

# ORTHODOX UNITY

by the Commission on Orthodox Unity, Andrew Kopan, Chairperson

## Preface

At the Third Annual Conference of the Orthodox Christian Laity held in Chicago in November, 1990, Project For Orthodox Renewal was launched. Seven commissions defined the project, and were appointed to study matters/issues/problems confronting and of concern to the Orthodox Christian faithful in America in the 1990's. The Commission Report on Orthodox Unity follows.

The Commission on Orthodox Unity was composed of lay persons from several Orthodox jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Chicago Area. It was further assisted by a national advisory group of concerned Orthodox, both clerical and lay. The Commission approached its work with missionary zeal and met diligently over a two and a half-year period. It deliberated the multifaceted problem of canonical Orthodox unity from many perspectives starting from Scriptural and Patristic texts, the nature of the Church and its unity, as well as applicable canon law, and developed a historical profile of the present "disunited" Orthodox jurisdictions in America. Seriousness, respect and a sense of dedication fueled all aspects of the discussion and deliberations which were preceded by the invocation for guidance by the Holy Spirit.

From the outset, the Commission recognized its own fallible shortcomings and the always present pitfalls of arrogance. In embarking on its task, the point of departure was the existing situation which many feel must be either justified or changed. Since no adequate position on the perceived "problem of disunity" has been articulated and forthcoming from the hierarchy, the laity, in its role as the "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9), has exercised not only its right but its obligation, reminding the Church when it is remiss, for whatever reasons, in exercising spiritual leadership. If Truth is the pronouncement, promise and province of the Church, then its pursuit, perfection and promulgation is no less the responsibility of the laity who also comprise that Body.

Thus, this Report represents a consensus of the views of the members of the Commission and, in the search for that Truth, the Commission believes it reflects the thoughts and opinions of the general membership of the Orthodox Christian Laity. As such, it is a "grass roots" input to the unity question of concern to many.

The deliberations of the Commission on Unity arrived at three models for achieving jurisdictional/administrative/organizational unity. They constitute the core of this Report. They are presented to all the Orthodox faithful — clergy and laity alike — with humility and no pretense for having exhausted all scenarios to achieve unity. It is prayerfully hoped that this Report will be received with the seriousness that permeated its creation and will become a springboard for discussion and, ultimately, for decision and a positive course of action on the part of all. This Report will be circulated broadly to hierarchy, clergy and lay leadership of the several Orthodox jurisdictions in America.

The Commission wishes to express its appreciation to the many individuals, clerical and lay, who have contributed to this Report and provided their valuable expertise to critique it. Any possible errors in the text are the responsibility of the Commission and not of these individuals. The Commission also expresses to the OCL Board of Directors its deep appreciation for its cooperation and support.

*Behold how good and pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity.*

**Psalms 133:1**

COMMISSION ON ORTHODOX UNITY

Feast of the Annunciation  
March 25, 1993



# ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA: THE UNITY WE SEEK

*By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews and Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*  
1 Corinthians 12:15

## INTRODUCTION

### Charge to the Commission

When the Commission on Orthodox Unity was appointed in the Autumn of 1990, its members were all aware of their solemn responsibility before God and man. Indeed, of all the commissions appointed by OCL, this one is seriously charged with the difficult and even painful task of confronting the reality of Orthodoxy in America. Of course, the temptation to gloss over the unpleasant and nettlesome facts were great. However, all of the Commission members agreed that the ultimate commitment to Christ and His Church lay in affirming the truth precisely because, for Orthodox Christians, Truth itself is a Person, namely Jesus Christ. In this manner, the members have prayerfully sought the Lord, Himself.

*I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.*  
John 17:20-21

In Christ's High Priestly prayer before His life-giving Passion and Death on the Cross, He speaks again and again of the unity of His disciples. The prerequisite for true discipleship is unity with others in and through Christ. In fact, John 13's description of the betraying Judas is cast in terms of his separating from the other disciples. In short, true discipleship is defined by and demands unity with Christ and with one another.

As Orthodox Christians in America, we are sadly aware that the inner reality and the external manifestation of that reality are at variance. No one can seriously view Orthodoxy in this country and judge otherwise. Yet, for various complex and sundry reasons, the situation continues (and grows worse). Such a spiritual crisis deeply affects every Orthodox Christian. Accordingly, we have undertaken the task of both detailing the Church's past and present, especially as it exists in America, as well as attempting some tentative and provisional recommendations for the future. Obviously, some will view all this as audacious and ask, "Who gave you the authority?" The decision to offer this report flows from the OCL's concern for the future of the Church and from the Commission members' concrete and personal experience in the Church and their serious and prayerful reflecting on the Word of God. Further, the witness of the Holy Fathers is conclusive as to the absolute necessity for unity in the Church.

Finally, the most telling and condemnatory evidence lies in the misapplication of Orthodox ecclesiology here in America. As a result of skewing the facts, the results cannot be but warped. The truth is that no Orthodox Christian in America is living a "normal," canonically correct life. All experience the reality of our abnormal situation. This Report humbly and prayerfully attempts to address this very serious matter.

### Rationale For Seeking Unity

This Report is specifically directed to the People of God, Orthodox believers in America. The question of unity affects their entire life in the Church on a number of levels. Primarily, the canonical union of the Orthodox jurisdictions here will bring the American Church in line with the richest possibilities of Orthodox life. Much of the Church's difficulty in witnessing in the United States lies in the dissonant, uncooperative nature of the present status of Orthodoxy in America. Consequently, we lose a unique opportunity given to us by historical and spiritual circumstances which is the mission to the West. "A universal missionary Orthodox Church simply cannot endure or survive for long within an American context without unity" (Papadakis 187).

A narrowly constructed, ethnically-centered Orthodoxy betrays an unfortunate sectarian tendency which renders other work ineffectual or meaningless. Scarce human and financial resources are divided into duplicative projects in Christian education, philanthropy and mission outreach. Orthodox jurisdictions "do things," but not the Orthodox as a whole. Particularly telling is Orthodoxy's lack of a moral-ethical voice in the American arena. Many perceive that Orthodoxy either has no moral positions or else that they are simply unknown. The net result is the same. Orthodoxy remains America's best-kept secret.

