthodox laws and Traditions.”

Concerning the implications of this declaration with regard to the question of grace, the metropolitans made themselves crystal clear in an encyclical issued on June 8/21, 1935: “We recommend to all those who follow the Orthodox Calendar that they have no spiritual communion with the schismatic church of the schismatic ministers, from whom the grace of the All-Holy Spirit has fled, because they have violated the decisions of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and the Pan-Orthodox Councils which condemned the Gregorian calendar. That the schismatic Church does not have Grace and the Holy Spirit is affirmed by St. Basil the Great, who says the following: ‘Even if the Schismatics have erred about things which are not Dogmas, since the head of the Church is Christ, according to the divine Apostle, from Whom all the members live and receive spiritual increase, they have torn themselves away from the harmony of the members of the Body and no longer are members [of that Body] or have the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he who does not have it cannot transfer it to others.’”

Now some have argued that this conciliar decision was later rejected by the leader of the Greek Old Calendarists, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Florina, and that it therefore represents only an “extremist”, “Matthewite” position. However, the doctrine that schismatics have no grace is not a specifically “Matthewite” position, but is based on many canons and patristic sayings, notably the First Canonical Epistle of St. Basil the Great. In fact, as Bishop Ephraim of Boston points out, the new calendarists and the Moscow Patriarchate have adopted a distinctly “Matthewite” position in relation to the True Orthodox, declaring that they have no grace of sacraments – while at the same time declaring that the Western heretics do have grace! In any case, it

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262 Metropolitan Calliopius (Giannakoulopoulos) of Pentapolis, Ta Patria, volume 7, Piraeus, 1987, p. 43 (in Greek).
263 Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 277-278.
is not true that Metropolitan Chrysostomos renounced the Council of 1935. From 1937 to 1950 he appeared to doubt it, introducing the notion (unknown in patristic literature, as Bishop Ephraim again correctly points out), of “potential schism”. But in 1950 he repented of these doubts and openly and unambiguously returned to the confession of 1935. Some have said that in private correspondence he claimed to have been pushed into making this confession by “extremists”, that he made it for the sake of unity and that it did not represent his true thinking. I do not believe that such a great confessor could have dissembled in his confession of faith. But in any case, even if he had private doubts, it is his public confession that we must judge him by – and that, from 1950 to the end of his life, was thoroughly Orthodox.

Now Metropolitan Cyprian does not mention the Council of 1935. Nor does he mention Metropolitan Chrysostomos’ encyclical of 1950, nor the Old Calendarist Council under the presidency of Archbishop Auxentius in 1974 (when Metropolitan Cyprian himself was under his omophorion), which explicitly declared that the new calendarist ecumenists had no grace of sacraments. The reason for these omissions cannot be that he does not know of their existence. The reason can only be – although he does not write this explicitly – that he rejects their validity, or at any rate the validity of their decisions in relation to the ecumenists. To understand why he does this, let us now turn to the metropolitan’s theory of the Councils and their relationship to heretics.

Of central importance in Metropolitan Cyprian’s argument is his concept of the “Unifying Synod”. A “Unifying Synod” is one that unites the heretics to Orthodoxy, such as the Seventh Ecumenical Council. By implication – although, again, he does not state this explicitly here – a Synod that simply condemns the heretics without uniting them to Orthodoxy (such as the decisions of the Greek Old Calendarist Councils of 1935 and 1974 against the new calendarists, or the 1983 anathema of the Russian Church Abroad against Ecumenism) is of less significance and is not in fact competent to expel heretics from the Church.

Indeed, it is difficult to see, according to Metropolitan Cyprian’s theory, how or when any heretic has been expelled from the Church. For if, before the convening of a Unifying Synod, the heretics or not outside the Church but simply an ailing faction within the Church, and if a Unifying Synod does not expel heretics from the Church but simply unites the ailing and the healthy parts of the same Church in a closer union, there seems to be no mechanism for the expulsion of heretics from the Church altogether – in other words, there are no Separating or Expelling Synods. It would not be inconsistent with his theory to suppose that those heretics who refuse to be unified by the Unifying Synod are thereby expelled from the Church altogether; but this is not stated explicitly (at any rate, in the position paper under review), so heavy
is the emphasis on the supposed fact that these Synods unified rather than expelled the heretics.

Metropolitan Cyprian develops his concept of a “Unifying Council” as follows: “During the reign of the iconoclastic innovation, for example, it was impossible for an Orthodox Synod of the entire Church to be convened. For this reason, such a Synod was convened when the iconoclastic heresy was no longer in power, that is, in 787, as the Seventh Oecumenical Synod of union. The same Seventh Oecumenical Synod writes through its Fathers that the Synod took place ‘so that we might change the discord of controversy into concord, that the dividing wall of enmity might be removed and that the original rulings of the Catholic [Orthodox] Church might be validated.’ That is, it was convened so that the differing factions of the Church, divided up to the time of the Synod – the Iconoclasts disagreeing with the Orthodox belief and the Orthodox opposed to the iconoclastic heresy -, might be united by means of an agreement within Orthodoxy.”

This is inaccurate both as regards the Ecumenical Councils in general and as regards the Seventh Council in particular.

First, there were some Ecumenical Councils which took place without the participation of heretics – the Second and the Fifth. According to the reasoning of Metropolitan Cyprian, these must be considered not to be “Unifying Councils” and therefore lacking in full validity! And yet there is no higher, “more valid” Council in the Orthodox understanding than the Seven Ecumenical Councils.

Moreover, after several of the Ecumenical Councils many of the heretics were not only not “united”, but remained in bitter enmity to the Orthodox Church. Thus there were many Arians after the First Council, many Nestorians after the Third and many Monophysites after the Fourth – in fact, all three heresies are very numerous to the present day. Even the Seventh Council was only temporarily “unifying”, since the iconoclastic heresy broke out again some years later. Thus according to the reasoning of Metropolitan Cyprian, we must eliminate the First, Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils from the category of “Unifying Council”.

Secondly, even those Councils which took place with the participation of heretics did not receive them into communion until they had renounced their heresies. They made it quite clear that the heretics were outside the Church until such a renunciation. However, if, as Metropolitan Cyprian asserts, heretics cannot be considered to be outside the Church until they have been condemned at a “Unifying Council” in which they themselves participated, then not only were the Arians, Nestorians, Monophysites and others still “members of the Church weak in faith” until the Unifying Councils that condemned them, but, as Hieromonk Nectarius (Yashunsky) points out, “we
shall have to recognize the Roman Catholics and Protestants as 'as yet uncondemned members of the Church', because since the time of their separation there has not been (and until 'their union in Orthodoxy' there cannot be) a Council of the united (undivided Universal Church) in common with them!"  

"As far as the Seventh Council is concerned," continues Hieromonk Nectarius, “not only did it not consider the iconoclasts to be a part of the Church, but they themselves did not pretend to be such.” In support of this statement, Fr. Nectarius quotes from the *Acts* of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. “These are the words of the uniting iconoclasts. Thus Basil, bishop of Ancyra, said: ‘As far as I was able, I investigated the question of the icons and converted to the Holy Catholic Church with complete conviction.’ Theodore, bishop of Myra, said: ‘... I beseech God and your holiness to unite me, the sinful one, to the Holy Catholic Church.’” (pp. 41, 43 in the edition of the Kazan Theological Academy). And here are the witnesses of the holy Fathers of the Council: “His Holiness Patriarch Tarasius said: 'What is now to be our relationship to this heresy that has again arisen in our time?' John, the most beloved of God, locum tenens of the apostolic throne in the east, said: 'Heresy divides every man from the Church.' The Holy Council said: 'That is evident.' The Holy Council said: 'Let the bishops who are standing before us read their renunciations, insofar *as they are now converting to the Catholic Church.*’” (p. 48).

Thirdly, the exceptional importance of Ecumenical or “Unifying” Councils should not lead us to cast doubt on local Councils’ authority to expel heretics from the Church. Many of the heretics of the early centuries were first cast out of the Church by local Councils. For example, Arius was cast out by a local Council presided over by St. Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, in 321 and again in 323 (the First Ecumenical Council did not take place until 325). Again, local Councils convened at Rome condemned the Nestorians (under Pope St. Celestine), the Monothelites (under Pope St. Martin) and the Iconoclasts (under Pope Gregory III) – in each case before the convening of the Third, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, which never disputed the validity of these local Councils, but rather confirmed their decisions.

Thus when the heretical bishop Theodosius in conversation with St. Maximus the Confessor disputed the validity of the local Council under St. Martin that condemned the Monothelites on the grounds that it was not convened by an emperor, St. Maximus replied that the validity of a Council depended on its recognising “the true and immutable dogmas”, not on who convened it or how general it was. Again, when the same saint was asked in the Emperor’s palace why he was not in communion with the Throne of Constantinople, he replied: “… They have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What

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Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?" 266

Again, Bishop Theophan the Recluse points out that before the start of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, its president-to-be, St. Tarasiu, bewailed the fact that “we (the iconoclastic Church of Constantinople) are being anathematized by them (the other Local Churches in Local Councils) every day”. 267

If local Councils did not have the authority to expel heretics from the Church, we should have to condemn many local Councils for exceeding their competency and assuming an authority that did not belong to them. These would include many of the Councils of the Early Church, which expelled such heretics as Marcion and Sabellius; the local Councils of the Great Church of Constantinople between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries that expelled the Roman Catholics; and the Councils of the Russian Church presided over by Patriarch Tikhon that anathematized the communists and their co-workers in 1918 and the renovationist heretics in 1923. However, the Church, which has the mind of Christ, has accepted all of these acts as lawful and valid. To think otherwise is to suppose that for the last several hundred years the Church has – God forbid! - lost her God-given power to bind and to loose since the convening of the last Ecumenical or Pan-Orthodox Council!

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Let us now turn from consideration of Metropolitan Cyprian’s position to the question: when are we entitled to consider that a heretic is outside the Church and, consequently, deprived of the grace of sacraments? In particular, are we entitled to consider the “Orthodox” heretics belonging to the World Council of Churches as still belonging to the Church and having the grace of sacraments? We shall not discuss here the question why these “Orthodox” should be considered to be heretics, since Metropolitan Cyprian himself accepts that they are.

Now the Sacred Canons of the Church, notably Apostolic Canons 46, 47 and 68, and the First Canon of St. Basil the Great, all teach that heretics and schismatics are outside the Church and have no sacraments. These heretics and schismatics are to be received in various ways – some by baptism, some by chrismation, some by simple confession – but, as Bishop Gregory Grabbe insisted in various of his writings, this does not alter the basic principle. Moreover, Apostolic Canon 46 declares not only that heretics and schismatics

are outside the Church, but also that those who recognise the sacraments of heretics or schismatics should be deposed: “We order that a bishop or priest who accepts the baptism or sacrifice of heretics be deposed. For what agreement has Christ with Beliar? Or what part has the faithful with an infidel?”

Is a conciliar verdict necessary in order to expel a heretic? At first sight it would seem that the answer to this question is: yes. However, there are grounds for thinking that Arius was invisibly expelled from the Church not only before the First Ecumenical Council of 325, but even before the local Councils of 321 and 323. For when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Hieromartyr Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria, in the form of a twelve year old child in torn clothing, and was asked by St. Peter: “O Creator, who has torn Your tunic?”, the Lord replied: “The mindless Arius; he has separated from Me people whom I had obtained with My Blood.” And this took place before St. Peter’s martyrdom, which was in 311.

The question arises, then: What is the purpose of the Councils? Is it they, and they alone, which bind heretics and cast them out of the Church? Or do they simply discern that binding has already taken place, “knowing,” as the apostle says, “that he that is such [a heretic] is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself” (Titus 3.11)?

Of particular importance in this context is the 15th Canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople (861), which declares that those who withdraw from a bishop for public preaching of heresy “condemned by the holy Councils or Fathers… not only are not subject to any canonical penalty on account of their having walled themselves off from any and all communion with the one called a Bishop before any conciliar or synodal verdict has been rendered, but, on the contrary, they shall be deemed worthy to enjoy the honour which befits them among Orthodox Christians; for they have defied, not Bishops, but pseudo-bishops and pseudo-teachers, and they have not sundered the union of the Church with any schism, but, on the contrary, have been sedulous to rescue the Church from schisms and divisions.”

It should be noted, first, that the canon is here speaking about heresies that have been condemned “by the holy Councils or Fathers”. This would imply that a conciliar judgement – or, at any rate, a patristic judgement - is indeed necessary before one can leave a heretic (not necessarily, however, the judgement of an Ecumenical Council). Secondly, however, such a conciliar or

268 St. Dmitri of Rostov, Lives of the Saints, November 25.
269 St. Bede the Venerable writes: “The keys of the Kingdom designate the actual knowledge and power of discerning who are worthy to be received into the Kingdom, and who should be excluded from it as unworthy” (Sermon on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, P.L. 94, col. 219, sermon 16).
patristic judgement need not be a contemporary one, for the canon explicitly states that it is praiseworthy to leave such a heretic “before any conciliar or synodal verdict has been rendered”. In other words, no additional, contemporary Council has to be convened to confirm the decision of the earlier “Councils or Fathers” in relation to the contemporary heretic. And thirdly, a man who preaches such a heresy publicly is already a “pseudo-bishop” on the basis of the early “Councils or Fathers” alone.

Now this attitude towards heretics was disputed in the fourteenth century by the famous opponent of St. Gregory Palamas, Acindynus. Writing to Barlaam, another opponent of St. Gregory, he gently chides him for calling Gregory a heretic; “for it was against canon law to treat a man as a heretic before he had been formally condemned. ‘Therefore, be more moderate towards Palamas,’ he repeated.”

Vasily (now Igumen Gregory) Lourié has supplied a fitting riposte to this: “It is characteristic that the latter remark was expressed by Acindynus – that is, by one who was himself a heretic. The church canons distinguish two cases. 1. If the heretic is not a bishop (in which case it is no longer important who he is: a layman, a monk, a deacon, a priest, a superior, etc.). Here the words of the Apostle Paul retain their full force: ‘A heretic after the first and second admonition reject’ (Titus 3.10). No church canons have been added to them. This means – and it is precisely such an understanding that is confirmed by the practice of the holy fathers, – that one should not wait for any church condemnations of, for example, a heretical priest. One must immediately cease to pray and concelebrate with him, and to receive confession and communion from him. One must first break communion in prayer with him, and only then, if possible, appeal to a church court (juridical power over a priest is given to a bishop). 2. If the heretic is a bishop. Here the Church has at various times introduced various elaborations of the apostolic formula. In force at the present time is Canon 15, which was introduced at the so-called First-and-Second Council of Constantinople in 861. After discussing those who, on the pretext of various accusations, separate from their bishop, [the canon] says that it is quite another matter if the separation takes place as a result of heresy…”

This enables us to answer the question whether the contemporary new calendarists and ecumenists, including the Moscow Patriarchate, are in the Church and have the grace of sacraments. The answer is that they are not in the Church, and do not have the grace of sacraments, because according to the 15th Canon their bishops are “pseudo-bishops” as having been condemned “by the holy Councils or Fathers” – specifically, in the case of the new calendarists, by the Pan-Orthodox Councils that anathematised the new

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calendar in 1583, 1587 and 1593. No contemporary Council is needed to apply those earlier decisions to the contemporary heretics, although in fact there have been such contemporary Councils – specifically, the Greek Old Calendarist Councils of 1935 and 1974, together with the Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in 1983, which did not condemn new-calendarism as such, but rather Ecumenism, of which, as Metropolitan Cyprian agrees, new-calendarism is a definite manifestation – the first stage, as it were.

Already in the nineteenth century, Bishop Theophan the Recluse was saying that there was no need for further conciliar anathemas to condemn the heretics of his day since they had all already been condemned by earlier decisions. Commenting on St. Paul’s words, “If anyone preaches any other gospel that that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema” (Galatians 1.8), he writes: “The apostle laid only the beginning to anathematization. Since then all the opinions worthy of this punishment have already been marked out by the Church. At the present time there is no point waiting for a special ecclesiastical act to strike the evildoers with this judgement. They themselves are placing their own heads under this sword immediately they acquire opinions contrary to the truth and stubbornly begin to insist on them.”

And yet, of course, new Councils and new anathemas have been found to be necessary in this century. What, then, has been the purpose of these new Councils? First of all, to point out to the faithful that the old heresies have reappeared in a new form – idol-worship, for example, in the form of Sergianism, and all the old heresies in the form of Ecumenism, “the heresy of heresies”. And secondly, in order to make a clear separation between light and darkness, between the Church of the faithful and the “Church of the evildoers”, lest the latter swallow up the former entirely. And thirdly, to reverse the act that the Church carried out when she made the heresiarchs pastors and bishops.

It is for this last reason that contemporary Councils are necessary to depose contemporary heretics, even if they already fall under earlier anathemas. For, as St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite explains in his commentary on the 30th Apostolic Canon: “The Canons ordain that a synod of living bishops should defrock priests, or excommunicate or anathematize laymen, when they transgress the Canons. However, if the synod does not put into practical effect the defrocking of the priests, or the excommunication or anathematization of the laymen, these priests and laymen are neither defrocked nor excommunicated nor anathematized in actuality [ἐν ἐνεργείαι]. However, they

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are subject to defrocking and excommunication here, and to the wrath of God there.”

Here, and here only, is there some ground for speaking in a very restricted sense about heretics having grace. For between the first appearance of a heresy in modern times and its first condemnation by a local Council, there is a period in which the heretic, although already self-condemned and subject to the condemnation of God if he dies now, has the possibility of repenting and returning to the truth before being subject to the condemnation of the Church. Nestorius, for example, was given a short time to repent by St. Celestine before he was condemned at a local Council in Rome. This is that period of which the Lord says in relation to Jezabel in the Thyateiran Church: “I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not” (Revelation 2.21).

In this period, the heretic, although already deprived of grace in a personal sense (for all sin deprives the sinner of grace), may continue to preserve the priestly grace which the Church gave him at his ordination and which she deprives him of only through another public, conciliar act. In the period before the conciliar deposition of the heretic, not only is he given time to repent, but his flock are enabled to continue receiving the true sacraments – although, as Hieromartyr Cyril of Kazan writes, they will receive them to their condemnation if they are conscious of their hierarch’s heresy. After his conciliar deposition, however, the hierarch is no longer a hierarch, and the flock that remains with him no longer receives true sacraments from him; for “if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matthew 15.14).

However, this very restricted sense in which heretics retain the grace of the priesthood until they have been formally deposed does not help Metropolitan Cyprian’s case, because, as noted above, several local Councils composed of undoubtedly canonical and Orthodox bishops have already expelled the ecumenist Orthodox from the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. And in particular, they have been expelled by the 1983 anathema hurled at them by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR), a Church with which Metropolitan Cyprian is in communion and whose conciliar acts concerning heresy he and his Synod (and still more, of course, the hierarchs of ROCOR) are consequently bound to accept. Therefore the “space to repent” has run out, the door has been closed, the spiritual sword has fallen; and it remains only for every faithful Orthodox Christian to echo the verdict of the Church: Anathema.

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273 Cited by Hieromonk Theodoretus, To Imerologiakon Skhisma, 1971, p. 3 (in Greek).
274 I owe this distinction to Protopriest Lev Lebedev, who, however, expresses it in somewhat different terms, using Vladimir Lossky’s distinction between “christological” and “pneumatological” grace.
Let us now turn to some arguments that have been made against the position defended in this article:

**The Ecclesiology of Hieromartyr Cyril of Kazan.** In the early years after the Sergianist schism of 1927, until about 1934, Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan took the position that, while he could not concelebrate with Metropolitan Sergius because of his usurpation of Church power, he did not consider him to be a schismatic deprived of the grace of sacraments. As he wrote to Sergius: “I refrain from liturgizing with you not because the Mystery of the Body and Blood of Christ would not be actualized at our joint celebration, but because the communion of the Chalice of the Lord would be to both of us for judgement and condemnation, since our inward attitude, disturbed by a different understanding of our church relation to each other, would take away from us the possibility of offering, in complete calm of spirit, the mercy of peace, the sacrifice of praise.”

Again he wrote to an unknown hierarch: “It seems to me that both you yourself and your correspondent do not distinguish those actions of Metropolitan Sergius and his partisans, which are performed by them in proper order by power of those grace-given rights received through the mystery of the priesthood, from those other activities which are performed with an exceeding of their sacramental rights and according to human cunning, as a means of protecting and supporting their self-invented rights in the Church. Such are the actions of Bishop Zacharius and Priest Patapov of which you speak. These are sacramental acts only in form, while in essence they are a usurpation of sacramental activity, and therefore are blasphemous, without grace, non-ecclesiastical. But the Mysteries performed by Sergianists who are correctly ordained and not prohibited to serve as priests, are undoubtedly saving Mysteries for those who receive them with faith, in simplicity, without deliberations and doubts concerning their efficacy, and who do not even suspect anything incorrect in the Sergianist order of the Church. But at the same time, they serve for judgement and condemnation for the very performers of them and for those who approach them well understanding the untruth that exists in Sergianism, and by their lack of opposition to it reveal a criminal indifference towards the mocking of the Church. This is why it is essential for an Orthodox Bishop or priest to refrain from communion with Sergianists in prayer. The same thing is essential for laymen who have a conscious attitude to all the details of church life.”

These letters make clear that while Metropolitan Cyril was quite prepared to say of certain hierarchs (the renovationists, Bishop Zacharius) that they were deprived of the grace of sacraments, he was not prepared to say this – yet – of Metropolitan Sergius, “until a lawful Council by its sentence shall

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275 Quoted in Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
276 Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
utter the judgement of the Holy Spirit concerning him”.277 He gave as one reason for his hesitation – or “excessive caution”, as his correspondent put it – “an incomplete clarification of the conditions which surround me and all of us”.278 We may suppose that another reason was the fact that both Sergianists and True Orthodox were still linked, albeit tenously, by their common commemoration of Metropolitan Peter, who, because of his imprisonment beyond the Arctic Circle, had not been able officially to remove Metropolitan Sergius from his post as his deputy – although he had urged the other bishops to remove him.

In fact, according to Hieromartyr Maximus of Serpukhov and other sources, there had been a secret Council in 1928 that anathematized the Sergianists.279 But the inability of the first-hierarch of the Church to make his own position publicly and officially known – which inability was, of course, engineered by the Bolsheviks – prevented the Catacomb hierarchs from deposing Sergius in a manner that would have been accepted as canonical by all. As Metropolitan Cyril wrote: “For me personally, it is impossible at the present time to step forth, since I am entirely unsure of the character of the attitudes of Metropolitan Peter, in order to be convinced of his actual views and to decide how to act…”280

The situation changed, however, in August, 1936, when the Bolsheviks issued the false information that Metropolitan Peter had died, and Metropolitan Sergius promptly – and completely unlawfully - arrogated to himself Peter’s title of Metropolitan of Krutitsa and patriarchal locum tenens. Almost immediately we see a significant hardening in Metropolitan Cyril’s position. Thus in March, 1937 he wrote: “With regard to your perplexities concerning Sergianism, I can say that the very same questions in almost the same form were addressed to me from Kazan ten years ago, and then I replied affirmatively to them, because I considered everything that Metropolitan Sergius had done as a mistake which he himself was conscious of and wished to correct. Moreover, among our ordinary flock there were many people who had not investigated what had happened, and it was impossible to demand from them a decisive and active condemnation of the events. Since then much water has flowed under the bridge. The expectations that Metropolitan Sergius would correct himself have not been justified, but there has been enough time for the formerly ignorant members of the Church, enough incentive and enough opportunity to investigate what has happened; and very many have both investigated and understood that Metropolitan Sergius is departing from that Orthodox Church which the Holy Patriarch Tikhon entrusted to us to guard, and consequently there can be no part or lot with him for the Orthodox. The

277 Barker, op. cit., p. 94.
278 Barker, op. cit., p. 92.
280 Barker, op. cit., p. 92.
recent events have finally made clear the renovationist nature of Sergianism. We cannot know whether those believers who remain in Sergianism will be saved, because the work of eternal Salvation is a work of the mercy and grace of God. But for those who see and feel the unrighteousness of Sergianism (those are your questions) it would be unforgiveable craftiness to close one’s eyes to this unrighteousness and seek there for the satisfaction of one’s spiritual needs when one’s conscience doubts in the possibility of receiving such satisfaction. Everything which is not of faith is sin…”

So from 1937 Metropolitan Cyril considered that the faithful had had enough time to work out the “renovationist” nature of Sergianism. Moreover, by calling Sergianism “renovationist” Metropolitan Cyril was placing it under the category of an already condemned heresy, whose adherents had already been declared by Patriarch Tikhon to be deprived of the grace of sacraments in 1923. Strictly speaking, therefore, no new conciliar sentence was necessary, just as no new conciliar sentence is required to condemn each new Pope of Rome.

Metropolitan Cyril was shot on the eve of St. Michael’s day, 1937 together with Metropolitan Joseph, whose followers, as is well-known, declared that the Sergianists had no grace. According to Catacomb nuns who were able to communicate by secret signs with the two hierarchs as they walked through the prison yard shortly before their execution, Metropolitan Cyril indicated that he was not only in full agreement with Metropolitan Joseph, but that he recognized Joseph’s leadership of the Russian Church as blessed by Metropolitan Peter in the event of his death. There is therefore every reason to believe that at the time of their joint martyric deaths Metropolitan Cyril differed in no way in his confession from the “extremist” Metropolitan Joseph...

But in any case, can there be any doubt about what Metropolitan Cyril would have said if he had been alive now, more than sixty years later? In 1934, he said that he viewed the disorder in the Russian Orthodox Church “not as concerning the teaching which She holds, but as concerning administration” . Now, however, Sergianism has metamorphosed into something infinitely worse than administrative disorder, worse even than the heresy of renovationism. It has evolved into “the heresy of heresies”: first, through the filling up of its hierarchy with renovationists in 1943-45 (so that most of the post-war sergianists have not satisfied Metropolitan Cyril’s criterion of correct ordination); then through its idolatrous glorification of Stalin, and persecution of the Catacomb Church and Russian Church Abroad, in the years after the war; then through its entry into the World Council of

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282 Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov), Tserkov’ Katakombnaia na Zemle Rossiijskoj (MS, Mayford, 1980).
283 Barker, op. cit., p. 90.
Churches in 1961; then through its adoption of the gospel of Communist Christianity; and finally through its inter-religious “super-ecumenism” in the 1980s and 1990s, which in 1983 received a definitive conciliar anathematization to which Metropolitan Cyril has no doubt added his authoritative voice in the heavens...

The Validity of the 1983 Anathema. It is sometimes argued that ROCOR’s 1983 anathema against Ecumenism lacks force, if not validity, because no specific names are mentioned in it. If so, it is surprising that such a formidable canonist as Bishop Gregory Grabbe should have continued to consider it valid. Moreover, there is strong evidence to suggest that both Metropolitan Philaret, the first-hierarch of ROCOR at the time, and Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, the second hierarch, considered not only that it was valid, but that the Moscow Patriarchate fell directly under it.

Is it absolutely necessary for names to be mentioned for an anathema to be valid? A brief look at the Order for the Triumph of Orthodoxy will establish that most of the anathemas there are not specific as to name. Patriarch Tikhon’s anathema against the communists and their co-workers in 1918, which was solemnly confirmed by the Local Council of the Russian Church then in session, mentioned neither Lenin nor anyone else by name. The same applies to the anathematization of the renovationists. What are we to say about all these anathemas? That they are invalid because the names of the heretics are not mentioned? But is it possible for there to be a heresy without a heretic, or an anathema against a heresy without any individual heretic falling under it?

Of course, in borderline cases, where it is not quite clear whether a particular Church or hierarch falls under the anathema, it would be desirable to have a list of names – although, of course, no list of names could be exhaustive. However, to say that a heretical hierarch does not fall under an anathema unless his name is specified in black and white is legalistic at best, casuistical at worst. And before we could accept such an idea we would need to see patristic support for it... But let us suppose that those who would reject the 1983 Council on those grounds are right, that the correct procedure for the valid anathematization of heretics was not carried out in this case. What, then, must we do?

Two things are obligatory. First, the anathema against Ecumenism must be removed from the Order for the Triumph of Orthodoxy so that the faithful should not be misled into believing that it actually has any weight or power in God’s eyes. And secondly, a fresh Council must be immediately convened – it could now be considerably larger than the 1983 Council, having hierarchs from Russia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece as well as from ROCOR – to anathematize the ecumenists by name. Such a Pan-Orthodox Council would then settle the issue once and for all.
But there seems no sign of either of these things taking place. Therefore the suspicion remains that those who contest the validity of the 1983 Council – or, more often, simply ignore it, trying to suppress all discussion of it - are not doing so out of a laudable concern for correct procedure, but because they do not want to obey its decisions. We must exempt Metropolitan Cyprian from such a suspicion because he has given a quite clear – although, as we have argued, invalid – reason for waiting: only a “Unifying Council”, in his view, - a Council embracing both Orthodox and heretics - could decide such a matter, and such a “Unifying Council” cannot be convened in present circumstances. But some of the hierarchs in ROCOR quite clearly have a different motivation, and are not at all concerned about the theory of Unifying Councils. They reject the Council of 1983 because they believe that the ecumenist heretics are in fact Orthodox and want to unite with them…

**Bishop Ephraim and the Excuse of Ignorance.** We have seen that by 1937 Metropolitan Cyril considered that time enough had passed for the faithful to come to a clear appreciation of the renovationist nature of Sergianism and flee from it. Now the “argument from ignorance” which Metropolitan Cyril implicitly employed in the early years of the Sergianist schism has been developed further by Bishop Ephraim of Boston. Let us examine it more closely.

Bishop Ephraim rejects as unpatriotic Metropolitan Chrysostomos’ concept of “potential schism”. “Schism is schism and heresy is heresy from the very start”. And he accepts that the Matthewites’ view that schismatics and heretics have no grace has patristic backing – and is not confined, even in our day, to the Matthewites. However, he is unhappy with the Matthewites’ idea that grace is simply “switched off” like electricity at the beginning of a schism. The problem is that the people in a heretical or schismatical communion are not all at the same level of knowledge. Some do not know what it is all about; and the point at which these (shall we call them: “potential”?) heretics “become confirmed heretics, knowingly and stubbornly and unrepentantly, may take some time”.