The present predicament is caused by human error and misperception. The solution can only come from us. Once we have prayerfully and sincerely determined who we are and what our mission is, the light will appear at the end of the tunnel. "Our destiny is to witness to Orthodoxy in the West. It is our duty, as informed churchmen and laity, to make the solidarity of our future a genuine reality now. To remind our hierarchy of this fact firmly, persistently, and politely is our prerogative as members of the Catholic Church of Christ" (Papadakis 188)

## ORTHODOX ECCLESIOLOGY AND CHURCH UNITY

### Introduction to Scriptural Texts

The following citations from the New Testament are striking exponents of the unity theme which course through the Gospel, Acts of the Apostles, as well as the Epistles. Of particular significance is the fact that all four Gospels record sayings and exhortations of Christ, Himself, on the subject, especially in the context, both of His forthcoming Passion and His last words to the apostles before His Ascension. In both cases, the Lord reminds His followers that unity is characteristic of the Church, an essential mark of its work and mission. These selections from the Acts and the Epistles are proof positive that, in the development of the early Church, the issue of unity was paramount. This concern is expressed in concrete terms in the communications which the Epistle writers addressed. The words of Christ and the expressions of the early Church community form an eloquent and convincing call for unity.

### Scriptural References to Church Unity (RSV)

#### John 17:20-23

*I do not pray for these only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. The Glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou has loved me.*

#### Matthew 28:18-20

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."*

#### Mark 16:15-16

*And he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

#### Luke 24:45-47

*Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."*

#### John 7:33-38

*Jesus then said, "I shall be with you a little longer, and then I go to him who sent me; you will seek me and you will not find me; where I am you cannot come." The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we shall not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? What does he mean by saying 'You will seek me and you will not find me,' and, 'Where I am you cannot come'?" On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'."*

#### John 10:16

*And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd.*

#### John 15:18-21

*If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world*

would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all this they will do to you on my account, because they do not know him who sent me.

**Acts 10: 34-35**

*And Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."*

**I Corinthians 1: 22-24**

*For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

**I Corinthians 12:12-13**

*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

**I Corinthians 14:19**

*Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than the thousand words in a tongue.*

**Galatians 3:27-28**

*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

**Ephesians 4:4-6**

*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.*

**Colossians 3:9-11**

*Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.*

**Introduction to Patristic Texts**

The following Patristic selections all center around the theme of unity. After Christ's Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Church grew rapidly throughout the civilized world, spreading to the major cities of the Roman Empire. Certain Christian teachers and preachers became famous for their knowledge and defense of the Faith. In the changing circumstances and cultural tumult of those early centuries, these "Church Fathers" acquired a pre-eminence of authority and veracity precisely because they added to the essential Gospel message. Indeed, they formed the direct lineage from Apostolic times, since, taken as a whole, these authorities continued to witness to Christ in their own times, and, down to ours, in an infallible fashion. In every passage cited of the Fathers — Eastern and Western — the focus is the unity of the Church. These holy men knew, from direct and concrete experience, that all else in the life of the Church depended upon it, is nurtured by it. In short, for the Fathers, to be in Christ, to be Christian, is to be one. There could not be any substitution or obfuscation — One Faith, One Lord, One Baptism.

**Patristic References to Church Unity (Jurgens)**

**St. Ignatius of Antioch: Letter to the Smyrnaeans (1, 1)**

*I give glory to Jesus Christ, the God who has made you wise; for I have observed that you are set in faith unshakable, as if nailed to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ in body and in soul; and that you are confirmed in love by the Blood of Christ, firmly believing in regard to our Lord that He is truly of the family of David according to the flesh (1), and God's Son by the will and power of God, truly born of a Virgin, baptized by John so that all justice might be fulfilled by Him (2), (2) in the time of Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch truly nailed in the flesh on our behalf, — and we are of the fruit of His divinely blessed passion, — so that by*

means of His resurrection He might raise aloft a banner (3) for His saints and believers in every age, whether among the Jews or among the gentiles, united in a single body in His Church (4).

**Hermas: The Shepherd (Par. 9, 17, 4)**

*(The shepherd said:) "All the nations which dwell under heaven, when they heard and believed, were called by the name of the Son of God. When, therefore, they received the seal, they had one understanding and one mind; and their faith became one, and one their love; and they carried the spirits of the virgins along with the name; and that is why the structure of the tower was in one splendid color like the sun (5)."*

**Hermas: Letter to Diognetus (6, 1)**

*To put it briefly, what the soul is in the body, that the Christians are in the world. (2) The soul is spread through all parts of the body, and Christians through all the cities of the world. (3) The soul dwells in the body, but it is not of the body; and Christians dwell in the world, though they are not of the world. (4) The soul is invisible, but it is sheathed in a visible body. Christians are seen, for they are in the world; but their religion remains invisible.*

**St. Justin the Martyr: Dialogue with Trypho the Jew (117)**

*(Justin) "There is not one single race of men — whether barbarians or Greeks, or of whatever name they may be called, either wagon-dwellers or those who are called homeless or herds-men who dwell in tents — among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to God the Creator of all things, in the name of the crucified Jesus."*

**St. Irenaeus: Against Heresies (1, 10, 2)**

*For, while the languages of the world are diverse, nevertheless, the authority of the tradition is one and the same.*

*Neither do the Churches among the Germans believe otherwise or have another tradition, nor do those among the Iberians, nor among the Celts, nor away in the East, nor in Egypt, nor in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the world. But just as the sun, that creature of God, is one and the same throughout the whole world, so also the preaching of the truth shines everywhere and enlightens all men who desire to come to a knowledge of truth.*

*Nor will any of the rulers in the Churches, whatever his power of eloquence, teach otherwise, for no one is above the teacher (6); nor will he who is weak in speaking detract from the tradition. For the faith is one and the same, and cannot be amplified by one who is able to say much about it, nor can it be diminished by one who can say but little.*

**St. Irenaeus: Against Heresies (3, 4, 1)**

*If there should be a dispute over some kind of question, ought we not have recourse to the most ancient Churches in which the Apostles were familiar, and draw from them what is clear and certain in regard to that question? What if the Apostles had not in fact left writings to us? Would it not be necessary to follow the order of tradition, which was handed down to those to whom they entrusted the Churches?*

**Tertullian: The Demurrer Against Heresies (20, 7)**

*Any group of things must be classified according to its origin. Therefore, although the Churches are so many and so great, there is but the one primitive Church of the Apostles, from which all others are derived. (8) Thus, all are primitive, all are apostolic, because all are one. The communication of peace, the title of brotherhood, and the bond of hospitality prove her unity: (9) privileges which no other principle governs except the one tradition of the same sacrament (4).*

**Eusebius Pamphilus: History of the Church (3, 1, 1)**

*The holy Apostles and disciples of the Savior, however, were scattered throughout the whole world. Thomas, as tradition holds, received Parthia by lot; Andrew, Scythia; John, Asia, busying himself among the people there until he died at Ephesus. (2) Peter, however, seems to have preached to the Jews in the diaspora in the Pontus and in Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and in Asia; and at last, having come to Rome, he was crucified head downwards, the manner in which he himself had thought it fitting to suffer. Is it needful to say anything of Paul, who fulfilled the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and afterwards in the time of Nero was martyred in Rome?*

### **St. Cyril of Jerusalem: Anti-Clerical Lectures (18, 26)**

*And if ever you are visiting in cities, do not inquire simply where the House of the Lord is — for the others, sects of the impious, attempt to call their dens the Houses of the Lord — nor ask merely where the Church is, but where is the Catholic Church. For this is the name peculiar to this holy Church, the Mother of us all, which is the Spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God.*

### **Nationalism and Phyletism in the Church**

Our Lord established one church, ". . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism," (Ephesians 4:5). From the very beginning, there were divisions, theological and doctrinal, most of which have been dealt with and resolved by the Ecumenical Councils of the first seven centuries. But some of these divisions have had a nationalistic or ethnic base. This was first manifested in Apostolic Times when early Jewish Christians conceived the new faith for those of the Jewish world only. The defiance of St. Paul, who became the "Apostle to the Gentiles," (Acts 15) and the decrees of the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem resolved that issue — that Christianity was indeed for all people: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:27-28).

But notwithstanding this Biblical exhortation, nationalism or phyletism always reared its divisive head in both parts of the Universal Undivided Church of the first ten centuries as evident by the rise of "national" churches in Spain and France and in Egypt and other parts of the East. Yet by the time the Council of Chalcedon (451) and certainly by the two following Ecumenical Councils of Constantinople II (553) and Constantinople III (680), the assembled bishops were seen as representing five patriarchates — Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

Authentic ecumenicity required the participation of these five patriarchates, either in person, or by proxy, or, at least, as in the case of Pope Vigilius and the Council of 553, in the form of a *post factum* approval. This system of *pentarchy*, the governing of the Universal Church by five rulers, equal in dignity, but related to each other by a strict order (taxis) of precedence, was a Byzantine vision enshrined in the legislation of Emperor Justinian I (Meyendorff Imperial Unity 327). The only exception to this was the Church of Cyprus, a lonely survivor of the old provincial system which was declared autocephalous in 432 by the Third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus (Callinikos 57).

But the unity of the Church was not destined to last long. Already in the early centuries of the Church there were forces creating divisions. The rise of heresies such as Monophysitism and Monotheletism, among others, brought about a rupture in the unity of the Church resulting in the creation of schismatic churches (now called Non-Chalcedonian or Oriental Orthodox churches) during the 5th and 7th centuries.

The Great Schism of 1054 between East and West was, of course, a significant rupture which brought about the end of the Undivided Church of the first ten centuries resulting in the creation of two major rival churches — Greek Orthodoxy in the East and Roman Catholicism in the West. Later in the 15th century another rupture was caused in the Western Church by the Protestant Reformation.

Following the travails of the Byzantine Empire in its attempts to stave off its imminent collapse under the Ottoman Turks, the Church of Russia, which had always been administratively dependent on the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Constantinople and whose Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia was generally a Greek, rebelled against the authority of Byzantium and in 1448 selected its own metropolitan to replace Isidore the Greek who had signed the Unionist Agreement with Rome at the Council of Florence. However, the new metropolitan, Jonas of Ryazan, was not acceptable to Constantinople and the rupture continued until 1587 when Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople visited Russia and established the new "Patriarch of Moscow" to replace Rome which had fallen away because of the Great Schism and thus restoring the *pentarchy*. Thus, the Church of Russia became the first national church of Orthodoxy (Meyendorff Byzantine Tradition 45-60).

In 1830, following the successful Greek Revolution and the independence of Greece from Turkish domination, the religious authorities of the new nation, not wishing to be under the control of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was subject to Turkish suzerainty, declared the Church of Greece autocephalous, thus establishing the second "national church" of the modern era. This act was not recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the Greek church remained in schism until 1850, when the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized a *fait accompli* (Sherrard, 182-199).

This pattern was to recur over and over again as one by one the Balkan nations gained their independence from the Turks. Thus Serbia became formally autocephalous in 1879; Romania in 1885; Albania in 1937; and Bulgaria in 1945, after a long schism lasting from 1870. Georgia became autocephalous in 1917. This chain of events created the

modern "national" autocephalous churches which today comprise the worldwide Orthodox Church (See Directory, Appendix I).

### **Synod of Constantinople (1872) and Condemnation of Phyletism**

It was the Bulgarian Schism, however, which precipitated for the part of the Church as to the precise role of nationalism or ethnicity (then known as phyletism) in the life of the Church. The claim of the Bulgarians that on the basis of their ethnicity they were entitled to be an autocephalous church despite the fact that at that time it did not comprise a national state (still being part of the Ottoman Empire), unlike the newly independent Balkan states, provoked the Ecumenical Patriarchate to convene a Synod at Constantinople in 1872 which was attended by the heads or representatives of all the autocephalous churches of Orthodoxy. Presided over by Patriarch Anthimus VI of Constantinople, the Synod condemned as heresy the acceptance of *phyletism* or ethnicity as being the decisive factor in church organization.

Conforming to that decision is a condition for Orthodox Christian unity in today's world, and remains the basic principle regarding church unity — that is, that the organization of the Church along ethnic lines in the same geographical area is a heresy (Meyendorff *Vision of Unity* 67 & 69). The ethnic divisions of Orthodoxy existing in America today, are thus clearly inconsistent with the decision of the 1872 Synod of Constantinople.

### **Relevant Canon Law on Unity in the Church (Schaff and Wace; Cummings; Mastrantonis)**

As there are scriptural and patristic references to Church unity, likewise there are similar references to be found in canon law. Of particular importance to this theme are canons 8 and 15 of the 1st Ecumenical Council (Nicaea, 325); canon 2 of the 2nd Ecumenical Council (Constantinople, 381); canon 5 of the 4th Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon, 451), and canons 14 and 15 of the Synod of the Holy Apostles (Jerusalem, 1st century).

Canon law, of course, is the product of the Ecumenical Synods or Councils which were convened in the first seven centuries of the early Undivided Church to combat the rising heresies that threatened the unity of the Church. According to the conciliar system that prevails in the Orthodox Church, the right of administration of the Church is given not only to clergymen, but even to the laymen, a system which has been preserved to this day. In the Orthodox Church, the laymen are not excluded from the administrative functions of the Church. They are especially prominent in the election of candidates for clergymen and in their indispensable cooperation in the formulation of the "Conscience of the Church," which is the unshakable basis of conciliarity and supreme authority in the Orthodox Catholic Church.

Thus, on the basis of the principle of the oneness of the Church, the highest administrative tribunal in the ecclesiastical hierarchy and government is the Ecumenical Synod, the General Assembly of the bishops of the entire Church. The decrees of such a Synod or Council, when definitely accepted by the "Conscience of the Church," constitutes the supreme authority in the Orthodox Church.