It is evident that Bishop Ephraim, while rejecting the concept of “potential schism” and “potential heresy”, is nevertheless reintroducing some such concept “by the backdoor”. He does not say explicitly that “potential” or “unconfirmed” heretics receive true sacraments, but the implication is there. Thus instead of the metaphor of electricity, Bishop Ephraim quotes from St. Athanasios of Constantinople’s use of the metaphor of the severed branch (which in turn, of course, derives from the Lord’s use of it in John 15): “The Church of Christ is the tree of life. Therefore, just as a branch which has been cut off from a healthy tree withers away little by little, and becomes dry and fuel for the fire, so is it in this case as well. The proof is this: many people, after the economy of Christ my God’s incarnation in the flesh, cut themselves
off from the life-giving tree, from the Church, I mean, either through heresy or schism. And the tree of life, the Church, given water and light by Christ my Saviour, continues to flourish; but they who have apostasized from Her have perished, since of their own will they removed themselves far from God” (Letter 34). Bishop Ephraim clearly prefers this metaphor because it contains the idea of *gradualness*. Just as a severed branch only gradually withers away, he appears to be saying, so a schismatic or heretical Church only gradually loses grace.

However, the metaphor need not – and should not – be interpreted in this way. For while the withering away of the branch may be gradual, *its cutting off is sudden* - and it is the cutting off that corresponds to the loss of grace. The withering away, on the other hand, corresponds to the *consequences* of the loss of grace in the gradual loss even of the *external appearance* of a true, grace-filled Church.

Bishop Ephraim ridicules the idea that grace could have been “switched on and off” each time St. Athanasius returned from exile and was then exiled again by the Arians. I don’t find the idea ridiculous at all. Something very similar must have happened in the period 1922-24 in Russia, when churches ruled by renovationists lost the grace of sacraments – as Patriarch Tikhon himself declared – and then received it again when their hierarchs repented or were replaced by Orthodox ones.

But what about the people who were confused or ignorant at that time? In order to answer this question, let us consider two kinds of ignorance: ignorance caused by a lack of zeal for the faith, and ignorance caused by genuine incapacity of some kind - extreme youth, mental deficiency, distance from sources of accurate information, etc. If an Orthodox Christian is ignorant that his hierarch is a heretic because of his own lack of zeal for the faith, then he himself is largely to blame, as Bishop Ephraim appears to concede when discussing the indifference of present-day ecumenists. Very often the seemingly ignorant are actually simply indifferent. Let us remember that the main reason for the appearance of the Antichrist, according to St. Paul, will be *the lack of love for the truth* among contemporary Christians (II Thessalonians 2.10).

But let us suppose that the Christian really loves the truth, but is uneducated or unintelligent or a long way from good pastors or surrounded by misinformed or malicious people. Then we believe that God will enlighten him in one way or another, or simply *move* him out of danger. There are many, many examples from the lives of the saints to show that God does not abandon His faithful sheep when they are in danger of going astray; for, as the Lord said, “*no man* is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand” (John 10.29). For there is such a thing as genuine, unwitting ignorance, and it does serve as an excuse in God’s eyes. If ignorance did not serve as some kind of
but those who crucified Christ certainly sinned; and neither the Lord nor St. Peter said that they had not sinned. He pleaded for forgiveness for them, not because they had not sinned, but because there was some excuse for their sin (their ignorance of His Divinity).²⁸⁴ St. Paul also was guilty, but again there were “extenuating circumstances”: his lack of knowledge of the mystery. And when that knowledge was given him, he repented. And so sin remains sin, whether it is committed in knowledge or in ignorance; only sin committed in knowledge is more serious and is punished more severely than sin committed in genuine ignorance.

The Lord put it as follows: “That servant which knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes” (Luke 12.47-48). On which Blessed Theophylact makes the following comment: “He too was punished because he was able to learn the will of the master, but did not want to do so. Because of his laziness, he was the cause of his own ignorance, and he deserves punishment for this very reason, that of his own will he did not learn. Brothers, let us tremble with fear. If even he who knows nothing deserves to be beaten, what excuse will deliver those who are brimming with knowledge, especially those who are teachers? Their condemnation will be even more severe…”²⁸⁵

How does this all relate to the question of the grace of sacraments? Only obliquely, in my opinion. There is nothing in Holy Tradition to lead us to believe that when an Orthodox Christian goes up to receive communion in the church of a publicly condemned and deposed heretic, he receives the true sacrament out of condescension to his ignorance.

Or if this does sometimes happen, it is by a special oeconomia of God which we cannot know about except by special revelation, and which cannot therefore play a part in our public discussion. God is sovereign, and so may break His own rules. But we are His subjects and must follow the rules He has given us. We shall not be condemned if we follow the rules God has given us in the Holy Canons, even if He, in His sovereign mercy, sometimes

²⁸⁴ Cf. C. S. Lewis: “If you had a perfect excuse you would not need forgiveness: if the whole of your action needs forgiveness then there was no excuse for it” (“On Forgiveness”, in Fernseed and Elephants, London: Fount Paperbacks, 1977, p. 40.
practises oeconomia. But we shall be condemned if we cast doubt on the canons concerning heretics on the basis of private and quite possibly quite unfounded speculations.

However, it would not be inconsistent with the Holy Canons to suppose that, depending on the degree and nature of the ignorance of the Orthodox Christian - which is, of course, known to God alone, - he may be protected to a greater or lesser extent from the effects of his partaking of “the devil’s food”, as the Fathers call the communion of heretics. I think it is perfectly possible, for example, that there are many people in the remoter parts of the Russian countryside who do not know much about the heresy of Ecumenism and therefore sin less gravely when they partake of the “sacraments” in the patriarchate than do the priests and, even more, the hierarchs. But this is really only speculation that has very little bearing on the dogmatic issue. Neither I nor anyone else knows how many such people there are, how ignorant they really are, how much they are sinning by staying in the false patriarchate, and to what extent they are protected by God. I do not know, and I do not have to know that: the only thing I have to know is what the Church teaches about heretics, the “sacraments” of heretics, and the necessity of keeping away from them.

Bishop Ephraim goes on to cite the example of the Western schism, its lack of clarity (from a human point of view), the fact that there was heresy in the West before 1054, and communion between parts of the East and West in parts after 1054. He makes some good points here, but again they are not directly relevant to the question at issue. The fact that it is sometimes difficult to determine precisely when a schismatic or heretical community falls from grace does not mean that there was not in fact a precise cut-off point – we mustn’t confuse the Divine judgements, which are always clear and precise, with human knowledge of His judgements, which are often weak and clouded because of sin.

I believe that the traditional cut-off point of 1054 is the correct one for the Pope of Rome himself – the lights went out in Rome the day the Local Council of the Great Church of Constantinople pulled the switch. Some local Churches in the West continued to keep the light for a few more years yet – England, for example, was only formally integrated into the papist church only on August 29, 1070, after a bitter war in which one-fifth of the population was exterminated, and the last pre-schism archbishop was defrocked, and his papist successor installed in his place. I think it is also possible that Ireland and Scandinavia, whose direct contact with Rome was minimal and whose Churches were therefore de facto autonomous, retained the grace of sacraments even into the early part of the twelfth century.

Is the idea of “gradually receding grace” being reintroduced here “by the back-door”? I don’t think so. As even the ecumenist “Metropolitan” Anthony
(Bloom) of Sourozh once admitted when discussing the sacraments of papists, we cannot talk about “half sacraments”; on any one altar at any one time there either is or is not the true sacrament of Christ, and the angel sent by God to guard that altar either is or is not present. Grace does not “gradually recede” from that altar; it goes suddenly and decisively. In some historical cases it is, I agree, difficult to determine with precision whether or when grace has left a particular church, or diocese, or even patriarchate. But by a careful study of the facts – the canonical facts and the historical facts - we can come closer to precision than some people allow. I think it was St. Macarius who once saw the grace of baptism leave his disciple when he had apostasized during conversation with a Jew. I believe that the same sudden, decisive loss of grace takes place in churches, too – although, because of our sins, we cannot see it as St. Macarius did.

The concept of “degrees of grace” does have application in certain contexts – but not to the Body and Blood of Christ. St. Seraphim said that the aim of the Christian life is to acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit. This “personal” or “pneumatological” grace is clearly a matter of degree – insofar, that is, as we can use such categories in talking about the uncreated and unquantifiable energies of God. Saints have more grace than ordinary Orthodox Christians; and some saints shine more brightly in the firmament of grace than others. We can grow in grace and decrease in grace. But the holiness and grace of the Eucharist depends neither on the celebrant’s nor on the communicant’s degree of grace. For It is Christ Himself, no less...

The important question is: is it in principle possible to determine, with God’s help, whether or not a community has the grace of sacraments? I believe that the whole body of the holy canons and patristic writings presupposes that it is indeed possible – and must be done to the extent of our ability. And I believe that Bishop Ephraim is actually of the same view. Only he tends to cloud the issue by discussing all the practical difficulties involved in applying the canons in particular circumstances. These difficulties clearly exist, I do not deny it; but they should not divert us from the main dogmatic point without which we will never attain clarity or truth in this matter – the point, namely, that from the time of their canonical deposition heretics do not have the grace of sacraments.

A last important point has been made in this connection by Protopriest Lev Lebedev. It is, of course, a tragedy that an individual or community should be deprived of the grace of sacraments. But it is a still greater tragedy that a person should receive the True Body of Christ when he is, wittingly or unwittingly, not in a condition to receive it without condemnation. Therefore a community’s being deprived of the grace of sacraments may actually be a mercy of God at the same time that it is clearly a judgement. Moreover, we may better bring people to partake once more of the True Body and Blood of Christ to their salvation by gently but firmly pointing out to them that they
are not partaking of It in their heretical churches, which they must leave and renounce if they are to make themselves worthy of It again…

The Sunday of the Holy Cross.
APPENDIX 6. THE SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY AND THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE

The approach of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, always an important event in the Church’s calendar, is rendered all the more important this year by the planned union of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia under Metropolitan Lavr (ROCOR) with her supposed “mother” inside Russia, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (MP), which lies under many anathemas of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Not coincidentally, perhaps, we have recently witnessed a sustained attack on the nature of the anathematisms pronounced on this Sunday on the part of certain supporters of this union. For clearly the supporters of union wish to lull the members of the ROCOR into a false sense of security, into a feeling that the fearsome anathematisms pronounced on this Sunday will not apply to them if they are joined to the MP – a feeling which, as I shall now try to show with the help of God, is, tragically, completely unfounded.

The supporters of union characteristically employ one or all of the following tactics in various combinations, some of which are mutually inconsistent with each other: (1) a redefinition of the meaning and use of the word “anathema” in such a way as to limit, or radically distort, its significance; (2) a caviling at individual anathemas so as to prove their invalidity, incompetence, narrowness of application and lack of universality in space or time; and (3) a reinterpretation of the current state and status of the MP in such a way as to prove that it does not fall under any of the anathemas in question, even if they were valid. I shall approach each of these tactics in turn.

1. The Meaning and Use of the Word “Anathema”.

A common tactic used is to declare that anathemas do not constitute expulsion from the Church in the full sense, but rather warnings about false doctrine.

The falseness of this argument was shown by St. John Maximovich, who, after explaining the use of the words “anathema” in the New Testament, wrote: “In the acts of the Councils and the further course of the New Testament Church, the word ‘anathema’ came to mean complete separation from the Church. ‘The Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes’, ‘let him be anathema’, ‘let it be anathema’, means a complete tearing away from the Church. While in cases of ‘separation from the communion of the Church’ and other epitimias or penances laid on a person, the person remained a member of the Church, even though his participation in her grace-filled life was limited, those given over to anathema were thus completely torn away from her until their repentance. Realizing that she is unable to do anything for their salvation, in view of their stubbornness and hardness of heart, the earthly
Church lifts them up to the judgement of God. That judgement is merciful unto repentant sinners, but fearsome for the stubborn enemies of God. ‘It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God... for our God is a consuming fire’ (Hebrews 10.31; 12.29).”

Sometimes it is added that only God can expel from the Church, which is clearly false, in that Christ God specifically entrusted His True Church with the power to bind and to loose (Matthew 18.18; John 20.23) – that is, to retain people as members of the Church or to expel them from Her (provided, of course, that She exercises this power with justice and discernment).

Other variations on this tactic include the theory that anathemas anathematize, not individual men or churches, but teachings of men and churches, which again is clearly false, in that the Apostle Paul’s anathemas (I Corinthians 16.22; Galatians 1.8,9) are directed against people, as are many of the anathemas of the Ecumenical Councils.

Again it is asserted that anathemas anathematize nobody if specific names are not mentioned, which would imply that the Apostle Paul’s anathemas, as well as many of those of the Ecumenical Councils and those more recent anathemas pronounced on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, are all just a pompous form of game-playing and not to be taken seriously.

No, the matter is extremely serious. And no amount of Jesuitical circumvention of the plain meaning of the word “anathema”, and of the obvious significance of the formula: “To all those who teach.... Anathema”, can deny that in all true anathemas, whether with names or without them, somebody is anathematized, that is, cut off from the Church. For the word of anathema is no less than “the word of God, quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...” (Hebrews 6.12).

2. Cavilling at the Scope of Individual Anathematisms.

If it is accepted that a given anathema does apply to people, and not only to teachings, and that it does in fact separate people from the Church, and not simply warn them about a possible falling-away, the next tactic usually employed is to attempt to limit the scope of the anathema. This can be done either by mocking the small number of bishops involved, or by asserting that a synod of bishops, however large, can only anathematize those within its jurisdiction. One variant of this ploy is to assert that one Local Church cannot anathematize another.

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Those who assert this are usually thinking of the ROCOR’s anathema against ecumenism in 1983, which supporters of union with the MP like to think applies only to members of the ROCOR, contrary to its obviously universal scope and wording. Of course, many anathemas are formulated in the first place against heretics living within the jurisdiction of the bishops who pronounce them. But that in no way limits the application of such anathemas to those heretics, and those alone; and still less does it mean that there is a “heresy of universal jurisdiction”, as one ROCOR priest has put it.

Concerning this so-called “heresy of universal jurisdiction, I wrote some years ago: “An anathema excludes the person anathematised from the holy mysteries, from membership of the Holy Church. In the first place, of course, that applies to the local Church of which that person is a member. It applies to other Churches only to the extent that the leaders of those other Churches agree with the original anathema and "sign up to it", as it were. Thus the heretic Arius was originally anathematized by the Bishop of Alexandria, which meant that he was excluded from receiving the sacraments throughout the Church of Alexandria. However, not all the bishops of neighbouring Churches agreed with this anathema, so Arius was able to receive communion in other Local Churches. To this extent the anathema was only of local significance. It required the convening of the First Ecumenical Council before Arius was anathematized "universally" - and even then, the anathema was not universally received, as the history of the Church in the next fifty years demonstrates.

“It is a different matter when we consider an anathema sub specie aeternitatis, in its mystical, super-terrestrial significance. From that point of view, the anathematization of a heretic begins in the heavens. Thus even before Arius had been "locally" anathematized by St. Alexander of Alexandria, the Lord appeared to his predecessor, St. Peter, with a torn cloak, and in answer to St. Peter's question: ‘O Creator, who has torn Thy tunic?’, replied: ‘The mindless Arius; he has separated from Me people whom I had obtained with My Blood’.

“So not only Arius, but all those who followed him, had been separated from the Church by the anathema of Her First Bishop, the Lord Jesus Christ, years (or rather, aeons) before even the first "local" anathema had been uttered. All heresies and heretics are anathematized "from all eternity" by the eternal Lord, for just as every truth is approved by the Truth Himself from all eternity, so is every lie condemned by Him from all eternity, being condemned with "the father of lies" to the gehenna of fire (Revelation 22.15).

“The task of hierarchs on earth is to discern the decisions of the heavenly Church, and then apply these eternal and heavenly decisions on earth, in space and time. As St. Bede the Venerable (+735) writes: "The keys of the

St. Dmitri of Rostov, Lives of the Saints, November 25.
Kingdom designate the actual knowledge and power of discerning who are worthy to be received into the Kingdom, and who should be excluded from it as being unworthy”.\footnote{St. Bede, Sermon on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, P.L. 94, col. 219.} From this point of view, it matters not a jot whether a heretic is anathematized locally or universally, since he has already been anathematized by the heavenly Church. Or rather, it matters in this sense: that if the heretic has been anathematized locally, but this anathema is not accepted by the rest of the Church, then the rest of the Church is under the grave danger of falling under this same anathema. For the local anathema, if it is just, is the reflection of a heavenly anathema; and the anathema of the heavenly Church is universal….

“This explains why, when local Churches anathematized a heresy, they never qualified the anathema … by saying: ‘but of course, this applies only to the heretics in our local Church’. On the contrary: history shows that local Churches freely anathematized heretics, not only in their own Churches, but also in others. Thus Nestorius, a heretic of the Church of Constantinople, was first condemned by a local Synod of the Church of Rome under St. Celestine; the Monothelite heretics were first condemned by a local Synod, again, of the Church of Rome; and the Papist heretics were first condemned by a local Synod of the Church of Constantinople.

“Consider what St. Maximus said of the Monothelites: ‘In addition to having excommunicated themselves from the Church, they have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?’

“Note that the saint says that the heretics have excommunicated themselves; for as the Apostle Paul writes, ‘he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself’ (Titus 3.11). But the heretics' self-condemnation and self-exclusion from the Church as a mystical organism [here I borrow a distinction between the Church as a mystical organism and the Church as an external organization from the Catacomb Hieromartyr Bishop Mark of Sergiev Posad (+1938)] must be followed by their exclusion from the Church as an external organization, lest others be infected with their heresy. Hence the need for councils of bishops to anathematize them, following the rule: ‘A heretic after the first and second admonition reject’ (Titus 3.10), and: ‘If he refuses to listen to the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen and a publican’ (Matthew 18.17). And clearly St. Maximus considered that the anathema of the local Church of Rome had validity throughout the Ecumenical Church.

“Administrative matters and moral falls are the business of local Churches and councils. However, heresies of their very nature are of universal significance, having the potential to infect the whole Church. That is why the
appearance of a heresy in one local Church is not the business only of that local Church, but of all the local Churches - and every local Church can and must anathematize it.

“Even the anathema of single bishopric or metropolitanate has universal power and validity if it is uttered in the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the eternal Truth. Thus in 1069 the bishops of the metropolitanate of York, in the north of England, solemnly anathematized both the Pope of Rome and his stooge, William the conqueror, the first papist king of England. All the evidence is that they did not know that the Church of Constantinople had already anathematized Rome in 1054. So they were not simply confirming the word of a higher authority. They did not need a higher authority. They were successors of the apostles, with the power to bind and to loose. And they used that power, not for personal gain (on the contrary: they paid for their boldness with their lives), even against the most senior bishop in Christendom...

“In the same way, in 1983 the Sobor of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad, using the power to bind and to loose given them by the Bishop of bishops, the Lord Jesus Christ, translated onto earth, into space and time, the completely binding and universally applicable decision already arrived at from all eternity by the Council of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ecumenism is, was and always will be a heresy, indeed "the heresy of heresies", and the ecumenist heretics are, were and always will be outside the Church, the mystical Body of Christ. The decision of the ROCOR Sobor in 1983, confirmed with no change to its universal wording in 1998, expelled these already self-condemned and Divinely condemned heretics also from the external organization of the Church - and woe to any man, of whatever Church, who despises that decision, for he will then surely fall under the same anathema…” 289

Parallel to the theory that anathemas are not universal in space is the theory that they are not universal in time either, that they have a “sell-by date”, after which they need to be “reapplied” by “living” Synods of bishops. In answer to this we reply in the words of the Lord: “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Matthew 22.32), and his true bishops, together with the words of truth and power that they pronounce, live for ever. In any case, are not the anathemas of the Ecumenical Councils “reapplied” by “living Synods of bishops” every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy? And not because these anathemas have somehow “died out” in the course of the previous year (what a blasphemous thought!), but precisely so that the people should not forget their eternal significance and should, by pronouncing them themselves, take care that they should not “fall under their own anathema” by participating in heresy and the communion of heretics.

3. The MP and the Anathemas.

Let us now turn to some specific anathemas as they apply to the MP:

a. The anathemas against Sergianism. Metropolitan Philaret of New York (+1985) wrote of the MP: “This false church has been twice anathematised. His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the All-Russian Church Council anathematised the communists and all their co-workers. This terrible anathema has not been lifted to this day and preserves its power, since it can be lifted only by an All-Russian Church Council, as being the canonically higher Church authority. And a terrible thing happened in 1927, when the leader of the Church, Metropolitan Sergius, by his shameful apostate declaration submitted the Russian Church to the Bolsheviks and declared that he was cooperating with them. In the most exact sense the expression of the prayer before confession was fulfilled: ‘fallen under his own anathema!’ For in 1918 the Church anathematised all the co-workers of communism, and in 1927 she herself entered into the company of these co-workers and began to praise the red God-fighting authorities – to praise the red beast of which the Apocalypse speaks. And this is not all. When Metropolitan Sergius published his criminal declaration, the faithful children of the Church immediately separated from the Soviet church, and the Catacomb Church was created. And she in her turn anathematised the official church for her betrayal of Christ... We receive clergymen from Moscow not as ones possessing grace, but as ones receiving it by the very act of union. But to recognize the church of the evil-doers as the bearer and repository of grace – that we, of course, cannot do. For outside of Orthodoxy there is no grace; and the Soviet church has deprived itself of grace.”

Of course, many will say that all this is in the past, since communism has fallen in Russia. But since when does a change of political regime make a heretic Orthodox without his repentance? In any case, there is abundant evidence that if the communist regime has fallen, Sovietism has by no means fallen. When Fr. Dmitri Dudko praises Stalin, do his bishops rebuke him? They do not. When KGB President Putin toasts Stalin and restores the red flag to the armed forces, does the official church protest? Not a murmur... Russia is going back to the Soviet Union (if it ever really left it), and the MP is going along with that (because it never left it).

b. The anathemas of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils against the Monophysite heresy. In 1990, in Chambesy,
Switzerland, the Monophysites agreed to take “a positive attitude” to, although without officially accepting, the last Four Ecumenical Councils and the Fathers who took part in them, and to lift their anathemas against them; while the Orthodox agreed to lift their anathemas against all the Monophysite councils and fathers, including the notorious heresiarchs Dioscurus, Timothy and Severus. Thus both “families of Churches” (a new phrase unknown to Orthodox ecclesiology) agreed that “all the anathemas and condemnations of the past which divide us should be lifted by the Churches in order that the last obstacle to the full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and power of God.”

But this meant that all the six hundred and thirty holy Fathers who uttered these anathemas and condemnations were wrong!

Of course, the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches (with the exception of Jerusalem) have already implicitly rejected the Councils and the Fathers by their communion in prayer and the sacraments with all sorts of heretics, and even pagans, the WCC General Assembly in Canberra in 1991 being perhaps the most extreme example. Nevertheless, it is a further and important stage to say explicitly that the Ecumenical Councils were wrong, that the Monophysites should not have been condemned, that they were Orthodox all these centuries although the Holy Fathers and all the saints of the Orthodox Church considered them to be heretics. This is not simply a failure to come up to the standards of the Ecumenical Councils: it is a renunciation of the standards themselves. In essence, the Local Orthodox Churches here placed themselves under the anathemas against Monophysitism from the Fourth Ecumenical Council onwards, and must be considered to be “semi-Monophysites”.

c. The anathemas of the Constantinopolitan Councils of 1054 and the 1340s against Roman Catholicism. In 1965, the Constantinopolitan Church “lifted” the 1054 anathema against the Roman Catholics, and the MP did not demur, but in 1969 decided to give communion to Catholics in certain circumstances, an act which was defined by the ROCOR Synod as “heretical”.

In 1994 the Moscow Patriarchate and other Local Orthodox churches signed the Balamand agreement with the Catholics, in which the Orthodox and the Catholics were declared to be sister-Churches in the full sense, “two lungs” of the same organism (with the Monophysites as a “third lung”?). The Balamand Agreement, which was signed on the Orthodox side by Moscow, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Romania, Cyprus, Poland and Finland, declared: “Catholics and Orthodox… are once again discovering each other as sister churches” and “recognizing each other as sister churches”. “On each side it is acknowledged that what Christ has entrusted to His Church – the profession of the apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments, the apostolic succession of bishops, and, above all, the one priesthood celebrating the one Sacrifice of Christ – cannot be considered to be the exclusive property
of one of our Churches.” The baptism of penitent papists into the Orthodox Church was prohibited: “All rebaptism (sic) is prohibited.” The Orthodox Church “recognizes the Catholic Church in her entirety as a sister Church, and indirectly recognizes also the Oriental Catholic Churches” (the Uniates). “Special attention should be given on both sides to the preparation and education of future priests with regard to the new ecclesiology, (that they may) be informed of the apostolic succession of the other Church and the authenticity of its sacramental life, (so that) the use of history in a polemical manner (may be avoided)”.

This was an official acceptance of the “branch theory” of the Church, and therefore also fell under:

**d. The Anathema of the ROCOR Synod against Ecumenism.**

Some will say that the MP has extracted itself from under this anathema because, in the document on relations with the heterodox accepted at the 2000 Sobor, it was declared that “the Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ, created by our Lord and Saviour Himself; it is the Church established by, and filled with, the Holy Spirit…” “The Church of Christ is one and unique…” “The so-called ‘branch theory’, which affirms the normality and even the providentiality of the existence of Christianity in the form of separate ‘branches’… is completely unacceptable.”

But, wrote Protopriest Michael Ardov, “the ‘patriarchal liberals’ will also not be upset, insofar as the heretics in the cited document are called ‘heterodox’, while the Monophysite communities are called the ‘Eastern Orthodox Churches’. And the ‘dialogues with the heterodox’ will be continued, and it is suggested that the World Council of Churches be not abandoned, but reformed...”

Moreover, immediately after the Council, on August 18, “Patriarch” Alexis prayed together with the Armenian “Patriarch”. The Church does not accept words unless they are accompanied by deeds. Saying that the Church of Christ is only the Orthodox Church, but continuing to remain in the World Council of Churches, which officially declares the opposite, is hypocritical and would never have been accepted by the Holy Fathers, who insisted not only that Orthodoxy be proclaimed but also that the heretics be anathematised.

Until the MP breaks all ecumenical relations with, and anathematises, both the RCs and the Monophysites publicly, as well as the agreements of Chambesy and Balamand and all participants in the World Council of Churches, they remain under the anathemas of the Holy Fathers. It is here

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291 Ardov, “The ‘Jubilee Council’ has confirmed it: the Moscow Patriarchate has finally fallen away from Orthodoxy” (Report read at the 8th Congress of the clergy, monastics and laity of the Suzdal diocese of the Russian Orthodox [Autonomous] Church, November, 2000).
that “reapplying” the anathemas by “living” Synods of bishops makes sense and is necessary. Not because the anathemas of the Holy Fathers need reinforcing, but to show that we are in accordance with them, and are members of the same Church, the Church of the living God.

e. The Anathemas against Judaism.

In his famous speech before the rabbis of New York on November 13, 1991, “Patriarch” Alexis, alias KGB agent Drozdov, said: “Dear brothers, shalom to you in the name of the God of love and peace!… We are all brothers, for we are all children of the Old Testament on Mount Sinai, which, as we Christians believe, was renewed by Christ… Your law is our law, your prophets are our prophets.”

The patriarch confessed that “we are one with the Jews, without renouncing Christianity and not in spite of Christianity, but in the name of and by dint of Christianity, while the Jews are one with us not in spite of Judaism, but in the name of and by dint of true Judaism. We are separated from the Jews because we are not yet completely Christian, while the Jews are separated from us because they are not yet completely Jews. For the fullness of Christianity embraces both itself and Judaism, while the fullness of Judaism is Christianity… The Jewish people are near to us in faith. Your law is our law, your prophets are our prophets.”

The patriarch called on the Jews to work together to build “the new world order”: “by our joint efforts we shall build a new society - a democratic, free, open, just society… where Jews would live with Christians in security and peace, in an atmosphere of friendship, creative brotherhood and the brotherhood of the children of the one God, the Father of all, the God of your fathers and of ours.”

So the KGB Patriarch is going to work with the Jews for “the new world order”, considering himself a brother of the rabbis whose sacred book, the Talmud, calls Christ a magician, the son of a harlot and a Roman solider! Has he forgotten that God Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, said that the Jews were not the children of God, but of the devil (John 8.44)?! Does he not remember that the Apostle John said that those who reject the Son do not have the Father either (I John 2.22)?!

Have we not returned to the time, around the beginning of the 16th century, when the head of the Russian Church was a secret Judaizer? Only is it not much worse now, in that this Judaizer does not hide his Judaism, and the church which he heads make no attempt to oppose or depose him?

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Let us remind ourselves how the true metropolitans of Moscow and saints of Russia dealt with the Jews: "The polemic began... in the time of Metropolitan Peter (+1326), the founder of the Muscovite ecclesiastical centre. In the life of St. Peter it is mentioned among his other exploits for the good of the Russian Church that he 'overcame the heretic Seit in debate and anathematised him.' The hypothesis concerning the Karaite origin of the 'Judaisers' allows us to see in Seit a Karaite preacher.

"... The heresy did not disappear but smouldered under a facade of church life in certain circles of the Orthodox urban population, and the Russian church, under the leadership of her hierarchs, raised herself to an unceasing battle with the false teachings. The landmarks of this battle were: Metropolitan Peter's victory over Seit in debate (between 1312 and 1326), the unmasking and condemnation of the strigolniki in Novgorod in the time of Metropolitan Alexis (1370s), the overcoming of this heresy in the time of Metropolitan Photius (+1431), and of the heresy of the Judaisers - in the time of Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod (+1505) and St. Joseph of Volotsk (+1515)."\(^{293}\)

Archbishop Andrew of Rockland (+1978) saw a close link between the heresy of the Judaizers and the Russian revolution because both represented the triumph of Jewish ways of thinking. The present-day Moscow Patriarchate, far from cleansing Russia of Judaism, has presented an exhausted Russia on a plate to the international Jewish society that we know of as “the new world order”. What a mockery of the exploit of the holy new martyrs and confessors of Russia, and what a lesson for us all!