The decrees of the Ecumenical Synods are of two types: One refers to doctrinal subjects, usually in the form of statements of faith called *oroi*; the other refers to the administration or juridical subjects in decrees usually called *canons*. The *oroi* (for example, the Creed, the doctrine of the two natures in Christ), are unchangeable. The *canons* can be amended, but only by a decree of a new Ecumenical Synod. There are some *canons* with doctrinal content in their preamble or in their objective, although they are of a secondary value.

The canons relevant to Church unity are of this latter type. They were formulated in order to establish an order for discipline and administration, as well as for the regulation of some of the external functions of worship and devotion. While most of these relevant canons were formulated by the Seven Ecumenical Synods meeting from 325 to 787, some were decreed by earlier regional synods such as that of the Holy Apostles at Jerusalem in the 1st century and have equal validity as the canons of these earlier councils ratified by the Ecumenical Councils.

### **The relevant canons are as follows:**

#### **Canon 14 (Canons of the Holy Apostles)\***

*A bishop is not to be allowed to leave his own parish, and pass over into another, although he may be pressed by many to do so, unless there be some proper cause constraining him as if he can confer some*

*greater benefit upon the persons of that place in the word of godliness. And this must be done not of his own accord, but by the judgment of many bishops, and at their earnest exhortation.*

**Canon 15 (Canons of the Holy Apostles)\***

*If any presbyter or deacon, or any other of the list of the clergy, shall leave his own parish, and go to another and having entirely forsaken his own, shall make his abode in the other parish without the permission of his own bishop, we ordain that he shall no longer perform divine services; more especially if his own bishop having exhorted him to return he has refused to do so, and persists in his disorderly conduct. But let him communicate there as a layman.*

**Canon 34 (Canons of the Holy Apostles)\***

*It is the duty of every nation to know the one among them who is the first, and to recognize him as their head, and to refrain from doing anything unnecessary without his advice and approval; instead, each of them should do only whatever is necessitated by his own district and by the territories under him. But let not even such a one do anything without the advice and consent and approval of all. For only thus will there be concord, and will God be glorified through the Lord in Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."*

**Canon 8 (1st Ecumenical Council, Nicaea, 325)**

*. . . For in one city there shall not be two bishops.*

**Canon 15 (1st Ecumenical Council, Nicaea, 325)**

*Neither bishop, presbyter, nor deacon shall pass from city to city. But they shall be sent back, should they attempt to do so, to the churches in which they were ordained.*

**Canon 2 (2nd Ecumenical Council, Constantinople, 381)**

*The bishops are not to go beyond their dioceses, nor bring confusion on the churches; but the Churches of God in heathen nations must be governed according to the custom which has prevailed from the time of the Fathers.*

**Canon 3 (2nd Ecumenical Council, Constantinople, 381)**

*The Bishop of Constantinople, however, shall have the prerogatives of honor after the Bishop of Rome; because Constantinople is New Rome.*

**Canon 23 (Synod of Carthage, 419)\*\***

*That any province on account of its distance can have its own primate.*

**Canon 8 (3rd Ecumenical Council, Ephesus, 431)**

*None of the God-beloved bishops shall assume control of any province which has not heretofore, from the very beginning, been under his own hand or that of his predecessors.*

**Canon 5 (4th Ecumenical Council, Chalcedon, 451)**

*Concerning bishops and clergymen who go about from city to city, it is decreed that the canons enacted by the Holy Fathers shall still retain their force.*

**Canon 18 (4th Ecumenical Council, Chalcedon, 451)**

*The crime of conspiracy or banding together is utterly prohibited even by the secular law, and much more ought it be forbidden in the Church of God. Therefore, if any, whether clergymen or monks, should be detected in conspiring or banding together or hatching plots against their bishop or fellow clergy, they shall by all means be deposed from their own rank.*

**Canon 9 (4th Ecumenical Council, Chalcedon, 451)**

*And if a bishop or clergyman should have a difference with the metropolitan of the province, let him have recourse to the Exarch of the Diocese, or to the throne of the Imperial City of Constantinople, and there let it be tried.*

**Canon 28 (4th Ecumenical Council, Chalcedon, 451)**

*For the Fathers rightly granted privileges to the throne of old Rome, because it was the royal city. And the*



*150 most religious Bishops actuated by the same consideration, gave equal privileges to the most holy throne of New Rome, justly judging that the city which is honored with the Sovereignty and the Senate, and enjoys equal privileges with the old imperial Rome, should in ecclesiastical matters also be magnified as she is, and ranks next after her; so that in the Pontic, the Asian and the Thracian dioceses, the metropolitans only and such bishops also of the Dioceses aforesaid as are among the barbarians, should be ordained by the aforesaid most holy throne of the most holy Church of Constantinople.*

**Canon 20 (6th Ecumenical Council, Constantinople, 680-681)**

*It shall not be lawful for a bishop to teach publicly in any city which does not belong to him. If any have been observed doing this, let him cease from his episcopate.*

**Canon 36 (Quinisext Council, Constantinople, 692)**

*Let the throne of Constantinople be next after Rome, and enjoying equal privileges. After it Alexandria, then Antioch, and then Jerusalem.*

A cursory review of these canons indicate clearly the unity intended for the Church by the decrees of these synods. Indeed, there shall not be two bishops in one church (jurisdiction) nor shall bishops and priests go from one city or jurisdiction into another without approval. Nor shall clergymen (or laymen), bring confusion into the churches by ordaining priests or enthroning bishops and those who travel from place to place are subject to the canon law that governs administration and jurisdiction of those places. Furthermore, bishops are not allowed to leave their jurisdiction for another jurisdiction without official approval. If he or any clergyman does so, they are not permitted to perform their ecclesiastical functions but are to be returned to the ranks of the laity.

Added to this is the confusion in the interpretation of these canons. Canons 9 and 28 of Chalcedon and canon 36 of the Quinisext Council are indirectly related to the unity issue insofar as they ascribe to the See of Constantinople extraordinary privileges. By interpretation of some Byzantine canonists such as Balsamon and Blastiras, they make the bishop or patriarch of Constantinople the highest court of appeals for the clergy. Whether this refers only to the provinces under the direct jurisdiction of Constantinople, or even to those of the other great patriarchs properly so-called, has been debated for centuries (Schaff and Wace 272-76; Cummings 253-56; and Maximos 148ff). Similarly, canon 28 of Chalcedon and subsequent canons that reaffirmed it, such as canon 36 of the Quinisext Council, have frequently been cited by the Ecumenical Patriarchate for claiming jurisdiction over all churches in barbarian (read diaspora) lands, hence its claim over churches in the Western Hemisphere and elsewhere. "For this reason the metropolitans of Pontus, Asia and of Thrace, as well as the Barbarian bishops, shall be ordained by the bishop of Constantinople." (Ancient Epitome of Canon 28) (Schaff and Wace 287-90; Cummings 271-76; and Maximos 203ff). It was on the basis of this canon that the Ecumenical Patriarchate granted autocephalous status to the churches in the Balkan nations during the 19th Century (Bogolepov, 20). Some canonists have interpreted canon 28, not only as a mere ratification of canon 3 of Constantinople in 381, placing the bishop of that city second after the bishop of Rome, but indeed, as the "legal establishment of the Patriarchate of Constantinople; the precise legal recognition of its bishop as the first in the East and the second after Rome in the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy." (Maximos 231). According to this interpretation then, "all the areas lying outside the limits of any specific ecclesiastical jurisdiction are subject ecclesiastically to the Bishop of Constantinople" (Maximos 229). It is on this basis then, that the Ecumenical Patriarchate claims jurisdiction over the churches in "barbarian" lands that is, the churches of the diaspora in Northern and Western Europe and the New World. In this respect, therefore, these canons and their interpretation have a direct bearing upon the issue of ecclesiastical unity in America.

Such, however, is not the case in America! Indeed, each of the canons have been repeatedly violated by the Orthodox jurisdictions in the New World. Major American and Canadian cities (as well as some Western European cities) have two or even three bishops, and the ethnic divisions along which our jurisdictions are organized are a repudiation not only of canon law but also, as mentioned earlier, of the decree of the Synod of Constantinople in 1872 which prohibits the establishment of two competing churches or jurisdictions in the same territory along ethnic and linguistic lines — the new heresy of phyletism which has been formally defined as the establishment of particular churches accepting members of the same nationality and refusing the members of other nationalities, being administered by pastors of the same nationality," and as "a coexistence of nationally defined churches." Clearly, then, these multiple jurisdictions are uncanonical as defined by the church canons. That is precisely the status of the Church in America which this Commission is addressing.

In this respect, however, the existing multiplicity of jurisdictions and the uncanonical status of the Church in America, need not be a permanent situation. The early Church faced some of the problems we face today in realizing concretely the unity of the Christian community in each Place. This is evident by the fact that such canons were decreed by the synods. But we can learn much by considering the means which were used to overcome the

temptation of divisiveness. Indeed, if we believe in Tradition — as we say we do — the experience of the apostles and the fathers is part of our inheritance. We simply have no right to reject it, although we can and we must see how the guidelines which they provided can and must be applicable to our conditions, in our time. Our link with Tradition, in this respect, is the canons.

Taken as a whole, the Orthodox canonical inheritance is not a "juridical system" or a code. It contains texts which today are inapplicable, or in contradiction with others. Those who attempt to use canons as Protestant fundamentalists use Scriptures, ignore how much they themselves are influenced by Western approaches which absolutize legalism and institutional structures. Canons need interpretation in the light of Tradition as a whole, and their interpreters must first of all acquire that mind of the Church, without which individual canonical texts are often meaningless. It remains, however, that with regard to some basic theological, ecclesiological and moral principles there is clear canonical consensus, and it is possible to understand why this consensus exists. Such a consensus exists on two points which are of crucial importance for our problem: 1) the Church must be one in each place; 2) the office of the episcopate is particularly responsible for realizing and witnessing to the unity of the true Church locally, regionally and universally. Both of these points are obviously not only "canonical," but theological, ecclesiological and spiritual.

"Unity in each place" is, of course, a flexible concept. A "place" can be a house, a village, a city, an area or a country. With modern means of transportation and communication, with communities organized at workplaces, etc., there are various ways in which one can define a "place." What is involved here is the desire, the readiness and the ability of Orthodox Christians to share a common sacramental and community life with their neighbors on the basis of no other criterion and principle than a common faith, belonging to the same Church, hoping for the same salvation, sharing in the same anticipation of the Kingdom of God. This is, after all, exactly what St. Paul meant when he was wondering, in his writing to the Corinthians, whether "Christ was divided" in Corinth. If the readiness and desire to share one's faith exists, practical accommodations are always possible to meet difficulties, such as the absence of a common language. But the canons are unanimous in requiring local unity, and place particular responsibility on the bishops. In each place, the local church is headed by a bishop, **originally the only celebrant of the Eucharist**, image of Christ and center of unity. "There may not be two bishops in a city," proclaims the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea (canon 8). And, quite logically, the bishops (who were **elected** for life by the **clergy and laity** of their particular church) "are not to go beyond their own diocese to churches lying outside of their bounds, nor bring confusion on the churches. . . . And let not bishops go beyond their diocese for ordinations and any other ecclesiastical ministrations, unless they be invited" (Second Ecumenical Council, canon 2).

But the "one bishop in each place" principle does not mean that each local church is isolated and self-sufficient. Canons require that bishops of each province meet in synod twice a year (First Ecumenical Council, canons 4 and 5). The regular meetings are necessary for solving common problems, but particularly to fill vacant sees; for no bishop can ordain another bishop alone, particularly not his own successor. Conciliarity is therefore a basic principle. Within each church, the bishop heads the community together with his presbyters (who are compared to the apostles by St. Ignatius of Antioch), and the affairs of the province are directed by the bishops together. Among the bishops of a province, one is a *primate*, often designated as *metropolitan*. His personal approval is necessary for the creation of all new bishops, and the bishops are forbidden to act without his knowledge, just as he, too, does not act without theirs (Apostolic canon 34). He, therefore, coordinates and sanctions episcopal conciliarity on the level of the province.

On the universal level, the emperor (at least in the early Byzantine period) acted as coordinator, not by himself, but together with five *patriarchs* (the so-called *pentarchy*). With the disappearance of the Western empire, the bishop of Rome, always recognized as the first among patriarchs, developed a self-sufficiency which would eventually lead to schism. The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, who had been granted "privileges of honor after the bishop of Rome" (Second Ecumenical Council, canon 3), became the recognized coordinator, as *first bishop* within Orthodoxy. His actual powers, however, varied from period to period. Before the fall of Byzantium (1453), he acted in close coordination with the emperor. Under the Turkish regime, he became the political head of the entire Christian millet of the Ottoman empire, which gave him a de facto control over the other Eastern patriarchs. Russia developed quite independently, as did the independent kingdom of Georgia and its ancient patriarchate.

Responsible for unity locally, a bishop also shares in the universal episcopate; he is not bishop by himself, but only because he is in communion and conciliar cooperation with the world episcopate of the Church. All this is symbolized by the so-called *diptychs*. At the liturgy a local bishop mentions the head of the province or of the autocephalous church to which he belongs, while the head of the church mentions all the other heads by order of precedence.