To us, who witness the triumph, not only of sergianism and ecumenism, but even of God-hating Judaism in the heart of the formerly holy Russia, the words of the holy Apostle Paul to the Judaizing Christians of his day have never been more relevant:

\begin{quote}
Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be \textit{anathema}!
\end{quote}

\textit{February 12/25, 2004.}

\textit{St. Alexis, Metropolitan of Moscow.}

\(^{293}\) \textit{Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’}, Publication of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1988, p. 25 (in Russian).
APPENDIX 7. THE BRANCH AND MONOLITH THEORIES OF THE CHURCH

The February, 2004 (N 145) issue of Orthodoxos Pnoi, the organ of the Matthewite Metropolitan Kyrikos of Mesogaia, contains an extraordinarily bitter and unjust attack on his brother bishop Metropolitan Epiphanios of Kition (Cyprus). This attack actually highlights in a very instructive manner not only what is wrong with the Matthewites – more precisely: with the Kyrikite offshoot from the Matthewites, but also how a fanatically unbalanced attack on one heresy can lead to a fall into the mirror-image of that heresy, just as unbalanced attacks on Nestorianism lead to Monophysitism, and on Catholicism – to Protestantism. In this case, the heresy under attack is the ecumenist “branch theory” of the Church, whose mirror-image, into which the attackers are in danger of falling, is what I shall call the “monolith theory” of the Church.

The cause of the present quarrel is Metropolitan Epiphanios’ founding, in January/February of this year, of a mission of the True Orthodox Church of Cyprus in Russia. The initial perplexity of the Kyrikites on hearing of this event would appear to be understandable. After all, the Greek Matthewites (with whom Metropolitan Epiphanios is in communion) already have a mission in Russia under Metropolitan Kyrikos, so why create a second administration of the same Church there?

However, a closer examination of this quarrel reveals that the Kyrikites have already in effect created a schism from the Matthewites, so their accusing Epiphanios of schismatical activity is hypocritical. For in what other way can we characterize the language that the editor of Orthodoxos Pnoi uses about the Greek Matthewite Archbishop Nicholas, with whom all the Matthewites, including Metropolitan Kyrikos, are still formally in communion? He calls him “the pseudo-archbishop Mr. Nicholas” (p. 44)!!! This language is repeated by the theologian Eleutherius Goutzides, who calls him “Mr. Nicholas Messiakaris” (p. 62) and mocks Metropolitan Epiphanios’ description of him as “a canonical and Orthodox archbishop” (p. 62). Again, Goutzides writes: “His Beatitude Andreas [the former Matthewite archbishop] has fallen as far as possible with the abomination of his resignation in favour of Mr. Nicholas Messiakaris of the Piraeus” (p. 47)!

Since the Kyrikites reject them so violently, it is hardly surprising that the Matthewites under Archbishop Nicholas feel that they are entitled to found their own mission in Russia independently of the Kyrikite mission. (It appears that Metropolitan Epiphanios’ step was taken with the full agreement of Archbishop Nicholas). The Kyrikites cannot have it both ways. Either they recognize Archbishop Nicholas as the lawful archbishop, in which case they have a right to feel indignant if the archbishop founds a second mission on “their” territory. Or they reject Archbishop Nicholas as a “pseudo-
archbishop”, in which case the archbishop has every right to pay no attention to their “rights”, since schismatics have no ecclesiastical rights.

But the Kyrikites have another argument: they claim that their flock in Russia (five priests, one deacon, several hundred parishioners) is the Catacomb Church of Russia, so that Epiphanius is, in effect, trespassing on the canonical territory, not simply of another diocese (that of Mesogaia), but of another Local Church (the Russian).

Leaving aside for the time being the question how the Kyrikites can claim that their very small flock constitutes the whole of the Catacomb Church of Russia, let us consider another canonical problem that their position raises. Since a Local Church cannot exist without at least one bishop, and since the Russian Kyrikites have no other bishop than Metropolitan Kyrikos, we must presume that the Kyrikites consider Metropolitan Kyrikos to be the head of the Catacomb Church of Russia. But he is also, at the same time, a bishop (one of the very few) of the True Orthodox Church of Greece! So he belongs at the same time to two autocephalous Churches! But this is clearly anti-canonical!

The resolution of this anti-canonicity can proceed in one of two ways. Either Metropolitan Kyrikos renounces for his flock the title “the Catacomb Church of Russia”. Or he consecrates a bishop for Russia, who will be entirely a Russian bishop – that is, living in Russia, working only for his Russian flock, and making no claim to have any jurisdiction outside Russia.

Let us now look a little more closely at the concept of the Catacomb Church. The term brings to mind the situation of the Christians in Roman times, and again during the iconoclast persecutions, when the Church was forced to live in a semi-legal or illegal position vis-à-vis the State. If such a move was necessary under the pagan Roman emperors and heretical Greek emperors, then it was only to be expected that it would again become necessary under the militant atheist commissars of the Soviet anti-State, whose enmity towards religion was much fiercer than that of the pagan Roman and heretical Greek emperors.

The idea that the Russian Church might have to descend into the catacombs, in imitation of the Christians in early Rome, was suggested as early as 1909 by the future head of that Church, Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Petrograd: “Now many are complaining about the hard times for the Church... Remembering the words of the Saviour with complete accuracy, we must expect still worse times for the Church... Without any exaggeration, she must truly live through a condition close to complete destruction and her being overcome by the gates of hell. Perhaps with us, exactly as in the land of freedom, America, they will drive the Name of Christ
out of the schools. They will adapt prayer assemblies into ordinary meetings permitted by the police, as in that other land of freedom, France, and will convert the heritage of the Church, together with the very right of faith, into the property of the state. Perhaps the faith of Christ will again hide in the woods, the deserts, the catacombs, and the confession of the faith will be only in secret, while immoral and blasphemous presentations will come out into the open. All this may happen! The struggle against Christ will be waged with desperation, with the exertion of the last drop of human and hellish energy, and only then, perhaps, will it be given to hell and to mankind to assure us with complete obviousness of the unfailing power and might of the priceless promise of Christ: ‘I will build My Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against her’ (Matthew 16.18).”

The first Catacomb hieromartyr was probably the priest Timothy Strelkov, who, after being executed by the Bolsheviks in June, 1918 and then having his severed head miraculously restored to his body, was forced to go into hiding until he was caught and executed for the second time in 1930. In the same year of 1918, Patriarch Tikhon himself had called on the faithful to form unofficial, quasi-catacomb brotherhoods to defend the Orthodox Faith. Shemetov writes: “The brotherhoods which arose with the blessing of the Patriarch did not make the parishes obsolete where they continued to exist. The brotherhoods only made up for the deficiencies of the parishes.”

In fact, the organization of unofficial, catacomb bodies like the brotherhoods became inevitable once it became clear that the God-hating State was bent on destroying the Church. Thus according to Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko), “the catacombs began in 1922, when renovationism began. The Optina elders blessed the Christians to go into the catacombs....” Meanwhile, the “Danilovites” in Moscow and the “Andrewites” in the Urals were already preparing for a descent of the Church into the Catacombs. They clearly saw that the Church could no longer at the same time serve openly and have a pure confession of faith, untainted by compromise with the communists or renovationists. The history of the Church in the late 1920s and 1930s was to prove them right...

Shortly before his death, on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1925, the Patriarch confided to his personal physician and friend, Michael Zhizhilenko, that he felt that the unceasing pressure of the government would one day force the leadership of the Church to concede more than was right, and that

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the true Church would then have to descend into the catacombs like the Roman Christians of old. And he counselled his friend, who was a widower, that when that time came, he should seek the monastic tonsure and episcopal consecration.

That time came in 1927 with the notorious declaration of Metropolitan Sergius; and Michael Zhizhilenko, following the advice of his mentor, was consecrated as the first bishop (with the name Maximus) of the anti-sergianist Catacomb Church in 1928, for which he paid with his life in Solovki in 1931. Thus was the concept and even the name of the Catacomb Church foreseen by the Martyr-Patriarch himself; it was, and is the “Tikhonite” Church.

Now one of the disadvantages of a Church in a catacomb situation, hiding from State power, is that it is almost impossible to maintain the organizational integrity of the Church, to have regular Councils to resolve problems and disputes; for the central authority may be unable to contact all the bishops, still less convene them in one place. Even worse will be the situation if the central authority, in the person of the Patriarch, is himself killed, and it proves impossible to elect a new one. Anticipating this, Patriarch Tikhon and his Synod issued ukaz № 362 dated November 7/20, 1920, whose first three points were as follows:

“1. With the blessing of his Holiness the Patriarch, the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council, in a joint session, judged concerning the necessity of… giving the diocesan Hierarch… instructions in case of a disconnection with the higher church administration or the cessation of the activity of the latter…

“2. If dioceses, as a result of the movement of the front, changes of state boundaries, etc., find themselves unable to communicate with the higher church administration or the higher church administration itself together with his Holiness the Patriarch for some reason ceases its activity, the diocesan hierarch will immediately enter into relations with the hierarchs of neighbouring dioceses in order to organize a higher instance of church authority for several dioceses in the same conditions (in the form of a temporary higher church government or metropolitan region, or something similar).

“3. The care for the organization of the higher church authority for the whole group who are in the situation indicated in point 2 is the obligatory duty of the eldest ranked hierarch in the indicated group…”

Now it was anticipated that these autonomous groups of bishops would remain in communion with each other, even if communication was difficult. However, it was also tacitly admitted that if the persecutions intensified (which they did), then communication between groups might be broken
entirely. With the loosening of communication, differences were likely to arise between the groups; there might even be ruptures of communion because different groups might suspect each other of canonical irregularities, or even of falling away from the faith; and with the absence of any central authority recognised by both sides, there might be no means of healing the divisions thus created. Such a scenario had taken place in other periods of Church history when the faith had been persecuted – for example, in the second half of the fourth century in Asia Minor. So it was only to be expected that it would happen during the much more severe persecutions of the 20th century.

So where, in such a situation, was the Church? And on what basis could the Church still be called “one” if she was in fact divided into many parts unable to commune or communicate with each other? Could two autonomous jurisdictions of the Catacomb Church both be said to be part of the One Church if they not only could not commune with each other, but did not do so because of mutual suspicions of anticanonicity?

A very partial and schematic answer to these questions was provided by the Russian Church Abroad in its All-Emigration Council in Serbia in 1938: “We must follow the example of the Church prior to the Council of Nicaea, when the Christian communities were united not on the basis of the administrative institutions of the State, but through the Holy Spirit alone.”

In other words, administrative unity was not the criterion of Church unity in the deep sense. The Holy Spirit can “jump the gap” created by administrative disunity to preserve true unity in the Mystery of the One Church.

A little earlier, in July, 1937, the Ust-Kut Council of the Catacomb Church had come to a similar, but slightly more detailed conclusion in its four canons:

“1. The Sacred Council forbids the faithful to receive communion from the clergy legalized by the anti-Christian State.

“2. It has been revealed to the Sacred Council by the Spirit that the anathema-curse hurled by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon is valid, and all priests and Church-servers who have dared to consider it as an ecclesiastical mistake or political tactic are placed under its power and bound by it.

“3. To all those who discredit and separate themselves from the Sacred Council of 1917-18 – Anathema!

“4. All branches of the Church which are on the common trunk – the trunk is our pre-revolutionary Church – are living branches of the Church of Christ. We give our blessing to common prayer and the serving of the Divine Liturgy to all priests of these branches. The Sacred Council forbids all those who do not consider themselves to be branches, but independent from the tree of the

Church, to serve the Divine Liturgy. The Sacred Council does not consider it necessary to have administrative unity of the branches of the Church, but unity of mind concerning the Church is binding on all.”

So the mystical unity of the One Church is not destroyed by administrative disunity. But “unity of mind concerning the Church is binding on all”. And anyone who remains in communion with the official, “Soviet church” of the Moscow Patriarchate, or who discredits or separates himself from the Sacred Council of 1917-18, is outside the One Church.

Of course, these two conciliar decisions are only schematic; they do not solve, or pretend to solve, any particular quarrel between jurisdictions. Such quarrels can only be resolved with the re-establishment of central authority – that is, a canonical Patriarch and Holy Synod - after the persecutions have come to an end (which time has still not yet come today, in 2004). At the same time, these decisions enable us to say that a jurisdiction such as the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) under Metropolitan Lavr is outside the unity of the True Church of Russia insofar as it does allow its members to commune from the clergy of the Soviet church. Moreover, they condemn such a clergyman as, for example, Hieromonk Gregory Lourié, who, though belonging to a jurisdiction which claims to be part of the Catacomb Church, declares that the Sacred Council of 1917-18 was a “a tragic-comic story, which exerted a minimal, or negative rather than positive, influence on the following life of the Church…” What these two conciliar decisions exclude is the idea the Church as an administrative monolith. On the contrary, the Church is like a “tree”, of which the different catacomb jurisdictions are the “branches”.

Is this a form of the ecumenist branch theory of the Church? No, because the branch theory that was anathematised by ROCOR in 1983 spoke of branches “which differ in doctrine and way of life”, whereas the different branches of the Church envisaged in the conciliar decisions quoted above are understood to have the same faith and way of life, even if they may not agree about everything. In other words, the Catacomb Church has branches in the same sense that the pre-revolutionary Orthodox Church had branches (in the form of national churches such as the Greek, the Russian, the Syrian, etc.) rather than in the sense that the World Council of Churches has branches made up of denominations with completely different faiths.

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In view of the above characterisation of the Catacomb Church, it is clear that the Kyrikites have no right to call their own tiny Russian flock the

300 http://www.vestris.com/cgi-agnes/twenty-eight/agnes?PoetAgnes+PoetAgnesHTMLArticle+archive+Архив_номер_5+127.3.1
Catacomb Church. It may be one branch on the tree of the pre-revolutionary Russian Church – and that only if its bishop ceases to be a hierarch of the Greek Church. But it cannot claim to be the one and only branch unless it can be proved that every other branch has not only committed some kind of canonical transgression which merits excommunication, but is completely graceless – and such proof the Kyrikites have never provided.

However, the Kyrikites have to prove that all other branches of the Catacomb Church are graceless for another reason: that they hold to the “monolith” theory of the Church, according to which there can be only one True Church on any one territory, while all others are false. Of course, they apply this theory not only to Russia, but also to Greece, which is why they refuse to accept that any other ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Greece, whether of the Old or the new calendar, can have the grace of sacraments. And this is also the reason why they are so passionately opposed to Metropolitan Epiphanios, whom they accuse (whether rightly or wrongly is not the subject of this article) of practising “Old Calendar ecumenism”, that is, of believing that there might be more than one Old Calendar jurisdiction in Greece having the grace of sacraments.

Their reasoning is as follows. If we are true, then they are false, and if they are true, then we are false. But we know that we are true, so they must be false. This theory is held completely sincerely; they see no other way of understanding the dogma of the Unity of the Church. If we are not to fall into the ecumenist branch theory, they think, we have to believe in the monolith theory.

But their reasoning is false because they confuse the Unity of the Church as understood in the Symbol of the Faith, which is a dogmatic and mystical unity, with canonical or administrative unity. St. Maximus the Confessor says: “Christ the Lord called that Church the Catholic Church which maintains the true and saving confession of the faith.” Fr. Christopher Birchall, The Life of our Holy Father Maximus the Confessor, Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1982, p. 14. Thus faith alone is the criterion of unity. And that does not mean agreement on absolutely every Church question. Even the apostles did not have such agreement. Thus the Apostles Paul and Barnabas could not agree on how to conduct the mission to the Gentiles – but both remained in the True Church because both had “the true and saving confession of the faith”. As long as the Church on earth exists, there will be such disagreements; but they will not lead to anyone falling away from the Church as long as the true confession of the faith is maintained.

Of course, the two kinds of unity, dogmatic and administrative, are related. Dogmatic unity should be expressed in administrative unity, so that the inner unity of faith of the Christians is expressed outwardly as well; hence the
canonical requirement that there should be only one ruling bishop in any one territory. But history shows that there have been many occasions when there has been administrative disunity in the Church while dogmatic unity – and therefore the grace of sacraments – has been preserved.

“Ah, but it is not only heresies that lead to falling away from the Church,” they will object, “but also schisms, in which there are no dogmatic disagreements.” True, but is every division in the Church leading to a break in communion equivalent to a full schism leading to the loss of the grace of sacraments on one side? Church history seems to indicate otherwise, as the following divisions show:-

(i) between the Roman Church and the Asian Churches over the date of Pascha (late 2nd century), (ii) within the Roman Church over the legitimacy of Pope Callistus (early 3rd century), (iii) between the Roman Church under St. Stephen and the African Church under St. Cyprian over the question whether schismatics have the grace of sacraments (3rd century), (iv) within the Antiochian Church over the legitimacy of St. Meletius (4th century), (v) between St. Epiphanius of Cyprus and St. John Chrysostom (early 5th century), (vi) between the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Churches over the date of Pascha (6th-7th centuries), (vii) between St. Wilfrid of York and the rest of the English Church over the division of his diocese (7th-8th centuries), (viii) between St. Theodore the Studite and St. Nicephorus over the lawfulness of restoring Priest Joseph to his rank (9th century), (ix) between St. Photius the Great and St. Ignatius over who was lawful patriarch of Constantinople (9th century), (x) between the Arsenites and the Ecumenical Patriarchate over the forcible deposition of Patriarch Arsenius (13th-14th century), (xi) between the Serbian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate over Serbian autocephaly (14th century), (xii) between the Russian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate over Russian autocephaly (15th-16th centuries), (xiii) between the Greek kollyvades and the Ecumenical Patriarchate (18-19th centuries) over various matters of Holy Tradition, (xiv) between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek State Church over the Greek War of Independence (1821-52), (xv) between the Bulgarian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate over the Bulgarian exarchate (1872), (xvi) between two contenders for the throne of the Cypriot Church (late 19th – early 20th centuries), (xvii) between two contenders for the throne of Antioch (late 19th – early 20th centuries), (xviii) between several contenders for the throne of Constantinople (late 19th – early 20th centuries), (xix) between the Russian Church and the Georgian Church over Georgian autocephaly (1917), (xx) between the Russian Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate over the latter’s seizure of many Russian territories (early 1920s).

Now some may argue that some of these divisions were in fact full schisms, leading to the falling away of one of the parties for a greater or longer period. Perhaps… But this list proves one thing: that the mere fact of a
break of communion between two ecclesiastical bodies does not necessarily entail that one or other of the parties has become schismatic and lost the grace of sacraments. Why? Because in several of these instances there were saints of the Church on opposite sides of the debate.

Consider, for example, the division in the Church of fourth-century Antioch. On the side of Meletius (himself a saint of the Church) were Saints Basil the Great and John Chrysostom, while on the side of Paulinus were St. Athanasius the Great and the Church of Rome. If this were a schism in the full sense of the word, we should have to conclude that either Saints Basil the Great and John Chrysostom or St. Athanasius the Great and the Church of Rome fell away from the Church and became schismatics! But nobody, not even the Kyrikites, believes this.

Again, let us take the Bulgarian “schism” of 1872. The Kyrikites, being Greeks, would probably argue that the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s anathema against the Bulgarian Church was valid, so that the Bulgarians ceased to be Orthodox at that time. However, both the Russian Church and the Church of Jerusalem remained in communion with the Bulgarians, and the Russians even provided the Bulgarians with holy chrism. According to the logic of the Kyrikites, therefore, the Churches of Russia and Jerusalem fell away from the Church and became schismatics at that time, because “he who communicates with an excommunicate is himself excommunicate”, as St. John Chrysostom says! But nobody, not even the Kyrikites, believes this.

It follows that the monolithic theory of the Church is false. The Church is not divided into different branches differing in faith and life – that is the heresy of ecumenism. But neither is it an absolutely monolithic structure in which the slightest deviation from the norm of unity as understood in the holy canons immediately entails the deviant “branch” being deprived of grace.

We can better understand the meaning of Church Unity by studying a distinction made by the Catacomb Church Hieromartyr, Bishop Mark (Novoselov) of Sergiev Posad: "It is necessary to distinguish between the Church-organism and the Church-organization. As the apostle taught: 'You are the Body of Christ and individually members of it' (I Corinthians 12.27). The Church-organism is a living person, and just as the cells of our body, besides having their own life, have the life that is common to our body and links between themselves, so a man in the Body of Christ begins to live in Church, while Christ begins to live in him. That is why the apostle said: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me' (Galatians 2.20).

"The basis for the affirmation of the Church-organism is love for Christ. The Lord Himself saw the basis of His Church precisely in love for Him. He asked Peter: did he love Him? And He added: 'Feed My sheep'. The Church of
Christ is the union of mutual love of the believers ('United by the bond of love and offering themselves to Christ the Lord, the apostles were washed clean', Canon of Holy Thursday). Only in the Church organism can true democratism, equality and brotherhood come into being; we are equal and brothers only if we are parts of one and the same living body. In the organization there is not and cannot be “organic” equality and brotherhood."\textsuperscript{302}

"Only to the Church-organism can we apply such titles as we meet in the Word of God, for example: 'glorious, holy, spotless' (Ephesians 1.4); 'the Bride of the Lamb' (Revelation 19.7; 21.9); 'the Body of Christ' (Ephesians 1.23; Colossians 1.24); 'the pillar and ground of the truth' (I Timothy 3.15). These concepts are inapplicable to the Church-organization (or applicable only with great qualifications); they lead people into perplexity and are rejected by them. The Church-organism is the pure 'Bride' of Christ (Revelation 21.2), but the Church-organization has all the faults of human society and always bears the marks of human infirmities... The Church-organization often persecutes the saints of God, but the Church-organism receives them into her bosom... The Church-organization rejects them from its midst, deprives them of episcopal sees, while they remain the most glorious members of the Church-organism... It is possible to belong externally to the visible Church (organization), while one belongs only inwardly to the Body of Christ (organism), and the measure of one's belongingness is determined by the degree of one's sanctity."\textsuperscript{303}

The unity of the Church as organism can remain intact even when her unity as an organization is damaged. A person or church body is cut off from the Church as organism only when the damage done to the Church as organization reaches a certain critical degree, or when union is effected with another, heretical body. In the same way, a couple can remain married even when one spouse walks out on the other. Separation leads to final divorce only when a certain degree of alienation is reached, or when one of the spouses commits adultery. May God preserve us from the spiritual adultery that leads to a falling away from the Body of Christ, and also from a rationalist, mechanical understanding of Church unity which leads to accusing others of spiritual adultery when their only concern is to make externally manifest the true, inner unity of the True Orthodox Christians!

\textit{May 12/25, 2004.}
\textit{Holy Hierarchs Epiphanius of Cyprus and Germanus of Constantinople.}

\textsuperscript{303} Novoselov, \textit{op. cit.}, “Letter 18”, pp. 252-253, 253-254.
APPENDIX 8: ON THE CONDEMNATION OF HERETICS

Introduction

The writers of the article “On the Status of Uncondemned Heretics”\textsuperscript{304}, published by the Synod in Resistance, take issue with two ecclesiological theses:

1. “It has been argued that the ecumenists, and, more generally, the ecumenist Churches, have already fallen away from the Body of the Church entirely, that is, they are branches that are automatically cut off from the Vine, and this, indeed, can be demonstrated from the fact that we do not have Mysteriological (Sacramental) communion with them.”

2. “It has also been asserted that the Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Holy Synod in Constantinople, under St. Photios the Great (861), in characterizing the Bishops who preached heresies that had previously been condemned as ‘pseudo-bishops’ and ‘pseudo-teachers’, opened up a new era in a certain way, giving us the right to consider such Bishops, henceforth, as \textit{automatically} deposed, ‘prior to a synodal decision’, and no longer as being Bishops.”

It is not made clear who is supposed to uphold these two theses, but this is perhaps not important. More surprisingly and more importantly, the article contains only a very brief discussion, with no names or dates, of the heresy of ecumenism, and the synodal verdicts against it: almost the whole of the article is taken up with a discussion of general principles regarding the condemnation of heretics in the context of the period of the Seven Ecumenical Councils. We shall discuss these general principles in a moment. But it is necessary to point out at the beginning that, by refusing to discuss twentieth-century Church history in more than a very superficial way, the article has proved nothing one way or the other with regard to the status of the ecumenist heretics. For how can we say whether the ecumenist heretics are already condemned or not, if we do not discuss the various synodal verdicts that have been considered, rightly or wrongly, to be relevant to their status?

Who Represents the Church?

The only discussion of ecumenism in the article in question comes in the context of the declaration of certain “basic principles”, such as: “a. First and foremost, it is not correct, or even just, that a local Church should be characterized and regarded as ecumenist \textit{in toto}, simply because a number of Her clergy – and sometimes a small number, at that – are actually ecumenists: \textit{they} are certainly not to be equated with the local Church.”

\textsuperscript{304} \textit{Orthodox Tradition}, vol. XVIII, No. 2 (2001), pp. 2-15.
Who, then, is to be equated with the local Church? The first-hierarch? The Synod of Bishops? What if the heads of the Churches have endorsed clearly ecumenists statements published jointly with already-condemned heretics, as has happened many times in the World Council of Churches since the 1960s, and at Chambesy in 1990 and Balamand in 1994? What if joint prayers with heretics continue at the highest level (for example, the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople in the Vatican itself or in the Phanar) over a period of decades, if not generations? We seek in vain for answers to these questions in this article. In fact, no answer is given to the question it itself raises: who can be said to represent the Local Church?

“b. The local Orthodox Churches today are fundamentally anti-ecumenist; the inertia of the silent majority does not in any way imply agreement with, or endorsement of, ecumenist activities and teachings.”

No evidence is given for this extremely surprising statement. In fact, all the evidence points in the opposite direction. For example, the Phanar and the Vatican appear to be as close as they have ever been. Again, there has been a notable increase in the ecumenical activity of the Moscow Patriarchate since it engulfed ROCOR in May, 2007, including an increased representation at the World Council of Churches. Again, the Antiochian Patriarchate shows no signs of breaking its union with the Monophysites, and the Alexandrian Patriarchate appears to be following its example. The Local Orthodox Churches have been falling over themselves to tread the path to Rome and other heretical centres. Their main quarrel has been not with the heretics, but with each other, as was recently demonstrated at the Orthodox-Catholic talks in Ravenna.

As for the “silent majority”, we cannot determine what they believe for the simple reason that they are silent! But if they are silent, this does not speak in their favour, for, as St. Gregory the Theologian says, “By your silence you can betray God”. Indeed, when the majority is silent in the face of massive betrayal of the faith carried out over generations, there are only two possible conclusions: either they agree with their heretical hierarchs, or they are too indifferent to questions of the faith to make any protest – which Laodicean indifference to the truth is itself the characteristic feature of the ecumenist heresy, as Metropolitan Philaret of New York pointed out ...

In any case, the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils did not come to their decisions after taking democratic opinion polls of the opinions of their flock. Not only did they not have the technology to carry out polls: they were considered irrelevant. For a true bishop, a successor of the apostles and therefore the representative of his diocese, does not need to consult his flock in order to know whether a certain teaching is truth or heresy – he consults only his conscience and the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church.
“c. It should not be forgotten that no local Church has proclaimed *synodally* that the primary dogma of the ecclesiological heresy of ecumenism is a teaching of the Orthodox Church that must be believed and that it is necessary for salvation; and neither has this even been proclaimed in a pan-Orthodox manner.”

The Constitution of the World Council of Churches commits all its members to a Protestant theory of the Church – essentially the ecumenist branch theory. Insofar as each Local Church approved its entry into the WCC at a synodal level, it proclaims ecumenism *synodally*. Moreover, there are many ecumenist decisions of the World Council of Churches that have been accepted in an official manner by the Local Churches. For example, in 1982, at a conference in Lima, Peru, the Protestant and Orthodox representatives to the WCC agreed that the baptism, eucharist and ordinations of all denominations were valid and acceptable. In 1983 the ROCOR Council of Bishops specifically anathematized not only the branch theory, but also this particular manifestation of the branch theory: “to those... who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation... Anathema.”

A particularly clear example of the official acceptance by the Local Churches of the ecumenist branch theory is the Balamand agreement of 1994, in which the Orthodox and the Catholics were declared to be sister-Churches in the full sense, “two lungs” of the same organism (with the Monophysites as a “third lung”?). The Balamand Agreement, which was signed on the Orthodox side by Moscow, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Romania, Cyprus, Poland and Finland, declared: “Catholics and Orthodox... are once again discovering each other as sister churches” and “recognizing each other as sister churches”. “On each side it is acknowledged that what Christ has entrusted to His Church – the profession of the apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments, the apostolic succession of bishops, and, above all, the one priesthood celebrating the one Sacrifice of Christ – cannot be considered to be the exclusive property of one of our Churches.” The baptism of penitent papists into the Orthodox Church was prohibited: “All rebaptism (*sic*) is prohibited.” The Orthodox Church “recognizes the Catholic Church in her entirety as a sister Church, and indirectly recognizes also the Oriental Catholic Churches” (the Uniates). “Special attention should be given on both sides to the preparation and education of future priests with regard to the new ecclesiology, (that they may) be informed of the apostolic succession of the other Church and the authenticity of its sacramental life, (so that) the use of history in a polemical manner (may be avoided)

This was an official acceptance of the ecumenist branch theory.
Some argue that these ecumenist decisions signed by representatives of the Local Churches are not binding, because they were not ratified by later synods. However, this is sophistry. Since the time of the First Ecumenical Council, it has been normal practice for the heads of Local Churches to send representatives to Councils, and the decisions signed by these representatives have been accepted as representing the faith of the Local Churches without the need for any further synodal “ratifications”. Of course, it is possible for a Local Church to reject decisions signed by her representatives, as the Roman Church rejected the decisions of the Council in Trullo (692), which were signed by her apocrisiarii. But this is not the case with the ecumenist “councils” of recent decades – no Local Church has expressed any protest against the decisions signed by her representatives.

When is a Schism not a Schism?

The article we are examining proclaims the well-known teaching of the Synod in Resistance that the True Church contains both true believers and heretics, both “healthy” and “sick” members; for “the members of the Body can be ailing, that is, they can be in error regarding the Orthodox Faith, and in this way their spiritual communion with the God-Man can be ruptured; in spite of this, even as ailing members, they are not dead; they continue to belong institutionally to the Body, which is precisely what happens with a healthy human body, in which there can also exist unhealthy cells, or with a tree in bloom, which may also have sickly branches.”

We can agree with this if we are talking about individual lay members of the Church who do not represent the Local Church in the way that a bishop represents his diocese or a patriarch his patriarchate. It is an obvious fact that not every member of the Church has the same understanding of the faith, and some members have a purer and deeper faith than others. But when a hierarch proclaims heresy “with bared head” from the ambon, then, according to the Fifteenth Canon, he is not just a sick member of the Church but a “pseudo-bishop” and a “spiritual wolf”, from whom the other members of the Church must flee if they want to remain inside the Church.