## Patriarchal Encyclicals on Church Unity

Contrary to what has sometimes been asserted, the Orthodox Church was involved in seeking Christian unity long before the founding of the World Council of Churches at the Amsterdam Assembly in 1948, and was ecumenical before the Ecumenical Movement. The Western churches may have become aware of the scandal of division in recent decades, but the Orthodox Church has been aware of the tragedy of division from the earliest times. In many instances when errors emerged in either the East or the West, pastoral letters or encyclicals were written and local synods or peace-making conferences took place with the goal of resolving disputes or of taking the appropriate steps to re-establish church discipline and order. Even the convening of the Ecumenical Councils in the first centuries prior to the Great Schism of 1054 were examples of such efforts. Additional examples are the Byzantine delegations at the Council of Lyons (1274) and at the Council of Florence (1438), not to mention the bilateral meetings with the Armenians and other Monophysite bodies, and even the Muslims. Eagerness and passion for the restoration of the broken unity can be found in the written records of these meetings. If the pace and rhythm of the movement for reconciliation later slowed down due to unfavorable historic conditions, it would be wrong to attribute this decline of unity efforts to a lack of concern or to isolation in a confessional ghetto. And while these efforts initially pertained to the ecclesiastical divisions in the Old World, they have relevance today to the fragmented Orthodox jurisdictions in the New World.

The attempts to bring about unity were generally in the form of encyclicals issued by the five ancient patriarchates — Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. But since 1054, those of the See of Constantinople, as the ranking patriarchate of the East, have taken precedence. Some of the modern encyclicals on the theme of unity issued since 1848, have been as follows:

**Patriarchal Encyclical of Anthimus IV (1848).** This encyclical was issued in response to the encyclical of Pope Pius IX to the Greeks urging that they — the lost sheep of Christ "should return at last to the flock of Christ." The papal encyclical was issued at the time the Greeks were having difficulty with the Ecumenical Patriarchate regarding the autocephaly of the Greek Church which was unilaterally declared in 1830 but was not formally recognized by the Patriarchate until 1850. The patriarchal document which is entitled "An Encyclical Letter of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church to the Orthodox Everywhere," (Constantinople 1848), stressed the catholicity of the Orthodox Church as the Universal Church of Christ (Frazee 169-70).

**Patriarchal and Synodal Encyclical of Anthimus VI (1872).** This encyclical which resulted from the decision of the Synod of Constantinople in 1872 and which is signed by the patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem as well, "censured and condemned phyletism (i.e., excessive nationalism and national dissensions, and disputes) in the Church of Christ as being opposed to the teaching of the Gospel and to the holy canons." The synod and its encyclical were engendered by the excessive nationalism exhibited by the Bulgarian Church which unilaterally declared itself autocephalous in 1870. The schism was not healed until 1945 (Karmiris 173).

**Patriarchal Encyclical of Anthimus VII (1895).** This epistle was the response of the Ecumenical See to the appeal of Pope Leo XIII in 1895 to all non-Roman Christians "to return to the fold." Written by His Holiness, Anthimus VII and signed by all the members of the Holy Synod and entitled "The Reply of the Orthodox Church to Roman Catholic Overtures on Reunion," the encyclical remains among the best and most comprehensive exegesis of the position of the Orthodox Church regarding church unity.

**Patriarchal Encyclical of Joachim III (1904).** Addressed to the Orthodox churches by the great Patriarch Joachim III, the letter criticizes "ethnocracy" which "because of racial traditions and linguistic peculiarities, resulted in the rupture and dismemberment of the one, catholic Church of Christ into recognizable pieces and sections." Consequently, the encyclical goes on to state that the Church was compelled synodically to condemn this "strange and foreign spirit," capable of having a catastrophic effect on the unity and catholicity of the Orthodox Church. The encyclical goes on to decry the fact that certain local Orthodox churches have been induced into unadulterated nationalism and racism beyond all necessity to their own nations and states and which at times they have become involuntary instruments of the chauvinistic pursuits of their respective nations, that is, "the servants of worldly goals and political programs" (Karmiris 172-73).

**Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (1920).** Issued at a time when the Ecumenical Throne was vacant and entitled "Unto All the Churches of Christ Wheresoever They Be," this encyclical urged closer cooperation between separated Christian bodies and suggested an alliance of Churches, parallel to the newly founded League of Nations. Many of the ideas in this letter anticipated later developments in the Ecumenical Movement and the encyclical itself is credited as leading to the establishment of the World Council of Churches at the Amsterdam Assembly in 1948 (Ware, The Orthodox Church 331-32).

**Patriarchal Encyclical of Meletius IV (1922).** This encyclical revoked the Patriarchal Tome of 1908 which had temporarily placed the administration of the Greek Orthodox Church in the New World under the jurisdiction of the Church of Greece, returning it under the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and established the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. The letter calls for the unification of all Orthodox bodies in the New World under the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Efthimiou and Christopolous 15-16, and 99-101).

**Patriarchal Encyclical of Athenagoras (1952).** This encyclical of Athenagoras, perhaps the greatest post-Byzantine patriarch of the Ecumenical Throne, officially approved of Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement and membership in the World Council of Churches, under certain conditions. The letter launched the involvement of the Orthodox Church in the search for Christian unity.

**Message of Demetrius (1990).** Message read by the late Patriarch Demetrius upon the occasion of his visit to the United States in 1990 and expanded from the episcopal throne of the Washington, D.C., St. Nicholas Cathedral of the Orthodox Church in America, in which he denounced the tragedy of Orthodox disunity in America as uncanonical and as a heresy and calling for an end to such disunity.

## Definition of Diaspora

The term *diaspora* has a rich history in the Old Testament generally referring to the Jews who were obligated, for one reason or another, to live among the Gentiles. This exile from the Promised Land was perceived as a just retribution from God for unfaithfulness to Him. Still, diaspora was a temporary situation, for the Jews always belonged to His people in Zion.

For the Christian, there is no true homeland except for the Kingdom of God. Spiritually speaking, all are in diaspora while living on earth. The essential difference between this New Testament viewpoint and the Old is that, for the Christian, the only return is to the Fatherland of the Kingdom. There is no earthly home. Thus, the Christian Church itself is in dispersion throughout the world until the fulfillment of all things in the Kingdom.

Applied narrowly, the term diaspora has come to mean the relationship of certain Orthodox bodies in the Western world with their "Mother Churches." This view of the Church is necessarily influenced by secular forces and even determined by them. It is to see the vibrant church life across many new lands as dependent upon churches in traditional Orthodox countries, and that is simply contrary to the empirical facts.