However, the article goes on to argue that such “pseudo-bishops” or “spiritual wolves” still remain members of the True Church, with all the privileges of their Sees (“they presided over thrones and were heretics in the Church”). They remain “sick” members of the Church until they have been excommunicated either (1) by their own actions in separating themselves from the Church into schismatic communities or (2) through synodal verdicts. Thus “when the Holy Ecumenical Synods summoned Nestorios of Constantinople (the Third Synod in Ephesus) and Dioscoros of Alexandria (the Fourth Synod in Chalcedon) three times to appear for judgement, they acknowledge that the heresiarchs in question still occupied their Sees, up to that time, from which they spoke and acted in the name of, and on behalf of, the Orthodox Church.”
Let us consider these two criteria: (1) the creation of a schism, and (2) condemnation by a Synod.

We can agree with the first criterion, i.e. that those who voluntarily depart from the Church into schism “sever, by themselves, their institutional connection with the healthy Body of the Church”, and “such individuals are, and should be considered to be, decisively and ‘entirely cut off’”.

But does not this criterion apply precisely to the new calendarist ecumenists, who in 1924 separated themselves from the Body of the Church by choosing to celebrate the feasts and fasts of the Church at a different time? For it is inaccurate to say that the Old Calendarists “walled themselves off” from the new calendars, but the other way round: the new calendarists separated from the Church by refusing to celebrate the feasts at the time appointed by the Church, while the Church – that is, the Old Calendarists - simply stood where she had always been. And then the new calendarists compounded their sin by synodically condemning the Old Calendarists...

**Can a Local Council Cast Out Heretics?**

Is a conciliar verdict necessary in order to expel a heretic, as the second criterion declares? At first sight it would seem that the answer to this question is: yes. However, there are grounds for thinking that Arius was invisibly expelled from the Church long before the First Ecumenical Council of 325. For when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Hieromartyr Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria, in the form of a twelve-year-old child in torn clothing, and was asked by St. Peter: “O Creator, who has torn Your tunic?”, the Lord replied: “The mindless Arius; he has separated from Me people whom I had obtained with My Blood.” And this took place before St. Peter’s martyrdom in 311. So here we see an exemplification of the Lord’s words to Nicodemus: “He that believeth not is condemned already” (John 3.18), and the Apostle Paul’s words: “A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject, knowing that he... is self-condemned” (Titus 3.10, 11).

There is a distinction between the mystical organism of the Church and her visible, external organization. This distinction was worked out in detail by New Hieromartyr Mark (Novoselov), Bishop of Sergievo and the leader of the Catacomb Church in Moscow, who was shot in 1938. So we could say that Arius was cut off from the mystical organism of the Church by Christ, but was cut off from the external organization of the Church by the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. But this distinction does little to help the argument of this article. For of what benefit is it to be a member of the Church’s external organization while being cut off from her mystical organism by the Head of the Church Himself?

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305 Novoselov, *Pis’ma k Druziam* (Letters to Friends), Moscow, 1994.
Moreover, we must not think, as the writers of this article appear to think, that only an Ecumenical Council can cut off a heretic from the external organization of the Church. Since this is an important point, let us examine several examples from the history of the Church:—

a. **Arius.** He was first cut off from the Church, not by the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council in 325, but by his own bishop, St. Alexander, Archbishop of Alexandria, in local Councils in 321 and 323. The Ecumenical Council was convened because in some parts of the Church St. Alexander’s decision was disputed, and there were even attempts to overthrow it in other local councils. However, the First Ecumenical Council settled the dispute once and for all by confirming the original decision of St. Alexander – who, of course, had the complete right to defrock one of his own priests, but needed the added authority of “the great and holy Synod” of Nicaea in order to confirm his decision.

b. **Nestorius.** He was first cut off from the Church by a local Council in Rome under St. Celestine in August, 430, and then by another local Council in Alexandria under St. Cyril. Finally, in 431 the Third Ecumenical Council in Ephesus confirmed the decisions of these local Councils.

c. **Monothelitism.** This heresy was first condemned by a local Council under St. Martin the Confessor in Rome in 649. It was condemned again in another local Council under St. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury (a Greek from Tarsus), in Hatfield, England on September 17, 679. The decision of the English Church was then brought by St. Wilfrid, Bishop of York, to Rome, where another local Council under St. Agatho condemned the heresy for the third time, on March 27, 680. Finally, in 681 the Sixth Ecumenical Council anathematized it again, confirming the decisions of the three Western Councils. It should be noted that when the heretical bishop Theodosius in conversation with St. Maximus the Confessor disputed the validity of the first of these Councils, of 649, on the grounds that it was not convened by an emperor like the Ecumenical Councils, St. Maximus replied that the validity of a Council depended on its recognising “the true and immutable dogmas”, not on who convened it or how general it was. Again, when the same saint was asked in the Emperor’s palace why he was not in communion with the Throne of Constantinople, he replied: “… They have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?”

d. **Iconoclasm.** This heresy was first condemned by a local Council in Rome under Pope Gregory III in 731. This decision was then confirmed by the Seventh Ecumenical Council under St. Tarasius in 787. Bishop Theophan the Recluse points out that before the start of the Seventh Council, its president-to-be, St. Tarasius, bewailed the fact that “we (the iconoclastic Church of Constantinople) are being anathematised by them (the other Local Churches in Local Councils) every day”.

There is no suggestion that the saint considered these local decisions to be invalid. Rather, he hastened to bring his Church out from under the anathemas by confessing the true faith. Moreover, those heretics who were united to the Church during the Council confessed that they had been outside the Church before this. Thus we read in the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. “These are the words of the uniting iconoclasts. Thus Basil, bishop of Ancyra, said: ‘As far as I was able, I investigated the question of the icons and converted to the Holy Catholic Church with complete conviction.’ Theodore, bishop of Myra, said: ‘... I beseech God and your holiness to unite me, the sinful one, to the Holy Catholic Church.’” (pp. 41, 43 in the edition of the Kazan Theological Academy).

If local Councils did not have the authority to expel heretics from the Church, we should have to condemn many local Councils for exceeding their competency and assuming an authority that did not belong to them. These would include many local Councils of the Early Church, which expelled such heretics as Marcion and Sabellius; the local Councils of the Great Church of Constantinople between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries that expelled the Roman Catholics; the local Councils of the Russian Church presided over by Patriarch Tikhon that anathematized the communists and their co-workers in 1918 and the renovationist heretics in 1923. However, the Church, which has the mind of Christ, has accepted all of these acts as lawful and valid. To think otherwise - that is, to think that the Church cannot expel heretics through local Councils, but only through Ecumenical ones - is to suppose that for the last 1231 years the Church has - God forbid! - lost her God-given power to bind and to loose since the convening of the last Ecumenical Council!

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Who has the Right to Anathematize?

That this is in fact the logical consequence of the views propounded in this article is shown by the “Informatory Epistle” of Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili, President of the Synod in Resistance, which was published in 1998. As is well-known, Metropolitan Cyprian denies the rights of Local Councils to expel the ecumenist heretics from the True Church. Still more significantly, he denies the right of any contemporary Synod to anathematize heretics.

Thus he writes: “3 (c). The right to issue an anathema does not belong to ecclesiastical administrative bodies which have a temporary synodal structure, but which do not possess all the canonical requisites to represent the Church fully, validly, and suitably for the proclamation of an anathema – a right and “dignity” which is “granted” only to the choir of the Apostles “and those who have truly become their successors in the strictest sense, full of Grace and power…

“5 (a). The extremely serious implications of an anathema, coupled, first, with the absence, in our day, of a synodal body endowed with all of the aforementioned canonical prerequisites for proclaiming an anathema and, secondly, with the immense confusion that prevails, on account of ecumenism, in the ranks of the local Orthodox Churches, constitute, today, a major restraint on, and an insurmountable impediment to, such a momentous and, at the same time, historic action.”

In other words, the True Church today no longer has the power to anathematize heretics! This implies that the anathema against ecumenism issued by the Russian Church Abroad in 1983 was invalid because it exceeded the competence of that, or any other contemporary Synod. It also implies that if the Antichrist were a member of one of the Local Orthodox Churches, and were to proclaim himself as God today, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church would be powerless to expel or anathematize him!

There is no doubt that the Church is in a disorganized and weakened state today. And yet the fullness of the power of God still lives in Her, and will live in Her until the end of time, as the Lord promised. She still has true bishops, and these bishops still have the power to bind and to loose that was given them by the Holy Spirit. When St. Maximus defended the right of the Lateran Council in 649 to expel the Monothelite heretics from the Church, he did not discuss a whole list of “canonical prerequisites for proclaiming an anathema”, but gave as the only “canonical prerequisite” the possession of “the true and immutable dogmas”, i.e. Orthodoxy. And so if our bishops are truly Orthodox they have the right to anathematize any heretic anywhere – to think otherwise is to lose faith in the Church Herself.

The Fifteenth Canon

The authors of the article we are examining declare that the Fifteenth Canon of the First-Second Council of Constantinople, which allows Christians to separate from a bishop who proclaims heresy publicly even before a synodal trial, nevertheless does not give anyone the right to declare a heretic automatically deposed. And in their support they cite St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite’s commentary on the 30th Apostolic Canon: “The Canons ordain that a synod of living bishops should defrock priests, or excommunicate or anathematize laymen, when they transgress the Canons. However, if the synod does not put into practical effect the defrocking of the priests, or the excommunication or anathematization of the laymen, these priests and laymen are neither defrocked nor excommunicated nor anathematized in actuality (εν ἀληθείᾳ). However, they are subject to defrocking and excommunication here, and to the wrath of God there.” 309

This sounds eminently reasonable. After all, in the secular world, a man is counted innocent of a crime until he is judged guilty in a court of law; if I exceed the speed limit in my car, I am not deprived of my licence to drive until I have been judged by a competent magistrate. If such caution is exercised in secular judgements, should not even more caution be exercised in the far more important sphere of ecclesiastical jurisprudence?

And yet the Canon calls those bishops who proclaim heresy openly as “pseudo-bishops” even before a synodal decision. This is strong language, and the authors of the article try to lessen the impact of this language as follows: “The characterization of a Shepherd as a ‘pseudo-bishop’ ‘prior to a synodal decision’ is heuristic or diagnostic in nature (the doctor ascertains the disease) and not final and juridical or condemnatory (the doctor diagnoses the incurability of the ailing member and reaches a firm decision to amputate it).

But this explanation is unconvincing. Why should the canon call the “uncondemned heretic” a “pseudo-bishop” if he is in fact still a true bishop, and praise those who break with him immediately if he is in fact not yet condemned? It cannot be that the Canon is inciting laymen to judge their bishops without waiting for the only competent judgement — that of bishops meeting in council. More likely: heresy is such a serious matter that everyone, according to the canon, must have the right to flee from it immediately, without waiting for confirmation by a higher authority, just as one would flee from a plague victim immediately, without waiting for confirmation from a doctor. However, if, as the writers of our article affirm, an “uncondemned heretic” is still an Orthodox hierarch in the full sense, then there is great danger in fleeing from him before synodal condemnation — the danger, first of

309 To Pidalion, cited by Hieromonk Theodoretus, To Imerologiakon Skhisma, 1971, p. 3 (in Greek).
all, of depriving oneself of the grace-filled sacraments he dispenses, and secondly, of becoming a schismatic by separating oneself from the Church.

In order to resolve this problem, it will be useful to recall the words of St. Theodore the Studite. Writing to Bishop Euthymius of Sardis, he says: "You know, your Reverence, that by the common voice of the confessors who are still on the earth and those who have departed to the Lord it has been decreed that clergy who have been once convicted of communion with heretics should be banned from serving until review by Providence on high. How can we transgress this rule and by receiving one person extend the law to all those previously banned and thereby act contrary to our divine and highest superior... and deceive others from the confessors and produce discord among people who strictly follow the rules?"\(^{310}\)

And again: "You know, honoured of God, that by common agreement of the confessors still alive on the earth and of those who have recently appeared before the Lord, it has been decided to ban from serving those who have been seduced even only once into communion with the heretics - it goes without saying, until the time of the visitation of God's Providence, that is, until the convening of a Council that re-establishes Orthodoxy."\(^{311}\)

So even before a Council that looks into each case in detail, those in communion with heresy are banned from serving.

Bishop Theophan the Recluse (+1894) said that there was no need for further conciliar anathemas to condemn the heretics of his day since they had all already been condemned by earlier decisions. Commenting on St. Paul’s words, “If anyone preaches any other gospel that that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema” (Galatians 1.8), he writes: “The apostle laid only the beginning to anathematization. Since then all the opinions worthy of this punishment have already been marked out by the Church. At the present time there is no point waiting for a special ecclesiastical act to strike the evildoers with this judgement. They themselves are placing their own heads under this sword immediately they acquire opinions contrary to the truth and stubbornly begin to insist on them.”\(^{312}\)

Here Bishop Theophan appears to be endorsing the strict, “non-heuristic” interpretation of the Canon. The “new” heretics of his time did not need synodal condemnation because their teachings were not in fact new, but known and condemned long ago by the Church. Theoretically, a new heresy not already condemned by the Councils or the Fathers would need a conciliar condemnation, but Bishop Theophan doubts that any such new heresy exists.


\(^{312}\) Bishop Theophan, Commentary on the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians, Moscow, 1893, pp. 70, 71 (in Russian).
And yet the Church in the twentieth century had continued to condemn heretics and heresies. Thus in 1901 the Church anathematized Tolstoy. Then came condemnations of the heresy of name-worshipping (1913), the Bolsheviks (1918), the renovationists (1923), the neo-renovationists or sergianists (1928, 1937), the sophianists (1935), the new calendarists (1935, 1974, 1991) and the ecumenists (1983, 1998). All of these heresies, with the possible exception of name-worshipping, were in fact old, and therefore already condemned. For is not Sergianism simply the sin of Judas in a new guise? As for ecumenism, “the heresy of heresies”, “it is impossible not to recognise that it contains a multitude of old heresies [i.e. all the old heresies that the ecumenists enter into communion with], from which every one of the hierarch-ecumenists gave an undertaking to defend Orthodoxy”.313

What, then, has been the purpose of these recent Councils? First of all, to warn the faithful who may not be well-versed in theology that here is a heresy, and to explain its nature and its non-correspondence with the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church. Secondly, in order to make a clear separation between light and darkness, between the Church of the faithful and the “Church of the evildoers”, lest the latter swallow up the former entirely. And thirdly, to reverse the act that the Church carried out when she made the heresiarchs pastors and bishops.

However, the most important point is this: that there is God’s judgement and there is man’s judgement, and God’s judgement precedes man’s judgement, which consists essentially in discerning and declaring publicly that God has already judged the heretic. So the power of anathema held by the hierarchs of the Church is not held independently of God’s judgement, but strictly in consequence of it and in obedience to it. That is why heretics are “pseudo-bishops” even before a synod of bishops has condemned them – for God has already judged them.

As St. Dionysius the Areopagite writes: “Insofar as the [hierarch] makes known the judgements of God, he has also the power of excommunication. Not indeed that the all-wise Divinity gives in to his every unthinking impulse, if I may so speak with all reverence. But the hierarch obeys the Spirit Who is the source of every rite and Who speaks by way of his words. He excommunicates those unworthy people whom God has already judged. It says: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’ And to the one enlightened by the sacred revelation of the All-Holy Father it is said in Scripture: ‘Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ Thus [Peter] himself and all the hierarchs like him have had the judgement of the Father revealed to them, and, being themselves

men who provide revelation and explanation, they have the task of admitting the friends of God and of keeping away the ungodly. That sacred acknowledgement of God came to him, as Scripture shows, not on his own, not from a flesh-and-blood revelation, but as something from the understanding and under the influence of the God Who initiated him into what he knew. Similarly, God’s hierarchs must use their powers of excommunication, as well as all their other hieratic powers, to the extent that they are moved by the Divinity which is the source of every rite. And everyone else must obey the hierarchs when they act as such, for they are inspired by God Himself. ‘He who rejects you,’ it says, ‘rejects Me’.”

**Conclusions**

1. A heretical bishop is condemned immediately he utters his heresy publicly and unashamedly. He is cut off from the mystical organism of the Church by the invisible hand of Her Head and Chief Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. For it is the Lord, and the Lord alone, Who has “the keys of hell and of death” (Revelation 1.18) – that is, “authority over the death of the body and the soul” (Archbishop Averky).

2. While invisibly cut off from the mystical organism of the Church, the heretic may remain for a time a member of the visible organization of the Church. However, the faithful have the right to separate from him even while he remains within the visible organization of the Church; and in this case they, and not the heretic, should be called Orthodox. For, as St. Sophronius of Jerusalem writes: “If any should separate themselves from someone, not on the pretext of a [moral] offence, but on account of a heresy that has been condemned by a Synod or by the Holy Fathers, they are worthy of honour and approbation, for they are the Orthodox.” And, as St. Nicephorus of Constantinople writes: “You know, even if very few remain in Orthodox and piety, then it is precisely these that are the Church, and the authority and leadership concerning the ecclesiastical institutions (κυρος και προστασια των εκκλησιαστικων θεσμων) remains with them.”

3. Any Council of truly Orthodox Bishops, of whatever composition or generality, has the power to bind and to loose – that is, to cut off the heretic from the visible organization of the Church. But this power consists in discerning that God has already condemned the heretic in question. For, as St. Bede the Venerable writes: “The keys of the Kingdom designate the actual knowledge and power of discerning who are worthy to be received into the Kingdom, and who should be

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314 St. Dionysius, *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, chapter 7, 564B-564D.
315 Archbishop Averky, *Commentary on Revelation*.
316 St. Sophronius, P.G. 87, 3369D-3372A; quoted in *Orthodox Tradition*, op. cit.
excluded from it as unworthy” – and this knowledge and power depends, not on numbers, but on grace.

4. Any man who, while not “alienated in matters concerning the Faith itself”, nevertheless “separates himself for certain ecclesiastical reasons and questions capable of mutual solution”, is a schismatic according to the definition of St. Basil the Great, and has “condemned himself” (Titus 3.11). For, as the Lord says, “He who is not with Me is against Me” (Matthew 12.3), and, as St. Cyprian of Carthage says, “there is no salvation outside the Church”.

5. Therefore the ecumenists and new calendarists, having both uttered heresies condemned by the ancient Councils and Fathers, and having been cut off by living Councils of Bishops (i.e. Bishops contemporary with them), and having separated themselves into schismatic communities independent of the Church, belong neither to the mystical organism of the Church nor to its visible organization. For, as one of those Councils declared on June 8/21, 1935: “We recommend to all those who follow the Orthodox Calendar that they have no spiritual communion with the schismatic church of the schismatic ministers, from whom the grace of the All-Holy Spirit has fled, because they have violated the decisions of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and the Pan-Orthodox Councils which condemned the Gregorian calendar. That the schismatic Church does not have Grace and the Holy Spirit is affirmed by St. Basil the Great, who says the following: ‘Even if the Schismatics have erred about things which are not Dogmas, since the head of the Church is Christ, according to the divine Apostle, from Whom all the members live and receive spiritual increase, they have torn themselves away from the harmony of the members of the Body and no longer are members [of that Body] or have the grace of the Holy Spirit...’”

March 5/18, 2008.

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319 St. Basil the Great, First Canonical Epistle.
320 St. Cyprian of Carthage, On the Unity of the Church.
321 This article does not discuss the status of those who out of fear or for some other reason remain in communion with a bishop who preaches heresy or has entered into schism, but do not agree with his error. In principle, “economia” or condescension can be applied to such people in accordance with the word of St. Theodore the Studite: “If the Metropolitan falls into heresy, it is not the case that all of those who are in direct or indirect communion with him are regarded automatically and without distinction as heretics”, although by this stand of theirs “they bring upon themselves the fearful charge of remaining silent” (P.G. 99, 1076C). For a more detailed discussion of this tricky question see Lourie, op. cit., and “Two Churches”, Vertograd-Inform, June, 1999.
APPENDIX 9: WHAT IS THE LOCAL CHURCH?

The Russian church writer Lev Regelson has recently pointed out: “The concept of the ‘Local’ [pomestnoj] Church has long ago lost its literal sense. Nobody is surprised any longer by the existence of communities of the Russian Church in Africa, consisting of local aborigines. So that now it would be more correct to speak about the Autocephalous Russian Church as the historical successor of the Orthodox Church of the Russian Empire, which has gone beyond the bounds of the territorial, state or national principle.”

In fact, not only has the concept of the Local Church been lost: the administration of the Orthodox Church as a whole has been in a state of increasing anarchy since the fall and break-up of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires in 1917-18. The resultant enormous political changes, combined with the creation of large Orthodox minorities of various nationalities in the non-Orthodox countries of the West, have created huge problems of administration that have stretched the concept of the Local Church almost to breaking point. If these problems have afflicted the heretical, but more-or-less well-organized Churches of “World Orthodoxy”, they threaten completely to tear apart the right-believing, but divided True Orthodox Churches. This article is an attempt to introduce some clarity into the debate by going back to basic principles, on the one hand, and the witness of Church history, on the other.

1. Basic Principles

The first principle of Church organization, according to canon law and the early patristic sources (such as St. Ignatius of Antioch), is that the primary unit of the Local Church is the bishop and the Christians of the territory he administers. There can be only one bishop for any one given territorial unit. All the Christians living within that territory, whatever their nationality, must submit to the bishop of the territory. It is forbidden to create sub-units within the territorial unit on the basis of race, class or any other criterion unless they are blessed by the bishop and under his overall control. It is forbidden to divide the territorial unit into smaller sub-units, each with his own bishop, without the agreement of the bishop of that territory.

Although the power of the bishop is largely autocratic within his diocese so long as he rightly divides the word of truth, he is obliged to join with other bishops of neighbouring territories to form synods presided over by the senior of the bishops - the metropolitan or archbishop. This rank does not constitute a fourth level of the priesthood above bishops, priests and deacons, and a metropolitan or archbishop cannot impose his will on the other members of his synods. At the same time, the bishops of a synod cannot make any decisions in synod without the agreement of the metropolitan or archbishop.

Synods of bishops have the right to investigate complaints against the
behaviour of an individual bishop within his diocese and to discipline, or
even to defrock, him if he is found to have transgressed the dogmas or canons
of the Church. Moreover, they, and they alone, have the right to ordain the
successors of bishops who have been defrocked or who have died, and to
create new dioceses. It is this collective, collegial character of the episcopate,
as expressed in the meetings and decision-making of synods of bishops, that
both ensures apostolic succession within individual dioceses and the
organizational unity of the Orthodox Church as a whole.

In essence, these two levels of Church organization – that of the individual
diocese, and that of the metropolitan or archiepiscopal district – are the only
levels of Church organization that are required in order that the Church
should carry out all her essential functions...

2. The Patriarchal System

The third level of Church organization with which we are familiar today -
that of the patriarchate – did not come into being formally speaking until the
fourth century, although there are signs of it already in the second. It was
immediately accepted by the Church, and therefore undoubtedly constituted
a natural development. It consisted in bringing the main centres of Church
life and authority into correspondence with the five main centres of political
power and cultural life in the Roman Empire – Rome, Antioch and Alexandria,
in the first place, joined later by Constantinople and Jerusalem (Jerusalem was
not important politically, but it was important spiritually and historically as
being “the Mother of the Churches”). This was a natural development
because, on the one hand, these centres contained larger numbers of
Christians living in the midst of more, and more varied, temptations, who
therefore needed more, and more experienced and educated clergy to serve
them, and on the other, there was an obvious need for Christians to establish
good relations with the political authorities and, if possible, convert them to
the faith. And so the metropolitans of these large urban centres acquired great
prestige, becoming “super-metropolitans”, or patriarchs, exercising authority
over a wider area and a larger number of bishops and metropolitans.

However, problems began to arise when the Empire began to lose territory
in some directions, and acquire it in others. Thus from the seventh century
three of the five patriarchates – Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem – found
themselves outside the bounds of the Roman Empire under Muslim rule and
administering a much smaller proportion of the local population than before
(for most had become heretics or Muslims). Inevitably, this led to a decline in
their de facto importance (even if they retained de jure their titles and places
in the pentarchical order), and a corresponding increase in the importance of
the new “duarchy”, Rome and Constantinople.
But Rome and Constantinople had problems caused by their very success in converting the barbarians. The Roman pope, although technically still a subject of the Eastern Roman Emperor until the mid-eighth century, had to deal with several newly converted kings over whom the Emperor had no real suzerainty, and whose power could have been used to create national Churches independent of Rome. Some of the remoter Western Churches, such as the Irish, were essentially autocephalous; but Rome was remarkably successful, partly through her own skilful and energetic diplomacy, and partly because of the genuine reverence of the Germanic peoples for Roma Aeterna, in containing the threat of “ecclesiastical nationalization” until the late eleventh century, when theological differences with the Eastern Church, on the one hand, and the secession, first of England, and then of the German “Holy Roman Empire”, on the other, precipitated the transformation of the patriarchate into a semi-ecclesiastical, semi-political institution with strongly militaristic tendencies – the heretical papacy of Roman Catholicism.

Now the Latins effectively deny the concept of the Local Church. For them, there is only one Church, the Roman, which is not local, but universal. All local churches around the world are simply parts of the Roman Church. The idea of a Local Church standing alone in the world, without the symbiotic link to Rome, is unthinkable – Rome is the Church, and no Church can exist outside or independently of the Church that is in Rome. For the Orthodox, on the other hand, a Local Church contains within itself the fullness of God’s grace, and if all the other Local Churches in the world fell away from the truth, it could continue to exist on its own. So the idea of an “ecumenical” or “universal” patriarchate is incompatible with the Orthodox concept of the Universal Church as a family of Local Churches whose only Head is Christ. Moreover, as St. Gregory the Dialogist, Pope of Rome, pointed out to St. Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria, when refusing the latter’s offer of the title “ecumenical”, if there is an ecumenical or universal patriarchate, when that Church falls, the whole Church falls with it...

Unfortunately, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, while not falling into the heresy of Papism, did accept the title “ecumenical” and began to act in some ways like an eastern papacy. The concept of the Local Church was not denied, as in Romanism, but the Local Churches increasingly came to be seen as satellites of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (EP) whose independent status could be ignored as and when necessary. Within the bounds of the Orthodox Empire, in which the EP was also the Church of the Orthodox Emperor, a certain degree of ecclesiastical centralization was perhaps natural and even beneficial. Thus a small, Greek-speaking Local Church such as Cyprus would naturally look for support to the Orthodox Emperor, and therefore come within the orbit of the Imperial Church, too. But what about Local Churches that were outside the Empire and not Greek-speaking?
A critical test-case came with the conversion of the Bulgarians to Orthodoxy. The Bulgarian Tsar Peter wanted an autocephalous Church for his independent kingdom. This, at first, the Greeks were prepared to give—especially since Pope Nicholas I would offer it if they did not. However, the Bulgarians later overplayed their hand, demanding not only an autocephalous Church, but even that their tsar should be in the place of the Roman Emperor. But since the threat here was as much political as ecclesiastical, it elicited a politico-military response: the Byzantine emperors, especially Emperor Basil “the Bulgar-killer”, invaded Bulgaria, made the country again a part of the Empire, and removed the autonomous status of the Bulgarian Church. The patriarchate undoubtedly agreed with the emperors in this action, but its symphonic relationship with the Empire delivered it from the necessity, unlike Rome in relation to England or Germany, of dirtying its hands by direct political action in order to bring her insubordinate daughter to heel.

However, the threat posed by Bulgarian (and, in the fourteenth century, Serbian) claims to ecclesiastical autonomy, raised a question that the Byzantines were never really able to answer satisfactorily: what was to be the status of the Churches in newly converted territories beyond the bounds of the Roman Empire? The original web of Local Churches, Metropolias and Patriarchates had grown up within the cocoon of the Empire, and was held together, not only by unity of faith, but also by the Roman Emperor, who convened Councils and enforced discipline when necessary. There had been bishoprics and even Local Churches outside the Empire from an early date (in Ireland, Armenia, Georgia, Persia, Arabia, Ethiopia), but they lived in lands that were not a threat to the Empire politically (except Persia) and therefore could be treated as honorary confederates of the Empire. However, by the eleventh century at the latest it was evident that the idea of a Universal Church coterminous with a Universal Empire was a myth that had outlived its usefulness. Large numbers of Orthodox Christians lived in independent States that were either friendly (Russia, Georgia) or only intermittently friendly (Bulgaria, Serbia) or openly hostile to the Empire (the Arab Caliphate, the “Holy Roman Empire”). And yet the Byzantines continued to cling on to the idea of a pentarchy of autocephalous Churches, all obliged to pay formal allegiance to the Emperor in Constantinople, in spite of the fact that his Empire was becoming steadily smaller and less powerful. The idea of expanding the pentarchy to admit new Local Churches, or patriarchates, that did not owe civil allegiance to the Emperor was accepted only with great difficulty. But the irony is that when the Empire did eventually fall, in 1453, the Balkan Orthodox peoples were not freed to form their own autocephalous Churches, but came under a new uniting power: the Ottoman Sultan, who appointed the Ecumenical Patriarch as “ethnarch”, or ruler, of the “millet”, or race-as-defined-by-religion, of all Orthodox Christians of all nationalities. Evidently, it was not pleasing to Divine Providence that the centrifugal forces of ecclesiastical nationalism should be given free rein just yet…
3. Nationalism and the Church

This situation began to change in the late eighteenth, and especially in the early nineteenth century, when the Greek and Serbian revolutions set off a long-running revolution against Ottoman rule throughout the Balkans, with the result that by the end of the century the Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars and Romanians had all acquired independent States and Churches. However, this essentially political achievement came at a heavy spiritual price: a schism between the newly-autocephalous Church of Greece and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which remained under Ottoman rule, and another schism between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Bulgarian Church. Thus in 1872 the Ecumenical Patriarchate condemned the Bulgarian Church’s attempt to claim that all Bulgarians living in Turkey, that is, on the territory of the patriarchate, belonged to her jurisdiction. This was a clear violation of the principle of territoriality, and was condemned as the heresy of “phyletism”. Unfortunately, however, it was not difficult to accuse the Greeks of the same heresy they had just condemned. For centuries during the Turkish yoke, the Phanar had appointed Greek bishops serving only in Greek over Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian congregations. The “phyletism” of the Bulgarians, though wrong, had been elicited to a large degree by the nationalism of the Greeks of the Phanar…

Moreover, independence did not bring with it any obvious spiritual fruit: on the contrary, monasticism declined sharply throughout the liberated regions, while the essentially western-inspired doctrine of nationalism brought with it, as Constantine Leontiev noted, other western diseases, such as liberalism, ecumenism and modernism. The Russians, while sympathetic to the desire of the Balkan Orthodox to be liberated from Ottoman rule (it was Russian armies that liberated Bulgaria in 1877-78), were worried that their success in liberating themselves would encourage separatist movements in their own empire. Some of the Russian Tsars, such as Nicholas I, as well as some of the Greek elders, such as Athanasios Parios, even doubted whether the Balkan Orthodox had the right to rebel against the Sultan; for “all authorities are of God”, including the Sultan, and it would have been better for them to remain in obedience to him until they were liberated from outside.

Nevertheless, the new State Churches of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania came to be universally recognized (though in the case of the Bulgarian Church, not until 1945). However, problems relating to the legitimacy of self-proclaimed autocephaly remained. Thus:- On what basis can a group of Orthodox bishops break free from their ecclesiastical head and form a new, autocephalous Church? Is it sufficient simply that political conditions should change, placing the group in a different State from its former head? But surely nothing is done in the Church without obedience and the blessing of higher authorities? Surely their previous head should bless it? And perhaps even that is not enough, perhaps the approval of all the
autocephalous Churches has to be obtained in an Ecumenical Council? What if the bishops and flocks involved do not represent more than a small minority of the population of the State they live in? Could not this lead to evident absurdities, such as autocephalous Turkish and Albanian Orthodox Churches (both of which “absurdities” actually came into existence in the early twentieth century)?

In 1906 an important conference took place in St. Petersburg to discuss the issue of Georgian Church autocephaly. In 1783, at the Treaty of Georgievsk, the Georgian king had given control of the foreign policy of the kingdom to Russia in exchange for the preservation of its territorial integrity and royal dynasty. However, in 1800 the Russians violated the treaty, annexing the country and abolishing its royal dynasty and ecclesiastical autocephaly. Now the Georgians were agitating for restoration of ecclesiastical autocephaly, if not for political independence.

The Georgians’ case for autocephaly was strong, since nobody denied that the Georgian Church had been autocephalous since the fourth century, and that autocephaly had been abolished without their consent. However, most delegates at the conference argued that in one state there should be only one Church administration, so that the Georgian Church, as existing on the territory of the Russian Empire, should remain part of the Russian Church. Moreover, to encourage a division of Church administrations would encourage political separatism, would undermine the unity of the Empire, and therefore work against the interests of all the Orthodox of the Empire (and beyond it). This view prevailed. The delegates accepted a project put forward by Protopriest John Vostorgov (the future hieromartyr) giving the Georgian Church greater independence in the sphere of the use of the Georgian liturgical language, of the appointment of national Georgian clergy, etc., but the project for Georgian autocephaly was rejected.323

A minority view was put forward by the Georgian Bishop Kirion, who after the revolution became leader of the Georgian Autocephalous Church. In his report, “The National Principle in the Church”, he argued, as Pavlenko writes, that “Georgia ‘has the right to the independent existence of her national Church on the basis of the principle of nationality in the Church proclaimed at the beginning of the Christian faith.’ What does principle consist of, and when was it proclaimed? ‘It is sufficient to remember,’ writes Bishop Kirion, ‘the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, who immediately began to glorify God in various languages and then preached the Gospel to the pagans, each in their native language.’ But in our [Pavlenko’s] view, references to the preaching of the apostles in connection with the affirmation of the national principle in the Church have no firm foundation. The preaching of the apostles in various languages was necessary in order to

unite the peoples in the Truth of Christ, and not in order to disunite them in accordance with the national principle. That is, the principle of nationality is precisely that which Christianity has to overcome, and not that on which the Church must be founded. Since the Bulgarian schism phyletistic argumentation has characteristically sought support in references to the 34th Apostolic canon. ‘The basic canonical rule,’ writes Bishop Kirion, ‘by which the significance of nationality in relation to Church administration is recognised, is the 34th Apostolic canon which is so well known to canonists... According to the direct meaning of this canon in the Orthodox Church, every nationality must have its first hierarch.’ But the 34th Apostolic canon... has in view ‘bishops of every territory’ and not ‘bishops of every people’. The word ethnos, which is employed in this canon in the ancient language and in the language of Christian antiquity, is translated in the dictionary of Liddell and Scott first of all as ‘a number of people accustomed to live together’, and only then as ‘a nation’. It is precisely the first sense indicated here that points to the territorial meaning of the Apostolic canon. So references to its national meaning are groundless.”

Bishop Kirion also argued that dividing the administration of the Church along national, racial lines had the advantage of preserving the idiosyncracy of each nation. And in support of his argument he cited the 39th Canon of the Council in Trullo in 692, which allowed Archbishop John of Cyprus to retain all his rights as the head of the autocephalous Church of Cyprus while living, not in Cyprus, but in the Hellespont, to which he had been exiled because of barbarian invasions. Bishop Kirion argued that this canon prescribed the preservation of Cypriot idiosyncracy, and so “acquires a very important significance from the point of view of Church freedom”.

However, as Pavlenko points out, in this canon “not a word is said about ‘national religious-everyday and individual particularities’ and the like, but there is mention of the rights of first-hierarchs over bishops and their appointment. ‘Let the customs of each [autocephalous] Church be observed,’ it says in this canon, ‘so that the bishop of each district should be subject to his president, and that he, in his turn, should be appointed from his bishops, according to the ancient custom.’ The émigré Church of Cyprus, of which mention is made in this canon, did not become the national Church of the Cypriots, but took into herself all the peoples of the Hellespont district where they emigrated [the bishop of Cyzicus, who was under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, was temporarily placed in subjection to the Archbishop of Cyprus]. Where is mention made here of a conciliar sanction for the preservation of ‘local ecclesiastical traditions’ with the aid of administrative isolation?”

324 Pavlenko, op. cit.
325 Pavlenko, op. cit.
The example of the Cypriot Church paradoxically once again demonstrates the priority of the territorial principle over the racial principle. For the Cypriots living in the Hellespont were not allowed to form a second Church administration on the territory of the Hellespont in addition to that of the Bishop of Cyzicus. Rather, the two “races” were placed under a single Church administration—only, perhaps unexpectedly, it was not the Cypriots who were subordinated to the Cyzican bishop, but the other way round...

4. The Global Jurisdictions

However, there is at least one clear example in Church history when the territorial principle yielded to the racial principle with, it would seem, the blessing of God. The Russian Church Abroad (ROCOR) began its autonomous existence in 1920, when a number of South Russian bishops together with their flocks fled to Constantinople, and from there to Serbia. The Serbian Church, grateful to the Russians for their defence of Serbia in the First World War, not only offered the émigrés hospitality, but allowed them to form an essentially autonomous administration on Serbian territory. Although this situation is sometimes compared to that of the Cypriot Church discussed above, it in fact differs from it in one very important aspect; the Russian hierarchs were not placed in subjection to, or integrated into, the Serbian Church hierarchy. So here we have a clear violation of the territorial principle: two Church administrations occupying the same territory. Moreover, the Russian Church Abroad established similarly autonomous dioceses in many other parts of the world, making it a truly global Church— but the global Church (outside Russia) of a single nation.

There were powerful reasons, besides gratitude, for making this exception to the rule. First, Russian hierarchs were clearly better able to look after the spiritual needs of their Russian émigré flock than Greek or Serbian or Bulgarian or Arab hierarchs; and the trauma of revolution and persecution in the Homeland combined with poverty and homelessness abroad made the pastoral needs of the Russian émigré flock paramount. Secondly, the reputation of the Russian Church, and in particular of the leader of the Church Abroad, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, was very high throughout the Balkans and the Middle East. Metropolitan Anthony was an internationalist in the best sense of the word, enjoying close relations from well before the revolution with the leading hierarchs of the non-Russian Churches; and if anyone could have maintained peaceful relations with the non-Russian hierarchies, it was he. Thirdly, it was in the interests of all the Orthodox that the terrible threat posed to them all by Soviet communism should have a powerful rebuker in the form of an autonomous Russian Church Abroad, which witness would be lost if the Russians merged into the various jurisdictions of the Local Orthodox Churches.

If the violation of the territorial principle could be justified in the case of the Russian Church Abroad on the basis of pastoral considerations and for the
sake of the Orthodox faith, the same could not be said of the “ecclesiastical imperialism” indulged in after the First World War by the EP. The patriarchate did sometimes bow to force majeure, as when it recognized the annexation to the Serbian Church of all areas within the boundaries of Yugoslavia in 1922, and agreed to the inclusion within the State Church of Greece of a number of dioceses in the Greek State, and recognized the autocephaly of the Albanian Church in 1937. However, where it saw political weakness it pounced like a bird of prey. Thus as the Russian Empire disintegrated Patriarch Meletius Metaxakis and his successors carved out autonomous jurisdictions around its edges in Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary – and later even penetrated closer to the heart of the empire in the Ukraine. And in America, where before the revolution all the bishops of all nationalities had been subject to a Russian archbishop (the future Patriarch Tikhon), it formed a purely Greek “archdiocese of North and South America”, thereby encouraging the formation of other racially defined Churches on American territory. All this was justified on the basis of a perverse interpretation of the 28th Canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which supposedly transferred all the “barbarian territories” into the jurisdiction of Constantinople. And yet the irony was that on the Ecumenical Patriarch’s own canonical territory of Turkey Orthodoxy was declining very sharply while his own power was severely limited by the secular authorities.

The example provided by the EP encouraged other Local Churches to carve out overseas empires for themselves. Thus, as pointed out by Lev Regelson at the beginning of this article, the Moscow Patriarchate now has “colonies” in Africa and all around the world; and the same applies to the Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Antiochian, Alexandrine and even Albanian Churches. The only Local Churches which still apply the territorial principle in anything like its original meaning are the State Church of Greece and, to a lesser extent, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which do not allow any other jurisdictions on their canonical territories and are severely restricted (by the Ecumenical Patriarchate) in having “colonies” overseas.

The absurdity of the situation is illustrated by the names of the bishops. Take, for example, Britain, where the bishops of Thyateira, Diokleia, Telmessus, Sourozh and Sergievo all have flocks - but none in their titular dioceses, which have been defunct for centuries (except for Sergievo)! Only the ROCOR bishop was (until the 1980s) more realistically called “of Richmond and Great Britain”. By their titles these bishops evidently wanted to indicate their submission to their imperial heads in Moscow or Constantinople rather than the real identities of their flocks. Only the ROCOR bishop, being a “rebel”, could preserve the territorial principle in his title.

After the fall of communism in 1991, some of the global jurisdictions began to falter. The most dramatic collapse was that of ROCOR, which (apart from substantial “rebel” groups) entered into communion with the MP in 2007.
This demonstrates *both* the importance of having a territorial base (which the MP had but ROCOR did not) *and* the continuing pull of ethnic ties in World Orthodoxy.

By “ethnic ties” we mean old, Orthodox ethnic ties (Greek, Russian, etc.). For Local Churches based on more recent ethnic groups seem to be less successful. Thus the “Orthodox Church of America” attracts only a minority of the American Orthodox, and has no global empire...

5. The Restoration of Local Churches

As for the True Orthodox, they, too, tend to have global jurisdictions (the TOCs of Greece, Russia, etc., several for each country). The difference is that quarrels about the faith are more important for the True Orthodox, so that they are divided *both* from the World Orthodox (because of the heresies of ecumenism and sergianism) *and* among themselves (usually because of canonical differences, but also partly because of race). The canonical differences among the True Orthodox often come down to the question: where or what is the Local Church (of Greece, Russia, etc.)?

Now if the hierarchy of a Local Church has fallen into heresy and therefore out of the Orthodox Church, it is reasonable to assume that that minority of hierarchs, priests and laity who remain faithful to the truth now constitute the Local Church. For, as St. Sophronius of Jerusalem writes: “If any should separate themselves from someone, not on the pretext of a [moral] offence, but on account of a heresy that has been condemned by a Synod or by the Holy Fathers, they are worthy of honour and approbation, for they are the Orthodox.”326 And, as St. Nicephorus of Constantinople writes: “You know, even if very few remain in Orthodox and piety, then it is precisely these that are the Church, and the authority and leadership (concerning) the ecclesiastical institutions remains with them.”327

However, two problems tend to arise at this stage. The first is that the True Orthodox are divided among themselves – about, for example, the degree of the fall of the official Local Church, whether it still has grace or not. In this case, it is not obvious how to decide which of the two or more groups constitutes the true Local Church, or whether several or all of them do. The former mechanism for settling ecclesiastical disputes – appeal to the decision of the Synod of the official Local Church – no longer exists. Sometimes appeal can be made to another Local TOC to mediate, as when the “Matthewite” TOC of Greece appealed to ROCOR in 1971. But it is not clear whether any of the groups is obliged to accept the decision of this “foreign” TOC...

326 St. Sophronius, *P.G.* 87, 3369D-3372A.
327 St. Dionysius, *Apologeticus Minor*, 8, *P.G.* 100, 844 D.
A second problem relates to the size of the TOC, and whether it has bishops or not. It may be that the TOC in question has no bishops, and is obliged to turn for help to other TOCs. The question then arises: is the very small TOC now truly autocephalous, or does it form part of the larger TOC to which it has turned for help?

The example of the TOC of Greece is important here. In 1924 the official Church of Greece fell into schism by introducing the new, Grigorian calendar. Those who refused to follow the official Church into schism formed the movement of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece. At first, the TOC consisted almost exclusively of laypeople with a very few priests (although more priests came to their help from the autonomous monastic republic of Mount Athos). By the early 1930s the movement had swelled to some hundreds of thousands of people – in spite of the fact that they had no bishops. In 1935 three bishops joined them from the official Church. In 1955 they again found themselves without bishops, but in 1971 ROCOR officially restored their hierarchy. Throughout the period from 1924 to the present day the True Orthodox Christians of Greece have considered themselves to be the Local Church of Greece – and there is no good reason to deny them this title. Nor did ROCOR attempt to subsume them into their own Church or in any way restrict their independence, as befitted a true Local Church. In supplying the Greeks with bishops the ROCOR bishops saw themselves as helping a sister Church to re-establish herself – no more.

A similar example is provided by the True Orthodox Christians of Cyprus. This Church was in communion with the “Matthewite” True Orthodox Christians of Greece, and received her first bishop from them in 1948. Although small and at no time with more than one bishop, this Church’s autocephaly was recognized by the TOC of Greece.328

A third example is provided by the True Orthodox Christians of Romania. After the calendar change in 1924, the True Orthodox Christians of Romania had no bishop and only one priest. In spite of this, and fierce persecutions from the State Church, they received their first bishop in 1955 and now have a large Church with a full complement of bishops.

From these examples it follows that neither smallness of size nor paucity of clergy can deny the right of those few Orthodox Christians who have resisted a dominant heresy on the territory of a Local Church to call themselves the true successors of the Local Church. We have quoted the words of St. Nicephorus: “Even if very few remain in Orthodox and piety, then it is precisely these that are the Church, and the authority and leadership (concerning) the ecclesiastical institutions remains with them”. This must be accepted in principle, whatever the practical difficulties that these “very few” may encounter in maintaining an independent ecclesiastical existence...

328 Personal communication of Archbishop Andreas of Athens to the present writer, 1978.
Against this thesis it may be objected that to call a group of Christians without a bishop a Local Church is to contradict our first basic principle: “the primary unit of the Local Church is the bishop and the Christians of the territory he administers”. Moreover, if the mark of a Local Church is its autocephaly (or, at any rate, autonomy), how can it be autocephalous (that is, with its own head) if it is in fact “acephalous” (without a head)? Is not any other view a form of Protestantism?

Of course, if a group of Christians finds itself deprived of true bishops in their own Local Church, they should seek to find one in another Local Church; for there is no doubt that without a bishop they will be severely hampered in their activity and cannot survive in this condition for long. However, this does not mean that they are necessarily “acephalous” if they do not have an earthly bishop. If they are baptized and confess the true faith, and are not voluntarily without a bishop, then they remain members of the Church, whose Head is Christ. “For it is better to be led by no one,” says St. John Chrysostom, “than to be led by one who is evil. For the former indeed are often saved, and often in peril, but the latter will be altogether in peril, being led into the pit of perdition”. Even if they are without a bishop on earth, they are still under the omophorion of the Bishop of bishops, the Lord Jesus Christ. For “where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18.20), said the Lord. And again the Apostle Peter says: “You were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls” (I Peter 2.25). It is not Protestantism to consider such Christians within the Church: rather, it is Romanism to consider that a Christian without an earthly bishop is necessarily outside the Church. So a Local Church that has been deprived of its Local Head is not dead so long as there are members of the Church that still retain their bond with the Head of the Universal Church, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Moreover, even if the members of this Local Church acquire another Local Head from another Local Church, this must be considered only a temporary “transplant”, as it were, until the Local Church can acquire a bishop of its own again. Let us take as an example the Church of Serbia, which fell into the heresy of ecumenism in the 1960s. In the 1990s, a revival of Orthodoxy took place there when some Serbian monks from Mount Athos returned the True Faith to their Homeland. Since then, the Serbs have been served by a bishop from the TOC of Greece - but without ceasing to call themselves, and being in fact, the TOC of Serbia. Now the desire of all those who love Serbian Orthodoxy must be that the TOC of Serbia will become strong enough to cease to need a “transplant” from her sister Church, and will acquire a bishop or bishops of her own in order to demonstrate to the world, and especially to the apostate ecumenists in Serbia itself, that the Local Church - the true Local Church - of Serbia is alive and well.

329 St. John Chrysostom, Homily 34 on Hebrews, 1.
For if a Local Church has only recently fallen into heresy, it must be desirable to attempt to restore this Church by giving her her own bishops as soon as possible, rather than destroying her as an independent unit and subsuming her indefinitely under some other Local Church. And this for two major reasons: it will strengthen those who have remained faithful to Orthodoxy, and it will facilitate the conversion of those who have fallen away. For historical experience has demonstrated without a doubt that faith is strengthened in a people if the faith can be shown to be native, that is, already linked to the land by deep bonds of language, race, tradition and statehood; so that in converting to Orthodoxy the people feel that they are returning to their own native Church rather than joining a foreign one.

It is a different matter, of course, if the Local Church has been dead for many centuries, or if the land is pagan. In this case, the land must be considered to be missionary territory, and remain under the tutelage of a “Mother Church” in another country until Orthodoxy is firmly implanted in it. Even then, however, as is proved by the practice of the best missionaries, such as St. Innocent in Alaska or St. Nicholas in Japan, the aim must be to create the conditions for Local, autonomous or autocephalous Churches, with their own native clergy and with services in the native language, as soon as possible...

Conclusions

I. The Orthodox Church, unlike the Roman Catholic Church, is composed of Local Churches governed on the territorial principle by Synods of Bishops.

II. The boundaries of Local Churches have fluctuated greatly depending on political changes, the movements of peoples, and the rise and fall of Orthodoxy in different parts of the world.

III. Over the centuries the territorial principle has been distorted by political pressures and heterodox ideologies, such as phyletism and global imperialism, until now it is hardly to be found.

IV. The restoration of the Local Church must go hand-in-hand with the restoration of the territorial principle. Where possible, the pre-revolutionary Local Churches should be restored with bishops and priests living on the territory of the Local Church.

V. It is impossible to predict the future map of the Local Orthodox Churches. Much will depend on whether an Orthodox empire will arise to regulate the relations of the Churches. In any case, it is hoped that the distortions of the past will be eliminated, and the principle of territoriality reasserted.

March 28 / April 10, 2008.
APPENDIX 10: THE CYPRIANITES AND THE POWER OF ANATHEMAS

It has always seemed a strange coincidence that the “Ecclesiological Antitheses” of Metropolitan Cyprian of Orope and Fili should have appeared in 1984, only one year after ROCOR anathematized ecumenism and the ecumenists. Although they never admitted it publicly, this first formulation of the Cyprianites’ distinctively new ecclesiology appeared to be an attempted “antithesis” to the “thesis” of ROCOR’s anathema of the year before. These oblique, non-explicit attempts to discredit the anathema have continued unremittingly to the present day. The most recent example comes from the pen of Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna.  
However, there are signs that the gloves are coming off and it is now considered expedient to attack the anathema openly. We see a clear example of this in a recent interview given by Bishop Ambrose of Methone. An examination of these two assaults will reveal that the Cyprianites do not only question the validity of certain anathemas, but appear to be casting doubt on the very ability of hierarchs to bind and to loose, to exercise their God-given power of excommunication...

Archbishop Chrysostomos writes: “Plato tells us that there were engraved at the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi two mottos in ancient Greek: ‘Meden agan’ (nothing in excess, or all things in moderation) and ‘Gnothi Seauton’ (know thyself). Applied to Christian doctrine, we are called to moderation in the application of the truths which we know as well as we know ourselves: we cannot be moderate without fidelity to that which defines us.

“One can see, quite easily, why our austere stand against the religious syncretism of ecumenism does not render us religious bigots, or sympathetic with those who, usurping the place of God, believe that they have the right to condemn ecumenists and ailing Orthodox (and us, in our witness of love) as heretics outside the Church. We are acting in perfect balance within the dual truths of confessional exactitude and pastoral love, as we should.”

A very strange statement that begins with two quotations from a pagan oracle, continues by stating that we must be “moderate” in the application of the truth of Christian doctrine, and ends by saying that those who anathematize the ecumenist heretics are usurping the power of God!

The Apostle Paul firmly rebuked and then exorcised the girl possessed by a pythonic spirit, although she was speaking the truth (Acts 16). And the Lord forbade the demons to acknowledge His Divinity, although that, too, was the truth. So why should we be more accommodating to the Delphic oracle? It is not enough to reply that even the Holy Apostles and Fathers sometimes

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quoted from pagan authors. It is one thing to quote from a pagan author, and another to quote directly from a demon!

In any case, the use that the archbishop makes of these gnomic utterances is far from Christian. “Nothing in excess” applies, perhaps, to ascetic practices, but it certainly does not apply to truth! When it comes to truth, we Christians are insatiable! We want the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! There can be no “moderation in the application of truth” when “applied to Christian doctrine”. It is the ecumenists who want such moderation. Their heresy derives from indifference to truth. The fullness of Orthodoxy is “too much” for them; so “nothing in excess” would actually be a very appropriate banner for the ecumenical movement as a whole. No excessive condemnation of other religions, please… In fact, no condemnation at all would be preferable… Except, of course, the True Orthodox...

And of course there must be no sympathy for “those who, usurping the place of God, believe that they have the right to condemn ecumenists and ailing Orthodox”. So: no sympathy from Archbishop Chrysostomos for Metropolitan Philaret and the ROCOR Synod that condemned the ecumenists - they were undoubtedly “usurping the place of God”! Of course, Chrysostomos would deny that his words apply to Metropolitan Philaret, whom the Cyprianites continue to praise fulsomely while undermining and denigrating the main achievement of his life. But there can be no doubt about it: even before the anathema of 1983, Metropolitan Philaret condemned the Moscow Patriarchate as graceless, and after it he was perfectly consistent in his application of the anathema to all the ecumenists.

Let us now turn to the criticisms that Bishop Ambrose makes of the 1983 anathema. “Firstly, if you read the text of the anathema, its definition of the teaching of ecumenism is so extreme that almost no orthodox ecumenist, apart from Patriarch Athenagoras, could ever be put into the category of those who were preaching this new doctrine”.

Now the anathema is divided into several parts. The first is directed against “those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ’s Church is divided into so-called ‘branches’ which differ in doctrine and way of life”. In other words, the branch theory of the Church is anathematized. What is wrong or extreme about that? All the ecumenists confess the branch theory. So they are all under anathema.

The anathema continues: “or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future when all ‘branches’ or sects or denominations, and even religions will be united in one body.” Here a more extreme form of ecumenism is anathematized. Not all “Orthodox” ecumenists would fall under this part of the anathema, although many would – and not only Patriarch Athenagoras. So in the first part of the anathema a “moderate” form
of ecumenism, the inter-Christian branch theory, is condemned, and in the second part a more extreme, inter-religious form is condemned.

The anathema continues: “and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation”. This is simply a re-statement of Apostolic Canon 46, so it is not “extremism”, but straightforward church doctrine. In essence, it is a condemnation of the branch theory as applied to the sacraments. Of course, there is a question whether the Cyprianites themselves fall under this part of the anathema, because they do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics; for, while saying that the ecumenists are heretics, they still recognize that they have true sacraments...

The anathema continues: “therefore to those who knowingly have communion with these aforementioned heretics or advocate, disseminate, or defend their new heresy of Ecumenism under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, Anathema.” Here not only the ecumenists themselves, but also those who remain in conscious communion with them, are condemned. This applies perhaps most closely to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which, while often expressing reservations about ecumenism, nevertheless remains in communion with the ecumenists.

So we see that the range of application of the anathema is very broad, and applies to far more than the most extreme ecumenists such as Patriarch Athenagoras. In fact, a strict interpretation of the anathema would place the Cyprianites themselves under it, as well as those who accept their ecclesiology. Thus when ROCOR entered into communion with them in 1994 and officially accepted their ecclesiology, Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) pointed out that the Cyprianites “confess their own and by no means Orthodox teaching on the possibility of the grace-filled action of the Holy Spirit in churches that have clearly become heretical”. Moreover he declared: “In passing this Resolution on communion with the group of Metropolitan Cyprian, our Council has unfortunately also forgotten about the text of the Resolution accepted earlier under the presidency of Metropolitan Philaret, which anathematized the ecumenical heresy... In fact, by not looking into the matter seriously and forgetting about the anathematizing of the new calendarist ecumenists that was confirmed earlier (and perhaps not having decided to rescind this resolution), our Council, however terrible it may be to admit it, has fallen under its own anathema... Do we have to think that our Hierarchical Council has entered on the path of betraying the patristic traditions, or only that out of a misunderstanding it has allowed a mistake which it is not yet too late to correct at the November session in France?”

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That mistake was thankfully corrected some years later, and now, of those parts of the old ROCOR that have not entered into communion with the MP only the followers of Bishop Agathangel remain in the clutches of the Cyprianite ecclesiology (and not only of their ecclesiology — their apostolic succession also depends critically on the Cyprianites’ legitimacy). But Bishop Gregory’s main point remains: the Cyprianite ecclesiology is incompatible with Metropolitan Philaret’s anathema against ecumenism. So all Orthodox have to choose the one or the other, and cannot claim to be loyal to both.

Bishop Ambrose continues: “Secondly, the way that this anathema was approved, or rather not approved by the Russian Synod is altogether very peculiar. Having spoken to many bishops of the ROCOR, most of them claimed to have been unaware of the existence of this anathema until it was published, including the late Metropolitan Lavr, and this makes, at least, a curious impression.”

Metropolitan Lavr is, of course, not the most reliable witness that Bishop Ambrose could have cited! It has been reported that he died on the eve of the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, just after ordering that this anathema should not be read in the service the next day. Surely a more reliable witness is Metropolitan Philaret himself, who sent a copy of the anathema to Fr. Anthony Gavalas of New York City, confirming that this was now official ROCOR doctrine. Nor did Metropolitan Vitaly deny its existence. In his Christmas Epistle of 1986/87 he commented on the anathema without at any time hinting that it may have been a forgery, and in 1998 his Synod reiterated it without changing its wording in any way. Why, if it was a forgery, did the ROCOR Synod never say so? The conclusion can only be: it was not a forgery, but some of the bishops did not like its clear implications...

“Thirdly,” continues Bishop Ambrose, “this anathema was actually written in Greek, and translated into English, then into Russian: this is evident from the syntax. Was it the work of the Russian bishops? No, we know where it originated... The monastery of Boston - namely Holy Transfiguration Monastery. This led to all the qualifications that were made by Metropolitan Vitaly and other ROCOR bishops when they said that the anathema refers only to the members of their own flock — “we are not anathematising anybody outside... It would thus be absurd to claim that the anathema was proclaimed with the aim of cutting all ecumenists off from the Church even if they did profess the extreme doctrines described in the text of the anathema.”

There is more than one non-sequitur in this extract. First, so what if the anathema was written by Holy Transfiguration Monastery? The important fact is that the Synod accepted the text and it became part of ROCOR’s official...
confession of faith. So what if the anathema were originally written in Greek? This would be relevant only if the official Russian or English versions are inaccurate in some way – which Bishop Ambrose does not claim.

Then, according to Bishop Ambrose, the fact that the anathema was originally written in Greek by HTM is the cause of the further supposed “qualifications” of the anathema by Metropolitan Vitaly and others. But this doesn’t follow. Any interpretation of the anathema – whether Metropolitan Vitaly’s or anybody else’s – is valid if, and only if, it can be shown to have a firm basis in the text of the anathema, and for no other reason. The fact that the anathema was originally written in Greek, or in HTM, is completely irrelevant. As it is, the interpretation that “it would be absurd to claim that the anathema was proclaimed with the aim of cutting all ecumenists off from the Church” cannot in any way be justified from the text, which is a perfectly general anathematization – i.e. exclusion from the Church – of all those who confess the branch theory. The attempt to interpret the anathema as applying only to members of ROCOR not only has no basis in the text but leads to absurd consequences. Thus if this interpretation were correct, an ecumenically-minded babushka in ROCOR would find herself under anathema while the Pope of Rome, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople would all get off scot-free!

Immediately after this Bishop Ambrose moves to absolve Metropolitan Philaret of all criticism, saying that we should not confuse the “unclarities” in the anathema (which, as we have seen, do not exist) “with Metropolitan Philaret’s uncompromising, confessional, and absolutely clear condemnation of the ecumenist heresy which he saw advancing around him, and which he expressed in his ‘open letters’”. In other words, the early Philaret – the Philaret of the Open Letters – was good, while the late Philaret – the Philaret of the Anathema against ecumenism – was, well, not exactly bad, but “unclear” – and we can blame this lack of clarity on bad advisors...

However, if we look at Metropolitan Philaret’s confessional stand from the Open Letters of the 1960s to the Anathema of 1983, we see a very clear and consistent path. The Open Letters warned the heads of the Local Churches that ecumenism was a heresy, that they were betraying the truth of Orthodoxy. However, nobody was anathematized, nor were all relations with these Churches broken at this time. However, when it became obvious that the Local Churches were not going to respond to his warning, the metropolitan moved his Synod to strengthen sanctions against them and in other ways to adopt a stricter position:

(i) In 1967 he led the ROCOR Synod of Bishops to reverse its 1964 ruling on the preservation of communion with the official Serbian Church. The decision was marked “Top Secret” and dated June 1. Early in 1970, he announced to the members of the ROCOR Synod
that since the Serbian Patriarch German had chosen to serve as Chairman of the World Council of Churches, ROCOR should avoid joint prayer and service with him, while at the same time not making a major demonstration of the fact.  