The reality of the Orthodox Church in the U.S.A. is a two-hundred year history, including churches and a whole host of religious and charitable institutions. Taken as a whole, the Church in America is mature and fully developed, already standing on its own in the country in which it gives full witness to the Truth. No longer need the Church make excuses for her presence here, since she has become an integral part of the American landscape. No longer a stepchild, she is perfectly capable of being the Church in the fullness of that term.

## ORTHODOX JURISDICTIONS IN AMERICA

- **Demographics**
- **History (General)**
- **The Ethnic Dimension of the Church**

### Demographics

Informed estimates place the total number of Orthodox Christians in the United States at between 5 and 5.5 million (5.9 million for North America). Organized jurisdictions (dioceses or archdioceses) exist for Albanians, Bulgarians, Byelorussians, Carpatho-Russians, Greeks, Macedonians, Romanians, Russians, Serbians, Syrians (Antiochians), and Ukrainians. There are, in addition, separate parishes without the rank of diocese for small groups of Estonians, Finns, and for political reasons, for particular groups of Byelorussians, Russians, and Ukrainians. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and the Orthodox Church in America (formerly the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Metropolia in North America) account for probably three-fourths of the Orthodox Christians in the United States — between them approximately 3.5 million.

## History (General)

Orthodoxy formally came to the United States in 1794 when a group of Russian monks began missionary work among the Aleuts, Eskimos, and Tlingit Indians in Alaska, establishing the first Orthodox Church at Kodiak Island in that year. Informally, however, in 1768, a colony of over 500 Greek laymen settling in New Smyrna, Florida, established a chapel for worship. In 1848, a Russian diocese was established in Alaska which was transferred to San Francisco in 1872 and later, in 1905, to New York City. Up to World War I, the Russian Orthodox diocese was the only one in America and serviced all Orthodox churches of various ethnic backgrounds. Following the political upheaval in Russia in 1917, the cessation of material support by the imperial Russian government and the interruption of normal canonical direction resulted in the formation of other U.S. dioceses, subject to Mother Churches abroad: Albanian (1918), Ukrainian (1919), Serbian (1921), Greek (1921), Romanian (1930), Antiochian (Syrian) (1936), Bulgarian (1938), Byelorussian (1951), and Macedonian (1960). Although this pattern of multiple episcopates with overlapping geographic areas of jurisdictions was alien to traditional Orthodox practice and contrary to canon law, by 1940 it had become an accepted fact of church life.

## The Ethnic Dimension of the Church

Ethnicity is deeply rooted in church history because it is an inescapable component of human history. Every individual born into this world is a part of, or member of, an ethnic group. Each of these has its own particular and peculiar genius, system of values and focus. The very term ethnic comes from the Greek to ethnos, referring to tribe or clan. Undoubtedly, the word ethnic pre-dates many more modern conceptions of the nation — state. Clearly, it is basic and fundamental.

It is clear that the very Incarnation of Christ took place in a specific and ethnic context. The early church was comprised largely of Jewish disciples of an itinerant rabbi. The Gospel kerygma and the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, though universal in scope, nevertheless have a local basis. The lifting of strictures from Gentile Christians in Acts 15 freed the Church from Mosaic law, but not from ethnic concerns.

In Acts 2, the Pentecost event is vividly described as an ethnic event, with the entire inhabited world being present in Jerusalem by way of tribal representation. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit transforms ethnicity from its exclusivity and narrowness, making it into a vehicle for God's grace. The various ethnicities in Jerusalem for the feast form one People of God at that miraculous moment of Pentecost and is therefore, as St. Basil says, the undoing of Babel. The Old Testament story of Babel with its disunity and divisions, is reversed as ethnicity becomes a means to greater and more intense unity in the Spirit. God Himself has taken the very human factor of ethnicity and rendered it a fit vessel for the divine.

This transformation of ethnicity is not automatic. In fact, ethnicity is really neutral; one's intentionality is the key to transforming it. For the Christian, the affirmation of one's own ethnicity simultaneously opens him to the affirmation of the same in others. Without this "openness to the Spirit," there would simply be no Christian Church; Jesus' message to the whole world would be a curious relic, an archaism found in a narrow Jewish sect.

Let us as Orthodox Christians be open and courageous enough to permit such growth here in America. Let us not permit our own particular "Laws of Moses" to prevent ourselves or others from entering the fullness of Truth that is Orthodoxy.

## MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO

It is the point of view of the Commission on Orthodox Unity that there is something missing in the earthly manifestation of the Orthodox Church. That something, absence of unity, in the institutional/organizational/administrative expressions of the various ethnic jurisdictions, especially in the Americas diminishes the Orthodox Christian witness and ministry. Subsequent parts of this report address the prospects for bringing about jurisdictional "unity" and possible models for achieving it. Before such thoughts are presented and explored, it is appropriate and good to examine the status quo in the light of the historical roots, assumptions and questions that perhaps are driving the "push" for unity. Thus, in this part of the report the argument is advanced that no attempt should be made to contrive a schema for Orthodox unity as it may disrupt an already fragile situation and bring about further disunity. Rather, it is best to let the natural progression of unity evolve in the fullness of time.

## The Argument for Maintaining the Status Quo

**The Premise for Orthodox Unity.** This Commission Report is based on the premise that Orthodox Christians in the Americas are not united and that the time has come to bring them under one umbrella in a structure to be defined.

Several approaches are suggested for consideration, such as autocephaly, autonomy, or under some interim transitional structure that eventually will evolve into one or the other of the two other alternatives.

Underlying assumptions for this position are:

- That unity is always a desirable thing;
- That it provides the springboard for a coordinated projection of the Faith; and
- That in its absence, dissension not only can arise but can and often does lead to conflict.

Beyond the attraction that basic observation has, the unity or lack of it among Orthodox, especially among the faithful in the diaspora, is viewed somewhere between the extremes of the ineffective to the scandalous. It is this last appellation, cited elsewhere in this report, that the late Patriarch Demetrius used when he visited the United States in 1990.

**The Roots of the Churches in the Diaspora.** If there are many overlapping Orthodox jurisdictions in the Americas with more than one bishop in a given city or area, this is so not because of some deliberate plan, but it is from the natural flow of immigrants from various Orthodox lands in Europe. People coming to these shores brought their Faith with them, a Faith at its core Orthodox, but also colored by the ethnic and cultural particularities of their origins.

**A Scandalous Situation?** It is hard to understand why this situation is labeled as scandalous. It is an expression of Orthodoxy in a multifaceted way, colored by customs and traditions that are testimony not to a rigidity of expression, but to a flexibility that underscores the universality of the accommodations that can exist under the Orthodox umbrella. Further, the various ethnic Orthodox groups in this country, unlike sometimes the situation among their countries of origin, co-exist quite peacefully and share in expressions proclaiming the unity of the Faith, such as Pan-Orthodox vespers.