(ii) In 1969-71 he led the ROCOR Synod into communion with the Greek Old Calendarists, accepting their confession of faith.

(iii) On March 31, 1970 he led the ROCOR Synod to condemn the MP’s decision to give communion to Roman Catholics as “contrary to the dogmatic teaching of Orthodoxy”, an act whereby the MP “itself becomes a partaker of their heresy.”

(iv) In September, 1971 the ROCOR Sobor rejected the validity of the election of Moscow Patriarch Pimen, and decreed that all converts from Catholicism and Protestantism should now be received by baptism.

(v) In 1974, at the Third All-Emigration Council in Jordanville, Metropolitan Philaret moved for an official statement that the MP was graceless. According to the witness of a seminarian present at the Council, the majority of bishops and delegates would have supported such a motion. However, at the last minute the metropolitan was persuaded not to proceed with the motion on the grounds that it would have caused a schism.

In the next few years, worried by the metropolitan’s steady increase of pressure for a final break with the whole of World Orthodoxy, the liberals in ROCOR under the leadership of Archbishop Anthony of Geneva fought back. However, the apostasy of World Orthodoxy could not be denied, and after the 1983 General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Vancouver, Canada, reached new heights of anti-Christianity, the ROCOR Sobor, also meeting in Canada, anathematized ecumenism. This was the culmination and completely consistent climax of Metropolitan Philaret’s...
struggle, ever since he became metropolitan in 1964, to draw a firm line between Truth and falsehood, between the True Church and the false church—a line which the Cyprianites have tried to muddy ever since...

Bishop Ambrose continues with a direct attack on the anathemas against ecumenism launched by the Eastern Patriarchs in 1583, 1587 and 1593: “The 16th Century Synods anathematised the introduction of the new Papal Paschalion based on the New, Gregorian Calendar. They did not however specifically anathematise the peculiar hybrid used by the ‘Orthodox’ New-Calendarists who use the Julian Calendar for celebrating Pascha (in order to avoid the clear condemnations of those who change the Paschal calendar), but the New Calendar for the fixed feasts.”

This is sophistry. The seventh point of the 1583 Pan-Orthodox Council (which was attended by the plenipotentiary of the Russian Church) declares: “That whosoever does not follow the customs of the Church as the Seven Holy Ecumenical Councils decreed, and the Menologion which they well decreed that we should follow, but in opposition to all this wishes to follow the new Paschalion and Menologion of the atheist astronomers of the Pope, and wishes to overturn and destroy the dogmas and customs of the Church which have been handed down by the Fathers, let him be anathema and outside the Church of Christ and the assembly of the faithful…” It is obvious that not only the Papal Paschalion, but also the Papal Menologion – that is, “the new calendar for the fixed feasts” – is under anathema.

If Bishop Ambrose wishes to argue that only the combination of both the Papal Paschalion and the Papal Menologion is under anathema, and that of these two innovations only the Papal Paschalion is really serious, he has to answer the question: why did they not say that? Why, on the contrary, do the Eastern Patriarchs give the clear impression that both innovations are equally anathematized? If only the Paschal Paschalion was a really serious innovation, why was it necessary for the Greek Old Calendarists to break away from the new calendarists, since the new calendarists still retained the Orthodox Paschalion? And why have so many Orthodox hierarchs understood the Patriarchs to have anathematized the new Menologion if in fact they meant something different?

Thus Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, Rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Tutor of the Royal Family and Deputy First-Hierarch of ROCOR writes: “Through the labours of this [1583] Council there appeared: a Conciliar tome, which denounced the wrongness and unacceptability for the Orthodox Church of the Roman calendar, and a canonical conciliar Decree – the Sigillion of November 20, 1583. In this Sigillion all three of the above-mentioned Patriarchs with their Synods called on the Orthodox firmly and unbendingly, even to the shedding of their blood, to hold the Orthodox Menaion and Julian Paschalion, threatening the
transgressors of this with anathema, cutting them off from the Church of Christ and the gathering of the faithful…

“In the course of the following three centuries: the 17th, 18th and 19th, a whole series of Ecumenical Patriarchs decisively expressed themselves against the Gregorian calendar and, evaluating it in the spirit of the conciliar decree of Patriarch Jeremiah II, counselled the Orthodox to avoid it…

“Question. Is the introduction of the new calendar important or of little importance?

“Answer. Very important, especially in connection with the Paschalion, and it is an extreme disorder and ecclesiastical schism, which draws people away from communion and unity with the whole Church of Christ, deprives them of the grace of the Holy Spirit, shakes the dogma of the unity of the Church, and, like Arius, tears the seamless robe of Christ, that is, everywhere divides the Orthodox, depriving them of oneness of mind; breaks the bond with Ecclesiastical Holy Tradition and makes them fall under conciliar condemnation for despising Tradition…

“Question. How must the Orthodox relate to the new calendarist schismatics, according to the canons?

“Answer. They must have no communion in prayer with them, even before their conciliar condemnation…

“Question. What punishment is fitting, according to the Church canons, for those who pray with the new calendarist schismatics?

“Answer. The same condemnation with them…”

Again, in a letter to Metropolitan Epiphanios of Cyprus dated September 20, 1975, Metropolitan Philaret wrote: “It is obvious to all that the calendar innovation caused a schism in the Greek Church in 1924, and the responsibility for the schism weighs exclusively on the innovators. This is the conclusion that will be reached by anyone studying the Patriarchal Tomoi (as that of 1583)...” Since the calendar schism of 1924 affected only the Menologion, and not the Paschalion, it is evident that Metropolitan Philaret, following the supposedly “extremist” Greek Old Calendarists and not the Cyprianites, regarded the 1583 Council as expelling the new calendarists from the Church...

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336 Archbishop Theophan, “Kratkie kanonicheskie suzhdienia o letoschislenii” (Short canonical judgements on the calendar), in V.K., Russkaia Zarubezhnaia Tserkov’ na Steziakh Ostupnichestva (The Russian Church Abroad on the way to Apostasy), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 29-30 ©.
Bishop Ambrose continues his attack on the Pan-Orthodox anathemas as follows: “There is one last aspect to this matter that should be mentioned: all three Synods appear to be saying exactly the same thing. If one Synod had made a definitive and binding pronouncement, then why, after just a few years did another synod need to be called to make the same pronouncement? And why, a few years after that, yet a third? Also, the texts that have been preserved are in demotic Greek – very demotic Greek – and it is a very peculiar thing for an Ecumenical Patriarch to put out such an important encyclical in demotic Greek. Conceivably there was a text in church Greek which has been lost.”

This is really scraping the bottom of the barrel... Why are anathemas repeated? For the same reason that we repeat the same Gospel cycle every year, and the Beatitudes every Sunday: Because they are important!

As for the fact that the encyclical is written in demotic Greek, what possible bearing can this have on the validity of the thought contained in it? If, as Bishop Ambrose hints, following the founder of the new-calendarist schism, “Archbishop” Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, the text of the anathemas is a forgery by someone who wrote only demotic Greek, why was this not pointed out by anyone for over three hundred years? Why, even as late as 1919 (that is, five years before he changed the calendar), did Chrysostomos Papadopoulos himself declare that if he adopted the new calendar he would become a schismatic? The vital fact is that the Orthodox Church has accepted the thought expressed in the anathemas as corresponding to her own thought – and the Church has the mind of Christ. If new calendarist schismatics, or their old calendar fellow-travellers, choose to cast doubt on an event or fact that the Church has accepted for hundreds of years, this should not affect those who trust the Church more than their own or others’ fallen reasoning.

Bishop Ambrose continues, answering the question whether only the 1848 Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs should be taken seriously with regard to the new calendar: “Yes certainly, but the others can also be taken seriously but with some reservations. They are not a decision of an ecumenical council where we have the original text and we know when it was done and why.” So according to Bishop Ambrose only anathemas issued by Ecumenical Councils, and of which we have the original text, can be accepted wholeheartedly. That rules out all Church Councils without exception since 787, the date of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, including: the 1054 Local Council that anathematized the Roman Catholics, the fourteenth-century Councils that anathematized the Barlaamites, the sixteenth-century Pan-Orthodox Councils, the 1918 Local Council that anathematized the Bolsheviks, the 1923 Local Council that anathematized the renovationists, the Catacomb Church Councils that anathematized sergianism, the decisions of the True Orthodox Church of Greece in 1935, 1950, 1974 and 1991 that declared the new calendarists to be graceless, the 1983 Local Council that anathematized
ecumenism, its reiteration in 1998... It looks as if the all the most important decisions of the higher levels of the Orthodox Church for the last 1200 years must be placed under doubt if we are to accept the Cyprianite thesis.

Perhaps, Bishop Ambrose concedes, some of these decisions should be “taken seriously”: but only with “reservations” – reservations that enable him to escape those consequences that he finds personally unpalatable. Indeed, so resourceful are the Cyprianites in finding excuses for not really taking seriously the most important decisions of the Orthodox Church hierarchy that one begins suspect that they may have a problem with the concept of ecclesiastical anathematization in general. However, such a drastic conclusion is unnecessary: it is sufficient to point out that the Cyprianites specifically attack only those anathemas – whether by Russian bishops or Greek bishops, whether in modern times or ancient times – that make their own “loving” attitude to the new calendarists and ecumenists impossible.

But the Cyprianite position does have important general consequences, especially when one remembers that they have rejected the right of any other Synod to judge them. Thus they regard themselves as belonging to the Church of Greece, and yet reject the claim not only of the Greek new calendarist hierarchy but also of the Greek Old Calendarist hierarchies to judge them. Perhaps they consider only ROCOR, which resurrected the Greek Old Calendarist hierarchy in 1969, to be their judges? No: they prefer to stand in judgement over ROCOR. Thus last year, having rejected all the (non-MP) Russian bishops who remained faithful to the confession of Metropolitan Philaret, they chose the one bishop who rejects that confession, Agathangel of Odessa, proclaimed him the only true ROCOR bishop, and then ordained further uncanonical bishops with him!

This disastrous invasion into the affairs of the Russian Church shows that the apparent modesty and caution of the Cyprianites when assessing the rights of Orthodox bishops to anathematize heretics, or simply summon other Orthodox bishops to judgement, is distinctly one-sided. If their “stablemates” in the Greek Old Calendarist hierarchy call them to judgement, they say: “That’s none of your business; you cannot judge us.” If, on the other hand, the opportunity presents itself for them to interfere into the affairs of the Russian Church, ascribing to themselves the powers that could only belong to the future All-Russian Sobor, they jump in with both feet...

It should be noted also that in May, 2008 the Agathangelite hierarchy, having steadfastly refused to condemn the MP or ROCOR-MP (and even praising Metropolitan Lavr as a holy hierarch), effectively declared all the True Orthodox Russian hierarchies – the Vitalyites, the Suzdalites and the Tikhonites – to be graceless schismatics. No murmur of protest has so far been heard from their Cyprianite “sister-church” – in spite of the Cyprianites’ refusal to accept decisions of this kind by any except Ecumenical Councils. So
we must assume that the Cyprianite-Agathangelite coalition is now committed to the position that the MP and ROCOR-MP (the Lavrites) have grace, but that the True Orthodox Russians are outside the Church!…

So who now is “usurping the place of God”? Who now, in the exquisite phrase of Professor-Archbishop Chrysostomos, is failing to act “in perfect balance within the dual truths of confessional exactitude and pastoral love”?

Finally, we conclude, contrary to the Cyprianites, that the power of a council of bishops to judge another bishop does not depend on its ecumenical status, nor on its locality, nor on the language in which it is spoken, but on the Orthodoxy of the bishops who compose it – and on that alone. For it is God Who judges bishops in the first place: He then inspires those bishops who are Orthodox to proclaim His judgements to the world. So the power of excommunication and anathema held by the hierarchs of the Church is not held independently of God’s judgement, but strictly in consequence of it and in obedience to it. That is why heretics are “pseudo-bishops” even before a synod of bishops has condemned them, as the 15th Canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople declares – for God has already judged them. As St. Dionysius the Areopagite writes: “Insofar as the [hierarch] makes known the judgements of God, he has also the power of excommunication. Not indeed that the all-wise Divinity gives in to his every unthinking impulse, if I may so speak with all reverence. But the hierarch obeys the Spirit Who is the source of every rite and Who speaks by way of his words. He excommunicates those unworthy people whom God has already judged. It says: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’ And to the one enlightened by the sacred revelation of the All-Holy Father it is said in Scripture: ‘Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ Thus [Peter] himself and all the hierarchs like him have had the judgement of the Father revealed to them, and, being themselves men who provide revelation and explanation, they have the task of admitting the friends of God and of keeping away the ungodly. That sacred acknowledgement of God came to him, as Scripture shows, not on his own, not from a flesh-and-blood revelation, but as something from the understanding and under the influence of the God Who initiated him into what he knew. Similarly, God’s hierarchs must use their powers of excommunication, as well as all their other hieratic powers, to the extent that they are moved by the Divinity which is the source of every rite. And everyone else must obey the hierarchs when they act as such, for they are inspired by God Himself. ‘He who rejects you,’ it says, ‘rejects Me’.”

June 17/30, 2008.
St. Nectan of Hartland.

337 St. Dionysius, On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, chapter 7, 564B-564D.
When looking back at the origins of the pan-heresy of ecumenism, and of the Orthodox participation in it, it becomes clear that one issue in particular was (and is) of special importance in the formation of positions on either side of the debate: the question why the Orthodox Church receives certain heretics and schismatics, not by baptism, but through what the Russians call the “second” or “third” rite – chrismation or confession. This issue was addressed with characteristic forthrightness and clarity by Fr. Georges Florovsky in his article, “The Limits of the Church”, published in *Church Quarterly Review* in 1933. Because of precisely these qualities of forthrightness and clarity, I propose to run through the article’s main points again – but then bring forward reasons for coming to an opposite conclusion to that reached by Fr. Georges.

Fr. Georges begins by citing the teaching of St. Cyprian of Carthage in the third century that there is no sacramental grace outside the Church, that the canonical limits of the Church coincide exactly with the limits of her sacramental ministrations, and that all those who separate from the Church thereby immediately lose the grace that only membership of the One Church provides. “Strictly speaking,” he concedes, “in its theological premises the teaching of St. Cyprian has never been disproved. Even Augustine was not very far from Cyprian. He argued with the Donatists, not with Cyprian himself, and did not try to refute Cyprian; indeed, his argument was more about practical measures and conclusions. In his reasoning about the unity of the Church, about the unity of love as a necessary and decisive condition for the saving power of the sacraments, Augustine really only repeats Cyprian in new words.

“But the practical conclusions drawn by Cyprian have not been accepted by the consciousness of the Church…”

The primary practical conclusion referred to here is the necessity, according to St. Cyprian, of receiving all converts from the sects by baptism. However, the Church, writes Fr. Georges, “customarily receives adherents from sects – and even from heresies – not by the way of baptism, thereby obviously meaning or supposing that they have already been actually baptized in their sects and heresies.” But only the Church can perform true sacraments. Therefore, concludes Fr. Georges, St. Cyprian defined the limits of the Church too narrowly: the Church extends beyond her strictly canonical bounds. “A canonical cleavage does not immediately signify mystical impoverishment and desolation. All that Cyprian said about the unity of the

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Church and the sacraments can and must be accepted. But it is not necessary to draw with him the final boundary around the body of the Church by means of canonical points alone.”

Fr. Georges then examines the main argument against his position: the so-called “economical” theory of the reception of heretics and schismatics. First he considers an exposition of this argument by Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky. According to this, the reception of heretics or schismatics by other means than baptism does not mean that the Church recognizes the presence of true baptism in their heretical or schismatical communities. Rather, it is a form of “economy” or condescension to the weakness of converts: baptism is not insisted on in order to make their entry into the Church easier, in order that they should not be deterred from entering by false shame at having to admit that they had never had true baptism. But it is implicitly understood that baptismal grace is given to these converts at the moment of their reception into the Church, whatever the external rite by which they are received.

Florovsky rejects this argument with indignation. “Economy”, the practice of not receiving converts by other means than baptism gives them “not only an excuse but a ground to continue deceiving themselves through the equivocal fact that their ‘baptism, worship and hierarchical system differ in little externally from those of the Church’”.

In any case, he continues, “who gave the Church this right not merely to change, but simply to abolish the external act of baptism, performing it in such cases only mentally, by implication or by intention at the celebration of the ‘second sacrament’ (i.e. chrismation) over the unbaptized... If ‘economy’ is pastoral discretion conducive to the advantage and salvation of human souls, then in such a case one could only speak of ‘economy in reverse’. It would be a deliberate retrogression into equivocation and obscurity for the sake of purely external success, since the internal enchurchment of ‘ineophytes’ cannot take place with such concealment. It is scarcely possible to impute to the Church such a perverse and crafty intention. And in any case the practical result of the ‘economy’ must be considered utterly unexpected. For in the Church herself the conviction has arisen among the majority that sacraments are performed even among schismatics, that even in the sects there is a valid, although forbidden, hierarchy. The true intention of the Church in her acts and rules could appear to be too difficult to discern, and from this point of view as well the ‘economic’ explanation of these rules cannot be regarded as convincing.”

Florovsky goes on to quote Alexei Khomyakov’s exposition of the “economical” argument in his dialogue with William Palmer. Palmer was confused by the fact that the Russian Church was prepared to receive him from Anglicanism by chrismation only, whereas, the Greeks insisted on
baptism. Defending the Greek practice of receiving reunited Latins through baptism, Khomyakov wrote: “All sacraments are completed only in the bosom of the true Church and it matters not whether they be completed in one form or another. Reconciliation (with the Church) renovates the sacraments or completes them, giving a full and Orthodox meaning to the rite that was before either insufficient or heterodox, and the repetition of the preceding sacraments is virtually contained in the rite or fact of reconciliation. Therefore the visible repetition of baptism or confirmation, though unnecessary, cannot be considered erroneous, and establishes only a ritual difference [between the Greek and Russian Churches] without any difference of opinion.” 339

Florovsky’s comment on this (although he was in general an admirer of Khomyakov) is very sharp: “This is impossible. The ‘repetition’ of a sacrament is not only superfluous but impermissible. If there was no sacrament and what was previously performed was an imperfect, heretical rite, then the sacrament must be accomplished for the first time – and with complete sincerity and candor. In any case, the Catholic sacraments are not just ‘rites’, and it is not possible to treat the external aspect of a sacramental celebration with such disciplinary relativism.”

And he concludes: “The ‘economic’ interpretation of the canons might be probable and convincing, but only in the presence of direct and perfectly clear proofs, whereas it is generally supported by indirect data and most often by indirect intentions and conclusions. The ‘economic’ interpretation is not the teaching of the Church. It is only a private ‘theological opinion’, very late and very controversial, which arose in a period of theological confusion and decadence in a hasty endeavour to dissociate oneself as sharply as possible from Roman theology.”

Florovsky goes on in effect to defend Roman theology, which depends on St. Augustine’s distinction between the “validity” or “reality” of a sacrament and its “efficacy”. “The holy and sanctifying Spirit still breathes in the sects”, their sacraments are still “accomplished in reality”. But since they are accomplished in violation of love, and in disunity with the Church, they are inefficacious. Just as “baptismal grace must be renewed in unceasing effort and service, otherwise it becomes ‘inefficacious’”, so the sects must be restored to unity with the Church, otherwise their sacraments will continue to be inefficacious. For in them, while “the unity of the Spirit” is preserved in the sacraments, “the bond of peace” with the Church (Ephesians 4.3) is broken.

Florovsky admits that “the sacramental theology of St. Augustine was not received by the Eastern Church in antiquity nor by Byzantine theology, but not because they saw in it something alien or superfluous. Augustine was simply not very well known in the East…”

339 Khomyakov, in Birkbeck, Russia and the English Church, p. 62.
Let us now turn from an exposition of Florovsky’s argument to a critique of it.

But first its strong points must be admitted. The practice of “economy” in the reception of converts is often confusing—not only for the converts themselves, who are not given a clear, unequivocal sign that they are coming from darkness into light, from the sphere of the devil into the grace of God, but also for many of the Church clergy themselves, who through long practice of “economy” have come to believe what it appears, to a superficial view, to imply—that the heretics have valid baptism. The present writer vividly remembers a ROCOR priest trying to dissuade him from being baptized into Orthodoxy (although the date had already been fixed, and the local hierarch’s blessing obtained) on the grounds that he had already been validly baptized in Anglicanism…

Having said that, the practice of “economy” is not in itself deceitful, nor need it be done, as Florovsky claims, “with equivocation and obscurity”. It is quite possible to catechize without equivocation, teaching that the Orthodox Church is the True Church outside of which there are no sacraments, while going on to receive the convert by “economy” of one kind or another. The decisive argument in deciding whether to use strictness or economy remains, in all cases, the salvation of the many. This is particularly clear in the case of the reception of a large group, which may include clergy as well as laity and in which some members may be clearer in their faith and willing to accept baptism, while others are weaker and would be repelled by such a demand. In order that the group as a whole be integrated in the Church, with all the obvious advantages that would entail for the salvation of each member, condescension or “economy” may be applied for the group as a whole.

In any case, Florovsky ignores the clear evidence that the Holy Fathers rejected the doctrine of sacraments outside the canonical limits of the Church which he accepts, and accepted the “economical” interpretation that he rejects. Thus Apostolic Canon 46 decrees: “We order that a bishop or priest who has accepted the baptism or sacrifice of heretics should be deposed. For what agreement has Christ with Beliar, or what portion has a believer with an infidel?” On which the Serbian Bishop Nikodim (Milash) of Dalmatia comments: “According to the teaching of the Church, every heretic is outside the Church, and outside the Church there cannot be either true Christian baptism, or the true Eucharistic sacrifice, or in general any true and holy sacraments. The present Apostolic canon also expresses this teaching of the Church, citing, moreover, Holy Scripture, which does not admit anything in common between those who confess the Orthodox faith and those who teach against it. We read the same also in the Apostolic Constitutions (IV, 15), and
the Father and Teachers of the Church taught the same from the very beginning. Consequently, the heretics can have neither true baptism, nor true priesthood, and the Orthodox bishop or priest who recognizes baptism or any other sacred action accomplished by a heretical priest to be correct must be, according to this canon, deprived of his priestly rank, for he thereby shows that either he does not know the essence of his own belief, or he is himself inclined to heresy and defends it, as a consequence of either the one or the other he is not worthy of the priesthood.”

As regards the true purpose of receiving heretics and schismatics by other means than baptism, St. Basil the Great writes in his First Canonical Epistle: “Although the beginning of the departure [from the Church] took place through schism, those who departed from the Church no longer had the grace of the Holy Spirit upon themselves. For the bestowed of grace had withered away, because the lawful succession had been cut off. For the first who departed had received consecration from the Fathers, and through their laying-on of hands, had the gift of the Spirit. But those who had been torn away became laymen, and could not give to other the grace of the Holy Spirit, from which they themselves had taken away. Which is why the ancients ordered those who came from them to be cleansed again by the true Church baptism as ones who had been baptized by laymen. But insofar it was pleasing to some in Asia, for the sake of the building up of many, to accept their baptism: let it be accepted.”

Here we see what the “acceptance” of the baptism of schismatics really meant to the Holy Fathers. The schismatics had no grace of sacraments – that is made quite clear by St. Basil. But it was clearly a tradition of the Church not to insist on baptism in all or even most such cases “for the sake of the building up of the many” – so that more could be saved. Later in the canon St. Basil gives reasons for not accepting the En克拉特 schismatics’ baptism, and for baptizing them again. However, he writes, “if this could be an impediment to the general welfare, then again let custom be upheld, and let the Fathers who have ordered what course we are to pursue be followed. For I am under some apprehension lest, in our wish to discourage them from baptizing, we may, through the severity of our decision, be a hindrance to those who are being saved.” In other words, let “economy” be applied even in the case of the En克拉特, if thereby the salvation of the many is achieved.

As another, more recent example of how the True Church thinks in the reception of converts, let us consider the decision of the Synod of ROCOR on September 28, 1971, to suspend the use of “economy” in the reception of Catholic and Protestant converts to Orthodoxy: “The Holy Church has from antiquity believed that there can be only one true baptism, namely that which is accomplished in her bosom: ‘One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism’ (Ephesians

4.5). In the Symbol of Faith “one baptism” is also confessed, while the 46th canon of the Holy Apostles indicates: ‘We order that a bishop or priest who has accepted (that is, recognized) the baptism or sacrifice of heretics should be deposed.’

“However, when the zeal of any heretics in their struggle against the Church weakened, and when there was a question of their mass conversion to Orthodoxy, the Church, to ease their union, accepted them into her bosom by another rite. [There follows a discussion of St. Basil the Great’s first canonical epistle.]

“And so St. Basil the Great, and through his words the Ecumenical Council, in establishing the principle that outside the Holy Orthodox Church there is no true baptism, allowed out of pastoral condescension, so-called oikonomia, the acceptance of certain heretics and schismatics without a new baptism. And in accordance with this principle, the Ecumenical Councils allowed the reception of heretics by various rites, taking account of the weakening of their fierceness against the Orthodox Church. . . .

“In relation to the Roman Catholics and Protestants who claim to preserve baptism as a sacrament (for example, the Lutherans), the practice was introduced from the time of Peter the First of receiving them without baptism, through the renunciation of heresy and chrismation of Protestants and unconfirmed Catholics. Before Peter Catholics were baptised in Russia. In Greece the practice also changed, but for almost three hundred years, after a certain break, the practice of baptising those who came from Catholicism and Protestantism was again introduced. Those who are received by another rite are not recognized as Orthodox in Greece. In many cases also such children of our Russian Church were not even allowed to receive Holy Communion.

“Bearing in mind this circumstance, and the present growth of the ecumenical heresy, which tries completely to wipe out the difference between Orthodoxy and every heresy, so that the Moscow Patriarchate, in spite of the sacred canons, has issued a resolution allowing Roman Catholics to be communed in certain cases, the Hierarchical Council has recognized the introduction of a stricter practice to be necessary, that is, that all heretics coming to the Church should be baptized, and that only insofar as it is necessary and with the permission of the bishop, from considerations of oikonomia, should another practice be allowed in relation to certain people, that is, the reception into the Church of Roman Catholics and Protestants who have been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity through renunciation of heresy and chrismation.”

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341 Tserkovnaia Zhizn’ (Church Life), July-December, 1971, pp. 52-54. This decision brought the practice of ROCOR back into line with the practice of the Russian Church under Patriarch Philaret in the early seventeenth century, and of the Greek Church since 1756. “It should be noted,” writes Andrei Psarev, “that, within the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, it was
So we may now pose the question: is the distinction between the validity and efficacy of sacraments, which was introduced by St. Augustine and supported by Florovsky, accepted by the Orthodox Church?

It is a sad but undeniable fact of the spiritual life that we Christians do not always receive the holy mysteries to our salvation. St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, points out that some received the Body and Blood of Christ to their condemnation, and some had even died as a result. Thus it is possible to receive a valid sacrament which turns out to be inefficacious because of the unworthiness of the recipient.

However, the Apostle was writing to those inside the Church: he was not commenting on the possibility of there being sacraments outside the Church. And, as we have seen, the idea that there can be valid sacraments outside the Church is in fact condemned by the Tradition of the Church (Apostolic Canon 46, First Canonical Epistle of St. Basil).

So it is likely that St. Augustine’s teaching was not taken up in the Eastern Church, not because it was not known, but because it was not accepted, as being contrary to Church Tradition. For the canonical boundaries of the Church do coincide with the limits of her sacramental ministrations.

Of course, it is not always easy to determine the canonical boundaries of the Church with precision. There are many examples of ruptures in communion in the history of the Church, where it is very difficult, if not impossible, to determine with certainty whether the one or the other side – or both – were in the Church. Thus in fourth century Antioch there was a schism in which Saints Basil the Great and John Chrysostom supported one side, and St. Athanasius the Great and the Church of Rome – the other. Which side constituted the canonical Church of Antioch, or were they both in the Church in spite of the rupture of communion? It is very difficult to say... Again, in the nineteenth century the Ecumenical Patriarchate anathematized the Church of Bulgaria, while the Russian Church and the Jerusalem Patriarchate remained in communion with it. Was the Bulgarian Church inside the Church or not? It is very difficult to say... As for the chaos reigning among the True Orthodox Churches of Russia and Greece today, it would be a bold man who would declare with certainty exactly where the canonical boundaries of the two Churches are...

Bishop James of Manhattan, who led the American Orthodox Mission for a period of time, who first began the reception of Catholics by baptism, regarding which he informed the Council of Bishops in 1953.” (“The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia’s Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches”, http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0, pp. 708)
However, the difficulty, in many historical cases, of determining exactly where the canonical boundaries of the Church are does not affect the general principle: that her canonical boundaries (wherever they are, God knows where) coincide with the limits of her sacramental ministrations.

Let us consider, finally, a possible objection to this conclusion based on the teaching of the Catacomb Hieromartyr Mark (Novoselov), Bishop of Sergiev Posad: that the Church as mystical organism is to be distinguished from the Church as a canonical organization. "It is necessary to distinguish between the Church-organism and the Church-organization. As the apostle taught: 'You are the Body of Christ and individually members of it' (I Corinthians 12.27). The Church-organism is a living person, and just as the cells of our body, besides having their own life, have the life that is common to our body and links between themselves, so a man in the Body of Christ begins to live in Church, while Christ begins to live in him. That is why the apostle said: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me' (Galatians 2.20).

"The basis for the affirmation of the Church-organism is love for Christ. The Lord Himself saw the basis of His Church precisely in love for Him. He asked Peter: did he love Him? And He added: 'Feed My sheep'. The Church of Christ is the union of mutual love of the believers ('United by the bond of love and offering themselves to Christ the Lord, the apostles were washed clean', Canon of Holy Thursday). Only in the Church organism can true democratism, equality and brotherhood come into being; we are equal and brothers only if we are parts of one and the same living body. In the organization there is not and cannot be 'organic' equality and brotherhood."

"Only to the Church-organism can we apply such titles as we meet in the Word of God, for example: 'glorious, holy, spotless' (Ephesians 1.4); 'the Bride of the Lamb' (Revelation 19.7; 21.9); 'the Body of Christ' (Ephesians 1.23; Colossians 1.24); 'the pillar and ground of the truth' (I Timothy 3.15). These concepts are inapplicable to the Church-organization (or applicable only with great qualifications); they lead people into perplexity and are rejected by them. The Church-organism is the pure 'Bride' of Christ (Revelation 21.2), but the Church-organization has all the faults of human society and always bears the marks of human infirmities... The Church-organization often persecutes the saints of God, but the Church-organism receives them into her bosom... The Church-organization rejects them from its midst, deprives them of episcopal sees, while they remain the most glorious members of the Church-organism. It is possible to belong externally to the visible Church (organization) while belonging only inwardly to the Body of Christ (organism), and the measure of one's belongingness is determined by the degree of one's sanctity."
However, both the Church-organism and the Church-organization belong to the Church, whereas heretics and schismatics belong to neither. St. John Chrysostom was expelled by the canonical Church of his time, and died in exile. And in almost every age the canonical Church has acted unjustly at some times to some of its members, showing that her holiest members are by no means always her leaders. Nevertheless, this disparity in holiness in the members of the Church, which sometimes leads to open ruptures in communion, unjust expulsions and bans, does not change the boundaries of “the canonical Church” so long as the Church remains in Orthodoxy. But if it falls away from the truth even in one of the dogmas, then it ceases to be the canonical Church – the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church - and loses the grace of sacraments. For, as St. Maximus the Confessor said, “Christ the Lord called that Church the Catholic Church which maintains the true and saving confession of the faith”.

This truth is illustrated in the career of Florovsky himself. Although he was a fine and very erudite theologian, and one of the first to talk about a return to the Greek Fathers, whose teaching he championed so admirably, his departure from Church truth as revealed in “The Limits of the Church” eventually led him away from the Church and Orthodoxy. Thus he exposed the Sophianist heresy of Sergius Bulgakov – but refused to call him a heretic, and remained friendly and in communion with him until his death. He also remained in communion with the new calendarists and the sergianists. For, after all, if even “Catholic sacraments are not just ‘rites’” and may be valid even though performed outside the canonical Church, the same must be true, a fortiori, of all the organizations calling themselves “Orthodox”. And why should this extension of the mystical limits of the Church include only the Catholics? Why not also the Protestants? And so he was a founder-member of the World Council of Churches, whose Protestantism was inscribed in its very constitution. And even though he was a highly “conservative” member of that organization, and did not like many of its developments, he remained in it to the end.344

344 Some of the ambiguities of Florovsky’s attitude to ecumenism are described by George H. Williams as follows: “Florovsky repeatedly said that it will be for ‘the Lord of the harvest’ to make the final determination as to the boundaries of his Church in the latter days and that in the meantime ‘nobody is entitled to anticipate His judgement.’ But though Florovsky avowed that he himself was therefore ‘not going to unChurch anybody at all’, he nevertheless formally and firmly rejected such theories of the existing ‘dis-union’ as the branch theory of many Protestants and of the primordial unity in a common baptism recently stressed in Roman Catholicism, because both of these irenic and ecumenical efforts to find a common denominator gloss over or minimize the scandal of ‘dis-union’, which for him was rather to be faced forthrightly and explained in terms of the ‘the true [Orthodox] Church and secessions’. And he turned back any criticism of his somewhat more Cyprianic than Stephanic conception of ecclesiological and sacramental unity thus: ‘Intransigeance is but another and deprecatory name for conviction.’ And he went on: ‘Charity should neverbe set against the truth.’

“Besides the Stephani-Vatican II stress on a common baptism and the Anglican branch theory of the Churches, Florovsky was also dissatisfied with two other current theories of a
For ecumenism is a progressive disease: you begin by conceding a little to those outside the Church, you go on by conceding more, and in the end you end up in communion with them – and outside the Church.

And so we must concede nothing to the heretics. For, as the Council of Carthage declared: “Baptism being one, and the Holy Spirit being one, there is also but one Church, founded upon oneness by Christ our Lord. And for this reason, whatever is performed by them [the heretics] is reprobate, being counterfeit and void. For nothing can be acceptable or desirable to God which is performed by them, whom the Lord in the Gospels calls His foes and enemies: ‘Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather with Me scatters’ (Matthew 12.30).”

St. Maximus the Confessor.

345 Canon 1 of the Council of Carthage, 258 A.D.
APPENDIX 12: “THERE IS NONE THAT WATCHETH OUT FOR MY SOUL”

The heart of the Orthodox Christian is gripped with great sorrow – and not a little anger – when he looks at the truly catastrophic state of the Orthodox Church today. Many, very many are the lost sheep looking around in desperation for a priest or bishop who will provide the minimum of pastoral care. Few, very few are the priests and bishops who provide even that minimum. If we narrow the meaning of “the Orthodox Church” to exclude the clearly heretical churches of World Orthodoxy, and restrict it those “True Orthodox” Churches that are not in communion with World Orthodoxy, then the spectacle is hardly more encouraging: scandals abound, heresies and schisms multiply, the love of many has grown cold. It appears that now “Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame, and wilt not go forth, O God, with our hosts. Thou hast made us to turn back before our enemies, and they that hate us took spoils for themselves. Thou hast given us up as sheep to be eaten, and among the nations hast Thou scattered us” (Psalm 43.10-12).

The worst thing of all is that so few seem to care; a kind of torpor has overcome us, a faintheartedness in the face of the catastrophe that threatens us all with – why be afraid to say it? – the eternal torments of hell…

There are two standard solutions offered to this problem in relation to True Orthodoxy: we shall call the one the clerical solution, and the other the lay solution. The clerical solution is that the jurisdiction that they rule is, if not perfect, at any rate the most canonical to be found, and that the solution for the clergy of other jurisdictions is to repent before them, or at any rate seek union with them. The more rigorist clergy insist that their own jurisdiction is the only True Church, at any rate on the territory of the given Local Church, so that “repent”, rather than “seek union”, is the operative word. The less rigorist do not insist on this (at least openly), but still insist that their jurisdiction and its ecclesiology must be the core around which “the gathering of the fragments” must take place… The lay solution (which is also put forward by some clergy) arises out of frustration at the manifest failure of the proposed clerical solutions so far. It declares that the clergy of different jurisdictions must simply humble themselves, forget – or, at any rate, ignore – their differences, come together in a conference without preconditions and there attempt to combine into a single jurisdiction. The assumption behind this solution is that the great majority, if not all, of the True Orthodox jurisdictions have essentially the same faith and together already constitute the One True Church, even if that inner, mystical unity is not yet manifest in administrative unity.346

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346 For the distinction between the Church as an inner, mystical organism and the Church as an external organization, see Hieromartyrs Bishop Mark (Novoselov), Letters to Friends.
I believe that both solutions to the problem are vain for essentially the same reason: they underestimate the obstacles to unity that exist both within and between each jurisdiction. The essential problem with the clerical solution is that, even if we believe that there is one jurisdiction in each given territory that is more canonical than the others, and therefore the natural core around which the other jurisdictions on that territory must unite, - and my personal belief is that there is such a jurisdiction in both Greece and Russia - there still exist major problems that give members of other jurisdictions just reason to pause before joining it. Therefore the first priority must be to remove these internal problems first, before attempting to make disciples and converts of the other, less canonical jurisdictions. Otherwise, we are simply preparing the ground for further schisms in the future, leading to a still deeper, and still more dangerous degree of disillusionment... The essential problem with the lay solution is analogous: although some of the differences that divide the jurisdictions are clearly the result of personal pride or stubbornness on the part of individual hierarchs, and therefore should be remediable with a little more flexibility and humility on all sides, this is clearly not always the case. In some cases, the differences go deeper, and a simple-minded call to “forgive and forget” is inadequate. In fact, we have to admit that some of the breaks in communion are justified, even necessary from a canonical point of view – and if we do not attempt to keep the holy canons, we are lost before we even begin.

Let us now look briefly at some of these more intractable problems – but without naming names (even if the names will be known to many), because the purpose of this article is not to lambast individual hierarchs or jurisdictions, but to draw general conclusions applicable to all:-

a. In one jurisdiction, the chief-hierarch, though dogmatically Orthodox and with undoubted apostolic succession, is a homosexual who has only escaped a just prison sentence by the skin of his teeth. Moreover, he has succeeded in expelling dissidents by methods that no Orthodox Christian can recognize as just or canonical. The other hierarchs of his jurisdiction lack the strength to bring him to canonical trial, either because they have known, but done nothing about, his crimes for a long time, and are therefore partly guilty themselves, or because they know that they would be unjustly deprived of their sees if they attempted, however belatedly, to bring him to book. In this situation, it is hardly surprising or reprehensible that the leaders of other jurisdictions hesitate to seek union with him. The Augean stables need to be cleansed before other, fresh horses can be introduced into them...

b. In other jurisdictions, schisms have taken place on the grounds of the sympathies of the chief hierarch with anti-semitism, or Stalinism. Such sympathies are undoubtedly reprehensible, and it is difficult to criticize those who wish to distance themselves from them.

c. In another jurisdiction that is Orthodox from a dogmatic point of view and with undoubted apostolic succession, a senior hierarch with
extreme nationalist views has been allowed for many years to control
the “foreign policy” of the jurisdiction together with one of its major
foreign dioceses. This has had catastrophic consequences both for the
missionary work of the Church and for its relations with other Local
Churches. The other hierarchs again seem incapable of acting in
accordance with the canons in order to relieve this hierarch of the
duties that he has manifestly failed to fulfil. And again, it is not
surprising or reprehensible that other hierarchs and jurisdictions, for
whom missionary work is not an “optional extra”, and who believe that
the Catholicity of the Church should be proclaimed in deed as well as
word, hesitate to seek union with this jurisdiction as long as it is
dominated by this extremist hierarch.

d. Another jurisdiction, while impeccable in its rejection of ecumenism
and sergianism, and very active in missionary work, has become a
conduit for the heretical soteriology of the ecumenist John Romanides
that threatens to undermine the central dogma of Christianity.

e. Another group of jurisdictions has still not made up its mind to declare
World Orthodoxy outside the True Church, although the heresy of
ecumenism is now almost a century old. If this were simply a tendency
towards liberalism, a humble fear of making categorical statements of
condemnation, or a desire not to make the conversion of people from
World Orthodoxy more difficult than it need be, this would be a less
serious matter – such liberals have been found within the Church in
every epoch of her history. But when this liberal tendency is taken as a
justification for schism from other, less liberal jurisdictions who believe
– rightly – that World Orthodoxy is graceless; when this liberal
tendency is given a quasi-dogmatic basis in a new, elitist teaching on
the nature of the Church (as consisting of three layers: “healthy”
Orthodox, “sick” Orthodox and “sick” heretics, none of which are in
communion with each other); and when it is denied that any True
Orthodox Church has the canonical right to anathematize heretics, then
the matter becomes more serious and cannot be swept under the carpet.

These are only some of the more intractable problems that divide the True
Orthodox. It would be naïve to think that they can be solved simply by all the
jurisdictions getting round a table. Where bilateral talks have failed (we have
more than one example in 2009 alone), multilateral talks are bound to fail.
Moreover, multilateral talks aiming at not less than the complete “melting
down” and “reforging” of True Orthodoxy would be irresponsible nonsense.
For they imply the need for revolution rather than evolution in inter-
jurisdictional relations that is reminiscent more of renovationism than of True
Orthodoxy.347

347 See, for example, the remarks of Bishop Dionysius of Novgorod in “Vlast’ ili sluzhenie?”
(http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=fresh&id=1090), supported by “Bishop” Gregory of
What is needed is unilateral talks – that is, talks within each jurisdiction rather than between them – to root out the serious problems we have pointed to. Not only would this be the fulfilment of the Lord’s command to remove the beam from one’s own eye before attempting to remove the mote from one’s neighbour’s: it would make each jurisdiction more attractive to the others and thereby create a real desire for unity rather than the present fear of disunity...

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Speaking about a “clerical” and a “lay” solution raises the question of the relationship between, and relative responsibility of, the clergy and the laity.

St. Cosmas of Aitolia said that in the last times the clergy and the laity would distrust each other; and it must be admitted that this prophecy has been fulfilled in our time. The clergy, especially those that advocate the rigorist version of the clerical solution, tend to blame the clergy of other jurisdictions for the present catastrophe. Sometimes, however, echoing the Pharisees of Christ’s time, they also blame the laity, declaring that “the people that knoweth not the law is cursed” (John 7.49); they are “unstable”, “jurisdiction-hoppers”, who should simply listen to their priests and obey.

But attacks by the clergy on the laity are rare – and with reason. For it is generally understood that simply to get a general, objective idea of the rapidly changing jurisdictional situation – who’s who, and who stands for what, and who has been condemned for what by whom – is a major intellectual task requiring personal contacts and theological and linguistic skills for which few of the laity are well equipped. And if they ask the clergy, they will get very different pictures from different clergy – and even from the same clergyman at different times if he, too, has been a “jurisdiction-hopper”.

So even if it remains true that a people usually gets the leaders it deserves (for “as with the people, so with the priest” (Hosea 4.9)), the primary responsibility must remain with the priesthood. It could not be otherwise in a hierarchical religion such as Orthodoxy in which no priest can be removed, or new one installed, except at the hands of priests. So if the responsibility borne by the priesthood is not just an empty phrase, and if the priests are truly the leaders of the people, who have it within their power, with God’s help, to initiate change and turn the situation around in a way that is not given to the people, it is necessary to exhort and rebuke the priests first of all. Thus the Prophet Hosea says: “It is you, priest, that I denounce. Day and night you stumble along, the prophet stumbling with you, and you are the ruin of your people. My people perish for want of knowledge. As you have rejected knowledge, so do I reject you from the priesthood; you have forgotten the teaching of your God” (Hosea 4.4-6). Again, the Prophet Malachi declares: “Now, priests, this is a warning for you. If you do not listen, if you do not find
it in your heart to glorify My name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send the curse on you and curse your very blessing. Indeed, I have already cursed it, since there is not a single one of you who takes this to heart…” (Malachi 2.1-2).

The role of the laity need not be as passive as it is often made out to be. The “royal priesthood of the laity” is not a myth, and should not be mocked – as one True Orthodox priest has recently mocked it in public. The 1848 Encyclical of the Eastern Patriarchs specifically emphasized that the truth of the Church is supported and maintained by the whole body of the Church. If the laity cannot remove bad priests or install new ones, they at any rate have the right – nay rather, the duty – to lobby for change. In the epoch of the Ecumenical Councils, it was the lay monks who were at the forefront of the struggle for the defence of Orthodoxy against heresy. In the 1920s in Greece and Romania the movement in defence of the Old Calendar was essentially a lay movement with only a handful of priests and no bishops. And St. Joseph of Petrograd foresaw the possibility of a time when only a few laity would remain faithful to Christ: “Do not forget that for a minute: 'The Son of God when He cometh shall He find faith on the earth?' (Luke 18.8). And perhaps the last ‘rebels’ against the betrayers of the Church and the accomplices of her ruin will be not only bishops and not archpriests, but the simplest mortals, just as at the Cross of Christ His last gasp of suffering was heard by a few simple souls who were close to Him.”

But even when all exhortations have failed, and the best efforts of the laity to get their priests to act in defence of Orthodoxy have failed, it is essential not to relapse into torpor, into a kind of despondency that deadens the heart and paralyzes the will. One of the most subtle temptations of our time is the idea that we should concern ourselves only with our own problems, and not worry about the problems of others, but “leave all that to God (or the priests)”. And yet a certain measured indignation at the horror of the present situation must be considered an entirely appropriate response, and a lack of indignation - a sign of spiritual insensitivity. Indignation here is is not a sign of pride, still less of sinful rebellion against lawful authority, but of that most cardinal of virtues – love for our neighbours as ourselves. After all, did not the Apostle Paul say: “Who is offended, and I burn not?” (II Corinthians 11.29)?

For a people that has not lost the capacity to feel sorrow and indignation at the absence of a clear witness to Orthodoxy in the world, and at the loss of so many sheep wandering around without a shepherd, for whom the words of David are so appropriate: “I looked upon my right hand [i.e. towards the Orthodox], and beheld, and there was none that did know me. Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul” (Psalm 141.60) – for such a people there is still hope of redemption. For only such a people have a living faith in the Lord’s promise: “The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church” (Matthew 16.18). Only such a people can be the Church.
We do not know from where redemption will come. It may come from a hierarch, so far unknown or little known to the world, who rises above the general level of mediocrity and finally succeeds in “gathering the fragments”, or from an Orthodox tsar who, as the first layman of the Church and “bishop of those outside the Church”, forces the hierarchs to remove the scandals in their midst. This only do we know for certain: that “it is time for the Lord to act; for they have dispersed Thy law” (Psalm 118.126), that “it is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man” (Psalm 117.7), and that when earthly hierarchs fail above them stands “the Vladyka above all Vladykas, “the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls” (I Peter 2.25), the Head and Bridegroom of the Church for Whom all things are possible, the Lord Jesus Christ…

Vladimir Moss.
December 15/28, 2009.
APPENDIX 13: ORTHODOXY, UNIVERSALISM AND NATIONALISM

It is sometimes said that we are now living through a time similar to that of the first centuries in the history of the Church, before St. Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the civilized world. There are certainly many similarities between that time and ours. But in one respect at least there is a very sharp difference: whereas in the first centuries Christianity was seen as the most universal of all the existing religions, and the least tied to a specific people and place and national tradition, now Orthodox Christianity is perceived as among the most culture-specific of all religions, closely tied to the national traditions of certain specific peoples, such as the Greeks and the Russians...

Of course, in its origins Christianity did arise in a specific place and out of a specific national tradition: that of the Jews. And for some time the Church was seen as simply a Jewish sect. However, this perception began to change after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., when the Jews were expelled from their homeland, relations between the Church and the Synagogue became increasingly tenuous and hostile, and the flow of Jewish converts to Christianity began to dry up. Not that the Jewish roots of Christianity were ever forgotten. But the Church was now overwhelmingly a Gentile community composed of people of all nations and with a message aimed at the people of all nations. The Jews now looked on the Christians as completely alien to themselves, and on Jewish Christians as traitors to the national cause. At the same time, the Roman emperors were forced to reclassify the Christians, distinguish them from the Jews, and treat them in a different manner.

“The Roman government,” writes Alexander Dvorkin, “in practice was tolerant to any cult if only it did not incite to rebellion and did not undermine morality. Moreover, the Romans thought that one of the reasons for their military successes was the fact that while other peoples worshipped only their own local gods, the Romans showed marks of honour to all the gods without exception and for that were rewarded for their special piety. All cults not established by the state were allowed, but theoretically did not have the right to propagandize in Rome, although their gods also entered into the Roman pantheon. In the first century after Christ religions already known to the contemporary Roman were not, as a rule, persecuted for propagandizing. However, the law retained its prior force, and theoretically the possibility of applying it remained. The permitted religions had to satisfy two criteria: place and time. Religion was always a local matter – that is, it was linked to a definite people living in a definite locality, - and also an ancient matter, linked to the history of this people. It was more complicated to assimilate the God of the Jews, Who had no representation and did not accept sacrifices in any place except Jerusalem, into their pantheon. The Jews themselves did not
allow His representation to be placed anywhere and stubbornly declined to worship the Roman gods. The Jews were monotheists and theoretically understood that their faith in principle excluded all other forms of religion. Nevertheless, in spite of all the complications with the Jews and the strangeness of their religion, it was still tolerated: the religion of the Jews was a national one and, besides, ancient, and it was considered sacrilege to encroach on it. Moreover, the Jews occupied an important political niche that was for the Romans a stronghold of their eastern conquests. In view of all these considerations, the Romans gritted their teeth and recognized the Jewish religion as licit. Privileges were given to the Jewish people also because their rites seemed strange and dirty. The Romans thought that the Jews simply could not have proselytes among other peoples and would rather repel the haughty Roman aristocrat. Therefore the Jews were given the right to confess their belief in one God. Until the rebellion of 66-70 the Roman authorities treated them with studied tolerance. Augustus gave the Jews significant privileges, which, after the crisis under Caligula, who wanted to put his statue in the Jerusalem Temple (cf. Mark 13.14 and II Thessalonians 2.3-4), were again renewed by Claudius.

“The circumstances changed when Christianity appeared. Having examined it, the Romans classified the Christians as apostates from the Jewish faith. It was precisely the traits that distinguished the Christians from the Jews that made them still lower in the eyes of the Romans even than the Judaism they had little sympathy for. Christianity did not have the right belonging to historical antiquity – it was the ‘new religion’ so displeasing to the Roman conservative. It was not the religion of one people, but on the contrary, lived only through proselytes from other religions. If the propagandizing of other cults by their servers was seen rather as a chance violation, for Christians missionary work was their only modus vivendi – a necessity of their very position in history. Christians were always reproached for a lack of historical and national character in their religion. Celsius, for example, saw in Christians a party that had separated from Judaism and inherited from it its inclination for disputes.

“The Christians could demand tolerance either in the name of the truth or in the name of freedom of conscience. But since for the Romans one of the criteria of truth was antiquity, Christianity, a new religion, automatically became a false religion. The right of freedom of conscience that is so important for contemporary man was not even mentioned at that time. Only the state, and not individuals, had the right to establish and legalize religious cults. In rising up against state religion, the Christians became guilty of a state crime – they became in principle enemies of the state. And with such a view of Christianity it was possible to interpret a series of features of their life in a particular way: their nocturnal gatherings, their waiting for a certain king that
was to come, the declining of some of them from military service and above all their refusal to offer sacrifices to the emperor.”

So Christians were suspect because of the supposed “lack of historical and national character in their religion”, i.e. because of its universalism. Rome could tolerate and respect any number of historical and national religions, so long as they did not make claims to exclusive truth and universality. Of course, the Jews did claim that their God was the only true God, and there are definite hints of the universality of the Jewish religion in the Law and the Prophets. However, the Jews were still “historical and national” – and, especially after 70 A.D., they became more closed in on themselves and did not try to make proselytes from other religions. So the Jews could be tolerated – just. But it was a different case with Christianity: it was completely and explicitly universalist. And this constituted a threat to the Roman view of things; for the only universal power that Rome recognized was herself, and the only universal religion – the cult of the Roman Emperor.

Roman universality meant that St. Paul, a “Hebrew of the Hebrews”, could also say, without sense of contradiction: “I am a Roman citizen”. Already from the beginning of the second century, we find non-Roman emperors of Rome; they came from as far afield as Spain and Arabia, Dacia and Africa. In 212 Rome offered citizenship to all free subjects of the empire, which meant that these subjects could both identify with the empire as their own country and rise to the highest positions within it. And so Rutilius Namatianus could say of Rome: “You have made out of diverse races one patria”. And the poet Claudian wrote: “we may drink of the Rhine or Orontes”, but “we are all one people”. For the nations had become one in Rome:

She is the only one who has received
The conquered in her arms and cherished all
The human race under a common name,
Treating them as her children, not her slaves.
She called these subjects Roman citizens
And linked far worlds with ties of loyalty.

The clash between pagan Rome and the Church was ultimately a clash between two universalist visions – a political and constitutional one, and a spiritual and ecclesiastical one. They could not co-exist in their existing forms. But St. Constantine the Great showed that, with some adaptation on both sides – radical in the case of Rome (the abolition of emperor-worship), minor in the case of the Church (its administrative reorganization) – they could come together in a “symphonic” union – the Roman Christian Empire. Then for the first time the State could feel at home in the Church, and the Christians

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(up to a point) - in the State. “The breadth of the East,” wrote the Spanish priest Orosius, “the vastness of the North, the extensiveness of the South, and the very large and secure seats of the islands are of my name and law because I, as a Roman and Christian, approach Christians and Romans…”

The critical change came with the Edict of Milan in 313, which was signed by Constantine and his fellow-emperor Licinius: “Our purpose is to grant both to the Christians and to all others full authority to follow whatever worship each man has desired; whereby whatsoever divinity dwells in heaven may be benevolent and propitious to us, and to all who are placed under our authority”. So Christians were no longer compelled to worship the emperor.

But the significance of the Edict goes beyond this. Fr. Alexis Nikolin writes: “The Edict of Milan decisively rejected many traditions of antiquity. St. Constantine clearly proclaimed that Christianity is not the property of any particular people, but is a universal religion, the religion of the whole of humanity. If formerly it was thought that a given religion belongs to a given people and for that reason it is sacred and untouchable, now the lawgiver affirmed a new principle: that the sacred and untouchable religion was that religion which belonged to all peoples – Christianity. It was obviously not an attempt to bring Christianity under the usual (pagan) juridical forms, but a principled change in those forms.”

The modern world – or “the international community”, as it is often called by globalists – has a very similar approach to religion to that of the Roman pagan authorities. Any number of “historical and national” religions are permitted – indeed, encouraged for the sake of cultural variety – so long as none of them makes a claim to exclusive and universal truth. It is politics that is the only permissible universal religion, and the aims of politics – equality, prosperity, stability, “human rights” – the only truly legitimate aims of life... Only two religions defy this consensus: Islam and Christianity. Islam is treated now as Judaism was treated in the first century: with kid gloves. For now, as then, the powers that be would prefer not to use force against a religion having large numbers of adherents and wielding great political and economic power. Besides, any religion that encourages suicide bombers to establish its claims has to be treated with “respect”.

It is a different matter with Christianity. The universalism of Christianity is no longer a threat quite simply because most Christians no longer confess it. Ecumenism has blunted the sharp sword of Christian truth, with the result that each of the Christian “denominations”, and Christianity as a whole, is simply seen as a local tradition no better in principle than any other local tradition. Indeed, Christianity is now seen as so “historical and national” as to

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350 Lactantius, On the Deaths of the Persecutors, 48. 2-12.
351 Nikolin, Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo (Church and State), Moscow, 1997, p. 27.
be completely passé. In the march of historical progress (a modern concept not shared by the ancient Romans) Christianity has simply been left behind…

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Of course, this is highly ironical, because the word “ecumenism” derives from the Greek word oikoumene, “the inhabited world”, from which we get the word oikoumenikos, “ecumenical”, which can also be translated as “universal”. So the ecumenical movement, although universal in its name and aims and emotional pathos, is in fact destroying the only truly universal religion - Christianity. Ecumenism, as the religious component of the globalization movement, is striving to localize Christianity, reduce it to a group of “national and historical” traditions that may have some cultural or aesthetic or psychological value for the nations that inherit them, but no relevance at all for the world as a whole, which can only be saved by what the globalists regard as the only truly universal religion - that of human rights.

But there is a still greater, and more tragic irony: that we the anti-ecumenists, the True Orthodox who maintain that Orthodoxy Christianity is the one and only true faith for all men, often inadvertently give the impression of supporting the ecumenists’ attitude to their faith. For we passionately defend our national religious traditions – whether they be Greek, Russian, Serbian, Romanian or whatever - while failing to unite in a single Church so as to proclaim the truth with one voice to the whole world. It is not that we do not believe that our faith is for all men. We do – or most of us, at any rate. The problem is our failure to present a universalist icon of our universal truth…

“Charity begins at home,” goes the English proverb. This can be understood in both a descriptive and a prescriptive sense. On the one hand, charity, or love, as a matter of psycho-social fact begins in the context of one’s family, friends and neighbours; we learn to love at home. And on the other hand, love should begin with those closest to you, genetically and geographically. For if you cannot love those who brought you into the world and gave you everything that you are, whom can you love? Similarly, at the level of the nation, we see that almost everyone involuntarily loves their own people. He who does not love his own people, we feel, is not fully a man. This is the order of nature. But nature is fallen. And love of one’s country, like the love of women, is often blind. This fallen, blind love of one’s country we call chauvinism, nationalism or phyletism. But there is a true, spiritual love of one’s country, which we call patriotism.

The Russian religious philosopher I.A. Ilyin described the patriotism, the true love of one’s country, as follows: “To love one’s people and believe in her, to believe that she will overcome all historical trials and will arise from
collapse purified and sobered – does not mean to close one’s eyes to her weaknesses and imperfections, perhaps even her vices. To accept one’s people as the incarnation of the fullest and highest perfection on earth would be pure vainglory, sick nationalist conceit. The real patriot sees not only the spiritual paths of his people, but also her temptations, weaknesses and imperfections. Spiritual love generally is not given to groundless idealization, but sees soberly and with extreme acuteness. To love one’s people does not mean to flatter her or hide from her her weak sides, but honourably and courageously criticize them and tirelessly struggle with them.”

The Lord Jesus Christ gives us in this, as in everything else, the perfect example. He loved His earthly country more than any Israelite – but in an unfallen way. Like Paul, He was “a Hebrew of the Hebrews”. But, again like Paul, He recognized that it is precisely earthly kinship and love that often makes one blind to the sins of one’s own people – and the virtues of other nations. He both loved His country and exposed its sins, sometimes expressing both the profoundest love and the sharpest condemnation in the same breath: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23.37).

Again and again the Lord tried to quench the fallen national pride of His compatriots, foreseeing the spiritual and national catastrophe to which it would lead. In several parables He prophesied that the Kingdom of heaven would be taken away from the Jews and given to foreigners. The parable of the Good Samaritan could also be called the parable of the Good Foreigner. Of course, the Samaritan signified Christ Himself. But that is just the point: Christ is symbolized in the Samaritan because He might just as well have been a complete foreigner to His people, so little did they appreciate Him. Thus He was rejected and nearly killed by the people of his native Nazareth, to whom He said: “Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted by his own country” (Luke 4.24). And he went on to give two examples of prophets who had to flee Israel, but who were believed in by foreigners: Elijah by the widow of Sarepta in Sidon, and Elisha by Naaman the Syrian (vv. 26-27). It is a striking fact that, if we except the case of St. John the Forerunner (“among them that are born of women there hath not rise a greater than John the Baptist” (Matthew 11.11)), Christ reserved His greatest praise for foreigners – even foreigners from among the occupying race. Thus of the Roman centurion whose servant He healed He said: “I have not found such great faith, no, not in Israel” (Matthew 8.10). And then He went on to prophesy that there would be many more like him: “Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of heaven. But

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352 Ilyin, Put' dukhovnogo obnovenia (The Path of Spiritual Renovation); quoted by Fr. Victor Potapov in Put' Dukhovnogo Obnovenia Rossii (The Path of the Spiritual Regeneration of Russia), p. 5 (MS).
the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (vv. 11-12).