**What About Canon Law?** It is difficult to understand why the existing situation of the Orthodox in the Americas is labeled as uncanonical. True, canon law says that there should be one bishop in a given city or region. However, this law was proclaimed hundreds of years ago when the cities/locales were small to modest in size, unlike today, and the Christians in them were limited in number. Also, the human compositions of these locales were often culturally consistent if not to say, for all practical purposes, homogeneous. In other words, they were ethnically and culturally the same.

Thus, one bishop for one area seems like a reasonable administrative set-up. The application of an ancient canon law to an obviously changed social environment can be called into question.

**Chauvinism and Cultural Realities.** It's true that quite often the Orthodox church communities in this country have been affected by the spillover of politics from the homeland. Upheavals of a "political" nature, with passions and factions, are not unknown in all manner of church communities of whatever persuasion. In addition, quite often ethnic chauvinism takes precedence over Christian charity and projects an unhealthy image to the unbelievers of a community supposedly reflecting the spirit of Christ. Obviously, this not only should not be tolerated, but should be condemned.

Beyond that, however, the various Orthodox churches have a rich cultural component that is deeply ingrained in their life, is of inestimable value to their faithful and should not be a candidate for arbitrary change since it is not a fundamental detriment to the Faith. Such diversity is a manifestation of the creativity that the Holy Spirit can work in the hearts of the faithful and has nothing to do with ethnic chauvinism.

Many are too willing, because of their ignorance and lack of appreciation, to turn their back on their roots. An example of this is in some Greek parishes where many want to eliminate as irrelevant the Greek language from the Divine Liturgy. They view it as an insurmountable barrier to the appeal of the Faith to young people. This, while at the same time more and more Protestant preachers, in the confusion spawned by all sorts of translations, constantly refer to the original Greek word or phrase for precision in meaning.

**Unity Versus Unified.** There seems to be some confusion between the notions of unity and unified. The implication suggested in the present situation of the Orthodox in the Americas is that because we are not structurally unified we are not united, and this is a detriment to the Faith.

If anything, the opposite is true. In matters of faith, most of the Orthodox are united. Thus, unity is manifested primarily in the universality of the Eucharist as the centrality of worship of all the Orthodox and acceptance of all the Sacraments as the bedrock of their faith. This should be a powerful testimony to those who think different ethnicities implies that either people cannot pull together on crucial matters or are in quarrelsome disagreement. If anything, it strongly suggests an affirmation of the compatible existence of cultural antecedents not that different from what a culturally pluralistic America is all about.

## Why a Unified Orthodox Church?

**For Reasons of Identity?** There is hardly any need for this since we all know who we are and presumably know what our Faith is. Are non-Orthodox confused? If so, let us consider the large number of Protestant churches whose tenets of faith are all over the map; from who Christ is, to what is sexually moral. There certainly is no unity in the Protestant world, yet no one has difficulty identifying all those divisive and conflicting beliefs as Protestant. So why are we concerned with the various Orthodox churches where there is a unity of faith?

**For Reasons of Protection?** This is probably the reason that has caused many to be concerned with unification. As Orthodox Christians, our concern should not be ego-projecting motivations, such as numbers of faithful to impress. If there is something of inestimable value and meaning in our Faith, the question should be to what degree this Faith is part and parcel of our being and how do we live and radiate its richness and meaning and Truth.

**For Reasons of Power?** It has been said there is strength in unity — yes, that old trap — power. But what has power in the secular sense — political, financial, organizational — got to do with the Christian Faith? In terms of the Faith's essence, absolutely nothing. The power the Christian has is in the realm of the spirit, the power of conviction about the truth that is Christ, the power to stand firmly and uncompromisingly with the strength to do so even at the cost of sacrifice.

**So that the Orthodox Church will be "American?"** When it comes to the Faith, what does that mean? Language? We already have English where the pastoral decision is to have it. Does being "American" imply that we can enforce the use of a particular language on parishes that are already comfortable with another? On the part of some, does not that represent the height of arrogance, unrealism and lack of Christian spirit?

**So that the Orthodox can Elect Their own Hierarchs?** If what goes on in many parishes is any indication of the insensitivity of the members to the principles of the Faith, then there is much to be concerned about. But with prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, some process can be formulated whereby the American faithful of the various jurisdictions can participate in electing their church leaders as they did in the Church of the first centuries.

**One Voice to Speak for the Faith?** This refers to one bishop in one locale which seems to serve the perceived need that there be one spokesman for the Faith. The wisdom of Orthodoxy is that there is a reservation as to how much power should rest in one person. The behavior and actions of some hierarchs, and indeed some priests, bears this out. In matters of faith and action beyond the ordinary routine prescribed matters, there can be a synodical jurisdiction in a particular area which can meet to chart its course of action and representation in gatherings with other religious leaders.

## A Concluding Thought

From what has been said, it would seem that on the part of some, there is no real need for a unification of the various Orthodox jurisdictions other than for reasons of power. Also, there seems to be an attitude of disdain by some for their ethnic and cultural roots. This, in turn, is fueled by a sense of inferiority by those who feel the use of a foreign

language in the Divine Liturgy is not in tune with American realities. They say, "Make the language English and the youth will rush to the churches. If you don't we've lost them." Other faiths have had English for centuries and how are they faring? An observation! One of the busiest nights of the year is Good Friday when young college students home for Easter break, instead of attending church services, seek secular pursuits elsewhere.

As important as process and structure are, they are not the main problems the Christian churches face. The Church's problem is not communicating the Light of Christ, either as a message or as an example that inspires. Quite often the message is nothing more than insipid proclamations. Christianity's message is unequivocally demanding, with an uncompromising commitment to Christ and His Truth. That is the message that is not being preached because people do not want to hear it, and those that do preach it are often pilloried.

So what do we do? We dash off in other directions like pursuits for unification which, to many, is a betrayal of their heritage and culture. These are pursuits that will sap attention and energies for decades while the focus on Jesus Christ goes wanting. Other than addressing how better to meet the need for better communications among the Orthodox jurisdictions, and establish on a local basis better mechanisms for more coordinated efforts on issues affecting society at large, the Orthodox jurisdiction status quo should not be tampered with at this time. It should be maintained. Despite the diversity of languages in the Liturgy, customs and expressions, the Orthodox have one theology, one doctrine, one manner of worship and the same Sacraments. In other words, where it matters the Orthodox are united.

## PROSPECTS OF UNITY IN AMERICA

### Expressions and Attempts at Unity

The idea of Orthodox unity is not of recent emergence in the consciousness of a few. Its origins in America can be traced to activities as early as the last century. A detailed listing of those efforts are included in Appendix III.

### Present Status

A total of 76