The Jews fell away from God precisely because they placed the nation and its vain glory above God and His true glory. Their heresy consisted, not in the belief that “salvation is of the Jews” (John 4.22), - for the Lord Himself believed that, - but in the belief that salvation was exclusively for the Jews, and that no other nation was worthy to partake of that salvation. However, the religion of the Old Testament, though full of warnings against adopting the false religions of the Gentiles, nevertheless contained the seeds of true universalism. Thus God commanded Abraham to circumcise not only every member of his family, but also “him that is born in the house, or bought with the money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed” (Genesis 17.12). The Canaanite Rahab and the Moabite Ruth were admitted into the faith and nation of the Jews. King David believed that “all the ends of the earth shall remember and shall turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nation shall worship before Him” (Psalm 21.27). And King Solomon prayed that God would hear the prayer of non-Israelites who prayed in his temple, “that all people of the earth may know Thy name, and fear Thee, as doth Thy people Israel” (II Chronicles 6.33). And so by the time of Christ there was a large Greek-speaking diaspora which was spreading the faith of the Jews throughout the Mediterranean world.353

However, the Pharisees, who came to dominate Jewry, were interested only in converts to the cause of Jewish nationalism (cf. Matthew 23.15). It was the Pharisees who incited Christ’s death because He preached a different kind of spiritual and universalist Kingdom that was opposed to their nationalist dreams. And after His death, and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the scattering of the surviving Jews throughout the world, the Jews became possessed by an egoistical, chauvinist spirit that was expressed in such a way that, as Rabbi Solomon Goldman put it, "God is absorbed in the nationalism of Israel."354

The path of Jewish chauvinism has been followed, alas, by some Gentile Christian nations. Perhaps the first was the Armenians, whose anti-Chalcedonian and anti-Byzantine nationalism made theirs to be the first national church in the negative sense of that phrase – that is, a church that is so identified with the nation as to lose its universalist claims. Again, the Welsh, the remnants of the ancient Romano-British Church, refused to join with the Roman St. Augustine of Canterbury in the conversion of the pagan Anglo-Saxons because of their continuing hatred of the race that had driven them out of Eastern Britain. And so, as prophesied by St. Augustine, they

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353 According to Paul Johnson, there were about eight million Jews at the time of Christ - 10 per cent of the Roman Empire (A History of the Jews, London: Phoenix, 1987, 1995, p. 171). Dvorkin (op. cit., p. 41) gives a figure of four million in the diaspora, one million in Palestine.
were both defeated in battle and found themselves outside the union of Celtic and Roman Christianity that was achieved at the Synod of Whitby (664). They went into schism, and were regarded as schismatics by the Anglo-Saxon and Irish Churches. As an Irish canon put it, “the Britons [of Wales] are... contrary to all men, separating themselves both from the Roman way of life and the unity of the Church”.355 The English bishop, St. Aldhelm of Sherborne, described the behaviour of the schismatic Welsh thus: “Glorifying in the private purity of their own way of life, they detest our communion to such a great extent that they disdain equally to celebrate the Divine offices in church with us and to take course of food at table for the sake of charity. Rather,... they order the vessels and flagons [i.e. those used in common with clergy of the Roman Church] to be purified and purged with grains of sandy gravel, or with the dusky cinders of ash.. Should any of us, I mean Catholics, go to them for the purpose of habitation, they do not deign to admit us to the company of their brotherhood until we have been compelled to spend the space of forty days in penance... As Christ truly said: ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees; because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish’.”356

As we enter the second millennium of Christian history, we see nationalist passions becoming more widespread in the Orthodox world. Thus as the Armenians, Syrians and Copts separated from the empire, and came under the power of the Arabs, and then the Slavs and Romanians of the Balkan peninsula came under the power of the Turks, the Christian Roman Empire, while not giving up its universalist claims, came more and more to resemble a (rather small) Greek nation-state whose emperors had to struggle for occupancy of the imperial throne with the leaders of other nation-states – Tsar Kalojan of Bulgaria and Tsar Dušan of Serbia. However, the tearing apart of the empire along national lines was prevented, paradoxically, by the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. For the Turkish conquerors imposed their own rule over the whole of what had been the Eastern Roman Empire, including the warring Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbs. Moreover, by treating all the Orthodox Christians of their empire as a single millet, or “nation”, over whom they placed the Ecumenical Patriarchate as “ethnarch”, or civil-cum-ecclesiastical head, they reversed the fissiparous tendencies of the Balkan Orthodox, forcing them into an administrative unity that they had failed to achieve while free.

But it did not last. In 1766 Patriarch Samuel abolished the autonomous status of the Bulgarian Ochrid diocese as well as the Serbian patriarchate of Peč, and sent Greek bishops into the “reconquered” territories who served the


The Welsh Church remained in schism until Bishop Elbod of Bangor restored the northern Welsh to unity in 768 (the southerners followed in 777). Iona was brought into line early in the eighth century through the efforts of the holy Abbots Egbert and Adomnan.
liturgy only in Greek for their non-Greek-speaking flocks. Old wounds were reopened, and resentment against the Greeks among the Slavs became so strong that, for example, when the Serbs rebelled against the Turks under Karadjordje, and the Greek klephts offered their support, it was rejected. Again, when the Bulgarians rebelled against the Ecumenical Patriarchate to form their own autocephalous Church with dioceses even in Turkey, they were anathematized by a Council of the patriarchate in 1872 for adhering to the heresy of “phyletism”, i.e. nationalism. Finally, in the decades before the First World War, and especially in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans fought against each other with great savagery for control of Macedonia.

In relation to phyletism the Council of 1872 that anathematized the Bulgarians made the following decision: “…We have concluded that when the principle of racial division is juxtaposed with the teaching of the Gospel and the constant practice of the Church, it is not only foreign to it, but also completely opposed, to it. ‘We decree the following in the Holy Spirit: 1. We reject and condemn racial division, that is, racial differences, national quarrels and disagreements in the Church of Christ, as being contrary to the teaching of the Gospel and the holy canons of our blessed fathers, on which the holy Church is established and which adorn human society and lead it to Divine piety. 2. In accordance with the holy canons, we proclaim that those who accept such division according to races and who dare to base on it hitherto unheard-of racial assemblies are foreign to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and are real schismatics.”

Fine words! The problem was that the authors of these words were as guilty of phyletism as those whom they condemned! So who, in truth, was the schismatic?

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358 Konstantin Leontiev, a Grecophile, wrote: “In the ecclesiastical question the Bulgarians and the Greeks were equally cunning and wrong according to conscience. The difference lay in the fact that canonically, formally, in the sense precisely of abstract principles of tradition, the Greeks were more right” (“Khram i Tserkov” (Temple and Church), in Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavdom), Moscow, 1996, p. 165). And again: “Both you [Greeks] and the Bulgarians can equally be accused of phyletism, that is, in introducing ethnic interests into Church questions, and in the use of religion as a political weapon; but the difference lies in the fact that Bulgarian phyletism is defensive, while yours is offensive. Their phyletism seeks only to mark out the boundaries of their tribe; yours seeks to cross the boundaries of Hellenism.” (“Panslavism i Greki” (Pan-Slavism and the Greeks), op. cit., p. 46). D.A. Khomiakov wrote: “Is not ‘pride in Orthodoxy’ nothing other than the cultural pride of the ancient Greek? And, of course, the true ‘phyletism’, formulated for the struggle against the Bulgarians, is precisely the characteristic of the Greeks themselves to a much greater extent than the Bulgarians, Serbs, Syrians and others. With them it is only a protest against the basic phyletism of the Greeks. The contemporary Greek considers himself the exclusive bearer of pure Orthodoxy...” (Pravoslavie, Samoderzhavie, Naradnost’ (Orthodoxy,
However, this is not the important question for us now. The important question is: to what extent is the present disunity in the ranks of the True Orthodox the result of phyletism? And the answer is probably: not much, because divisions within the Churches are as numerous as those between them. Moreover, the blame for the lack of communion between different national Churches for most of the last century should with more justice be laid at the door of external factors – wars, revolutions, linguistic problems, persecutions – than of phyletism. Nor should we forget that there have been noble, if not very successful attempts to unite the national Churches – notably the Russian Church Abroad and the Greek Old Calendarists in 1969-71. Nevertheless, it would be rash to deny the strong influence of phyletism in some, if not all, True Orthodox jurisdictions. The most important question, therefore, is: how can the True Orthodox overcome the temptation of phyletism and translate

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Autocracy and Nationality), Minsk, 1997, p. 19). N.N. Glubokovsky wrote: “Greek nationalism historically merged with Orthodoxy and protected it by its own self-preservation, while it in its turn found a spiritual basis for its own distinctiveness. Orthodoxy and Hellenism were united in a close mutuality, which is why the first began to be qualified by the second. And Christian Hellenism realized and developed this union precisely in a nationalist spirit. The religious aspect was a factor in national strivings and was subjected to it, and it was not only the Phanariots [the inhabitants of Greek Constantinople] who made it serve pan-hellenic dreams. These dreams were entwined into the religious, Orthodox element and gave it its colouring, enduring the Byzantine patriarch with the status and rights of ‘ethnarch’ for all the Christian peoples of the East, and revering him as the living and animated image of Christ (Matthew Blastaris, in his 14th century Syntagma, 8). As a result, the whole superiority of the spiritual-Christian element belonging to Hellenism, and could be apprehended by others only through Hellenism. In this respect the enlightened Grigoriys Byzantios (or Byzantijsky, born in Constantinople, metropolitan of Chios from 1860, of Heraklion in 1888) categorically declared that ‘the mission of Hellenism is divine and universal’. From this source come the age-old and unceasing claims of Hellenism to exclusive leadership in Orthodoxy, as its possessor and distributor. According to the words of the first reply (in May, 1576) to the Tubingen theologians of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Jeremiah II (+1595), who spoke in the capacity of a ‘successor of Christ’ (introduction), the Greek ‘holy Church of God is the mother of the Churches, and, by the grace of God, she holds the first place in knowledge. She boasts without reproach in the purity of her apostolic and patristic decrees, and, while being new, is old in Orthodoxy, and is placed at the head’, which is why ‘every Christian church must celebrate the Liturgy exactly as she [the Greco-Constantinopolitan Church] does (chapter 13). Constantinople always displayed tendencies towards Church absolutism in Orthodoxy and was by no means well-disposed towards the development of autonomous national Churches, having difficulty in recognising them even in their hierarchical equality. Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Hellenism has done nothing to strengthen national Christian distinctiveness in the Eastern patriarchates and has defended its own governmental-hierarchical hegemony by all means, fighting against the national independence of Damascus (Antioch) and Jerusalem. At the end of the 16th century Constantinople by no means fully accepted the independence of the Russian Church and was not completely reconciled to Greek autocephaly (from the middle of the 19th century), while in relation to the Bulgarian Church they extended their nationalist intolerance to the extent of an ecclesiastical schism, declaring her (in 1872) in all her parts to be ‘in schism’. It is a matter of great wonder that the champions of extreme nationalism in the ecclesiastical sphere should then (in 1872) have recognized national-ecclesiastical strivings to be impermissible in others and even labelled them ‘phyletism’, a new-fangled heresy.” (‘Pravoslavie po ego sushchestvu’ (Orthodoxy in its essence), in Tserkov’ i Vremia (The Church and Time), 1991, pp. 5-6).
words into deeds, their confession of Universal Orthodoxy into its practical manifestation?

One fact should be recognized immediately: that it is neither possible nor desirable to turn the clock back to the time when the Church, after the falling away of the Judeo-Christians in the second century, was a community without national and historical traditions in the ordinary sense. It is not possible, because the Local Churches of Greece, Russia, Romania, Serbia, etc. are not going to disappear. And it is not desirable because it would be a catastrophe if they did disappear; for the national and historical traditions of these Local Churches are a priceless treasure which should be preserved at all cost, both for the sake of new generations born on the territories of these Local Churches who would most naturally become Christians by absorbing the local national tradition of Orthodoxy, and for the sake of converts from non-Orthodox lands. Moreover, experience has shown that those converts and their supporters among the “cradle Orthodox” who believe in escaping the phyletism of the old national Churches by creating new ones, such as the Orthodox Church of America, have in general been found prone to fall into heresy, especially ecumenism. And this is not surprising; for the Orthodox Church grows and develops in time, not through revolution, but through evolution, not through casting aside the experience and structures of earlier generations, but through accepting and renewing them.

At the same time, it is precisely on the mission-field, in such places as North America or Western Europe or Central Africa, that the dividedness of True Orthodoxy (as of World Orthodoxy) into a number of jurisdictions produces the most bitter fruits. “Cradle Orthodox”, who in general are not tempted to join any other faith than Orthodoxy, simply put up with the divisions in their homeland (although their children might not): potential converts in the mission-field are more likely to abandon Orthodoxy altogether. Somehow a way must be found of preserving both rootedness in the old national traditions and an unhindered entry for converts into the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church...

In this connection it will be worth briefly examining the experience of the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). Not planned by men, but brought into being through the Providence of God as a result of the Russian revolution and the huge emigration it created, ROCOR represented a new phenomenon in Church history: a truly global jurisdiction having its headquarters in the mission-field, and yet rooted firmly in the traditions of one national Church. Wherever the Russian émigrés went, – and they went to almost every corner of the globe, - they built churches that reflected with great faithfulness the traditions of their Russian homeland. And yet, since their homeland had fallen into the hands of the God-hating atheists, who had in turn enslaved the
officially hierarchy of the Russian Church, the émigrés were forced to become administratively independent.

In this they probably reflected the situation of the Apostles more closely than any ecclesiastical group since the Apostolic era. For the Apostles, too, were rooted in the traditions of a national Church, that of the Jews. And they, too, were both expelled from the homeland by persecution and found themselves compelled, both by their own lofty (i.e. super-territorial) status as Apostles and by the apostasy of their fellow-countrymen, to separate themselves completely from them and devote themselves exclusively to the Gentile mission-field. Moreover, in such a figure as the ROCOR Archbishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai, Western Europe and San Francisco we see a truly apostolic – as well as thoroughly Russian - man who preached to people of all nations and faiths, and saw in his apostolic work, not an accidental by-product of his forced exile from Russia, but the very purpose of that exile. For, as he wrote: “God allowed the Russian revolution to take place in order that the Russian Church might become purged and purified, and that the Orthodox Faith might be disseminated across the whole world.”

No less instructive is the fall of ROCOR. It would be correct, but superficial, to call this a fall into the heresy of ecumenism - ROCOR is now part of the Moscow Patriarchate, which is part of the World Council of Churches. A deeper analysis, however, would conclude that ROCOR fell into ecumenism because of its almost simultaneous fall into phyletism.

What is the meaning of this paradox?

Commentators have noted that, after the death of St. John Maximovich in 1966, and especially after the Third All-Diaspora Council in Jordanville in 1974, the ROCOR hierarchs began to be concerned more with the preservation of “Russianness (russkost’)” than with the confession of the True Faith against the heresies of sergianism and ecumenism. Missionary work among non-Russians was not a priority for most of them, although St. Philaret of New York, who became first-hierarch in 1964, managed to keep the door open both for converts and for “cradle Orthodox” of other races who were fleeing ecumenism until his death in 1985. True, ecumenism was anathematized in 1983; but the true consequences of the anathema were denied, because these included a continuation and deepening of the break with the apostate “Mother Church” of the Moscow Patriarchate in the homeland – and union with the Russians in the homeland, whether they were truly Orthodox or not, was more important for many in ROCOR than union with the True Orthodox of other races... With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989-91, and the return of ROCOR to Russia, the crisis deepened. It was not that so much that a return was wrong in principle – the Apostles would undoubtedly have returned to their homeland if they had been able to – but to convert them, not submit to them. However, weakened by sentimental phyletism, the Russian “apostles”
did not have the heart consistently to tell their countrymen the harsh truth they needed to hear, and ended up by joining them in their apostasy in 2007.

This tragedy is a clear historical illustration of the truth first propounded by Konstantin Leontiev in the nineteenth century, that liberalism or cosmopolitanism (ecumenism) and nationalism (phyletism) are two sides of the same coin. Nationalism, he argued, is closely related to liberalism, which is simply the political version of ecumenism. Both nationalism and liberalism are rooted in the French revolution – liberalism in its early, Masonic phase (1789-91), and nationalism in its later, Napoleonic phase, when the idea enshrined in the Declaration of Human Rights that the nation is the source of all authority was translated into the idea of France as the nation par excellence. Both liberalism and nationalism insist on the essential equality of men (in the case of liberalism) or nations (in the case of nationalism); both erase individual differences, undermining individuality in the name of individualism, hierarchy in the name of egalitarianism. But this levelling down is only the flip side of a creeping up, as each nation strives to keep up with the others, fearing that while all nations are theoretically equal some are in fact more equal than others... According to Leontiev, the nations’ striving to be independent of each other was based precisely on their desire to be like every other nation: “Having become politically liberated, they are very glad, whether in everyday life or in ideas, to be like everyone else... So much for the national development, which makes them all similar to contemporary Europeans, which spreads... petty rationalism, egalitarianism, religious indifference, European bourgeois uniformity in tastes and manners: machines, pantaloons, frock-coats, top hats and demagogy!”

As Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), second first-hierarch of ROCOR, said: “The nation, this collective organism, is just as inclined to deify itself as the individual man. The madness of pride grows in this case in the same progression, as every passion becomes inflamed in society, being refracted in thousands and millions of souls.” Thus there is a similarity in motivation in all three of the great evils: individualism, nationalism and ecumenism. The origin of all of them is prideful self-assertion: “I am as good as you”, or “my nation is as good as your nation”, or “my religion is as good as your religion”... When self-assertion fails to achieve its aim, it is followed by a (temporary) compromise which preserves everyone’s pride intact: “We are equally good”, “our nations are equally good”, and “our religions are equally good”...

So everyone is happy, and the only thing lost is – the truth. We believe, however, that there is a real difference between individuals and nations – not by nature, but because each individual or nation uses or abuses his or its

360 Gribanovsky, Besedy s sobstvennym serdtsem (Conversations with my own heart), Jordanville, 1998, p. 33.
freewill in relation to the truth. As for the truth itself, that is one and immutable, and the religion that expresses it is intrinsically and forever superior to all others...

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So ROCOR, the first experiment in truly global True Orthodoxy, failed. But did it have to fail? And does not its at any rate temporary success in preserving True Orthodoxy as a global missionary religion free from the extremes both of ecumenism and of phyletism indicate the need for another experiment on similar lines?

In order to answer this question we need to look briefly at other historical experiments in ecclesiastical globalism. One, the most famous, is that of the Roman papacy. A second is that of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. A third is the American Church before the revolution.

We have to admit that for many centuries, - essentially until the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s, when traditional Roman Catholicism, as many Roman Catholics ruefully admitted, surrendered to the New World Order, - the papacy was able to maintain its status as a truly global religion without falling into either of the twin evils of ecumenism and phyletism. But it was able to do that, while retaining its administrative unity, only by falling into a still deeper heresy that is truly satanic in its pride: the heresy of papal infallibility.

There are two aspects, or stages, to this heresy. The first is the idea that Rome is the ultimate court of appeal in ecclesiastical disputes, so that the Pope is in fact the single head of the Church on earth, having jurisdiction over all the Local Churches. We find this idea as early as the fifth century, in the writings of Pope St. Leo the Great, for whom the universality and one-man-rule of the Roman Empire naturally required a parallel universality and one-man-rule in the Orthodox Church – that is, the Church of the Roman Empire – that is, the Church of Rome. Although in error in this, St. Leo was too tactful, too Orthodox in other ways, and too genuinely concerned for the welfare of the Church to put his ideas into practice, or to lead them to their logical conclusion – infallibility.\textsuperscript{361} It was a later Pope, Gregory the Great, who pointed out that if there is in essence only one jurisdiction in the Orthodox Church headed by an Ecumenical Pope or Patriarch, then if that Pope or Patriarch falls, the whole of the Church falls with him. So either the Church

\textsuperscript{361} However, we should not forget his harsh treatment of St. Hilary, Archbishop of Arles, who disputed his ideas in the West and was thrown into prison for his protest, nor the instructions that he gave to his legates at the Fourth Ecumenical Council: that they should preside over the Council, and present St. Leo's \textit{Tome} at the beginning as the absolute truth which could not be disputed or even discussed. Moreover, the legates declared to the Council that the Pope had jurisdiction “over all the Churches”. The Eastern bishops decided to ignore all this...
can fall away, which is contrary to the Saviour’s promise that it will prevail over the gates of hell until the end of time, or the head of the Church must be endowed with infallibility. But this was denied by St. Gregory.

However, later Popes – notably Nicholas I and Gregory VII - embraced this second aspect or stage of the heresy, and thereby fell away from the unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Moreover, Gregory VII adopted what we may call the third and final stage of the papist heresy by proclaiming himself head both of the Church and of the State. And this, too, is a logical consequence of the original error. For “symphony” between Church and State, Roman Pope and Roman Emperor, is fine as long as it lasts, but what is to be done if the empire falls or the emperor ceases to be Orthodox? The only answer, according to the heretical popes, if their global mission was to be assured, was for the Pope to assume authority over the State as well as the Church, proclaiming himself, in effect, the absolute ruler of all things on earth...

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople is unlikely to fall into the papist heresy in this extreme form, if only because, for the last 45 years, she has acknowledged the heretical papacy as her elder sister and the first of the Churches of Christ throughout the world. So the most that the Ecumenical Patriarch can hope for is to be a highly honoured deputy to the supreme ruler. However, the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s globalism is significant in two ways.

First, he is quite clearly attempting to subdue all the Orthodox Churches to his sole rule. This trend became clear in July, 1993, when Patriarch Bartholomew convened a “great and super-perfect (παντελῆς) Synod” to judge Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem and certain of his collaborators for their supposed interference in the Australian Archdiocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and certain other questions. It was assumed, completely contrary to the canons, that Jerusalem was “interfering” in Australia on the grounds that the Ecumenical Patriarchate had sole jurisdiction in all lands not directly within the boundaries of any other patriarchate, and therefore in Australia also, in spite of the fact that the Jerusalem Patriarchate had had a mission in Australia since 1892, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate – only since 1924.

The clear implication of this action is that only the Ecumenical Patriarchate has jurisdiction in Australia, Western Europe, North and South America, Asia and Antarctica. This is not quite the whole oikoumene – but not far off it! Moreover, if we remember that Bartholomew is also contesting the Russian Church’s jurisdiction in the Ukraine and Estonia, and that he has divided the

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362 Or perhaps he can follow the example of Patriarch John the Cappadocian in 518, who, after signing an extraordinarily papist libellus of Pope Hormisdas, added the phrase: “I proclaim that the see of the Apostle Peter [Rome] and the see of this imperial city [Constantinople] are one” (Dvorkin, op. cit., p. 399). In that way he could become co-ruler of the universe!
Russian diocese in London, it will become clear that even the territories of the other established patriarchates are not safe from his rapacity!

Since Jerusalem’s capitulation to Bartholomew at the “super-perfect” Synod, the Eastern patriarchates are effectively in his pocket. As A.D. Delimbasis writes, Bartholomew is “trying to put Jerusalem [under] Antioch, Antioch under Alexandria, Alexandria under Constantinople and Constantinople under the heresiarch Pope...”363 As for the territories of Russia, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia, they were they all under the jurisdiction of Constantinople at one time or another in the past, so why, he could argue (but does not feel powerful enough to say yet), should they not be so now?

But the most original aspect of Bartholomew’s globalist ecclesiology is his concept of the supposedly “symphonic” relationship between the Church that is built on the Rock, which is Christ, and the world that is built on sand, which “lieth in evil”. The Emperor Justinian understood “symphony” as existing between the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Empire, and the Popes followed him in this: they did not pretend that there could be any “symphony” between the Church and the world in any other form. But in a lecture given at the London School of Economics in 2005 Patriarch Bartholomew introduced a new, unheard-of understanding of Justinian’s famous concept in the context of a comparison between two models of Church-State relations in contemporary Europe.

According to Marcus Plested, the patriarch argued that “either model... is perfectly acceptable from a religious perspective. What is more important is that governments and faith communities should work together in the common cause of toleration, respect and mutual understanding. We need, in other words, to find a model of positive co-operation and not mere separation or indeed exclusive patronage of a particular religious tradition.

“He called this new model one of ‘symphonia’ – working together in unison. Symphonia is an old notion deriving from the Byzantine model of harmony between Church and empire – both instituted by God to provide, respectively, for the spiritual and temporal needs of the people.

“The Patriarch has given this ancient notion a new interpretation, turning it into a startlingly prophetic call for a re-imagining of the relation between religion and politics free from the tired dichotomies of the 19th and 20th centuries.

“Recent world events, from September 11, 2001, and July 7 this year, to the riots on the streets of Paris, have reminded us that religion is not simply going to disappear as a major social and political issue. It remains a deep-seated

force. The great virtue of the Patriarch’s lecture was to provide a vision for the channelling of all this religious energy to the service of the greater social good, for the welfare of those of all faiths and those of none.”

So what is the State with which Bartholomew, as Ecumenical Patriarch of the East in subjection to the Ecumenical Pope of the West, wishes to be in symphony? There is no State in the ordinary sense of the word that could be the partner to such a Global Patriarch. It could only be a Global State, or World Government – the government of that “international community” of western nations that likes to speak as if it were the whole world. However, this World Government or “New World Order” is not wedded to any particular faith, unless that faith is the purely secular one of democracy and human rights. Hence the need for the patriarch to emphasise in his lecture (according to the newspaper report) that his symphonic model does not involve the “exclusive patronage of a particular religious tradition”, but is aimed at “the welfare of those of all faiths and those of none”.

But what concord or symphony can there be between Orthodoxy and heresy, between faith and unbelief, between the Church and the world?

In his *Novella 131* the Emperor Justinian decreed: “The Church canons have the same force in the State as the State laws: what is permitted or forbidden by the former is permitted or forbidden by the latter. Therefore crimes against the former cannot be tolerated in the State according to State legislation.” This is true symphony: the State recognises that it is pursuing the same aim as the Church, and therefore legislates in all things in accordance with the legislation of the Church. For, as Fr. Alexis Nikolin writes, “in their single service to the work of God both the Church and the State constitute as it were one whole, one organism – ‘unconfused’, but also ‘undivided’. In this lay the fundamental difference between Orthodox ‘symphony’ and Latin ‘papocaesarism’ and Protestant ‘caesaropapism’…”

Bartholomew, however, is both a Latin papocaesarist through his submission to the Pope and a Protestant caesaropapist through his submission to the Protestant-dominated New World Order.

Perhaps he is something even worse… In Russia, the main accusation against the founder of the present-day Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Sergius, was that he proclaimed the joys and sorrows of the God-fighting Communist State to be the joys and sorrows of the Church. In other words, he identified the interests of the Orthodox Church with those of the Communists. His successors even called Stalin “the new Constantine”… This heresy has been called “Sergianism”, and has been anathematised by the True Orthodox Church of Russia. Has not Patriarch Bartholomew become a sergianist in that, under the guise of the Orthodox doctrine of the symphony of powers, he has

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364 *The Times of London*, November 26, 2005, p. 82.
in fact identified the interests of the Church with the interests of the antichristian world, thereby bringing closer the rule of the Antichrist himself, for whom “symphony” will undoubtedly mean “identity” under his sole rule?

Let us now turn to our third historical example, that of the American Church just before the revolution of 1917... The Orthodox Church in North America was composed of a number of dioceses each with a bishop representing a single national Orthodox tradition – Russian, Greek, Syrian, etc. However, these dioceses were not only in full communion with each other (unlike the different dioceses of True Orthodoxy in North America today), but also recognized the head of one of the dioceses – Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin), the future Russian patriarch and hieromartyr – to be their head (which is not the case in the American dioceses of World Orthodoxy today). In this way the whole group of dioceses across the whole vast expanse of North America presented the image of a single metropolitan area, in which the spirit, if not the exact letter of the holy canons on church administration was preserved, and in which neither the possibility of vigorous missionary activity to the “native Americans”, nor the links of the émigrés to their native lands and traditions, was lost. Unfortunately, this very promising experiment was destroyed as a result of the Russian revolution, and the conflicting political and national demands this produced. It was replaced, on the one hand by a break-down in the unity of the American Church into independent national jurisdictions, and on the other by half-baked and premature attempts at an American Autocephalous Church having no dependence on any “old” national Church in Europe, in the form of the OCA and HOCNA.

Of course, the American example was not truly global. However, it could be the pattern for a truly global solution if replicated elsewhere. Thus we could see a whole series of inter-locking metropolias on the American model, each with a first hierarch belonging to one or another national Church (for example: Russian in North America, Serbian in Western Europe, Greek in Central Africa). Eventually some of these might become new, truly autocephalous patriarchates. And globalism might be turned to the advantage of the Orthodox: in a world united as never before by a single culture and great ease of communication, the structure of the Church might come to resemble again the collegial net of metropolias (or patriarchates) that St. Cyprian of Carthage spoke about in The Unity of the Church.

What are the prospects of some such solution ever being realized in practice?

Everything depends on two factors, one internal and the other external. The internal factor is the real, and not merely formal freedom of the True Orthodox from the equal and opposite heresies of ecumenism and phyletism, their real, and not merely formal faith that there is only “one Lord, one Faith, on Baptism” (Ephesians 4.4), and that all men, of all races, can enter this unity.
If they are free from these heresies, both of which in their different ways destroy the possibility of real missionary work, then they will have a true thirst for the conversion of the heterodox, and will work together for the creation of structures that support and facilitate the missionary drive.

The external factor is the political situation. History shows that the best conditions, both for the unity of existing Orthodox Christians of different races, and for the spread of Orthodox Christianity to other races, are provided by the Orthodox multi-national empires, such as Byzantium and Russia. Although the increasing power of the antichristian New World Order does not bode well for the resurrection of the Orthodox Empire in the short term, we must not write off the possibility of such a resurrection in the longer term, especially when several prophecies assert that it will happen. With God all things are possible, and God can make even the remotest possibility reality if He sees that there are men willing to work together with Him to make it reality. And so here, as always, the external depends on the internal… After all, while the terrible Diocletian persecution of the years 305 to 308 was reaching its climax, in a remote province of the Roman Empire the Roman legions were raising St. Constantine onto their shields. And who is to say that the Church today, having survived a persecution far longer and still more cruel than that of Diocletian, may not be on the verge of a new Constantinian era, when the prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the Church, will be fulfilled: “This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to all the world, and then the end will come…” (Matthew 24.14).

Vladimir Moss.
The Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos.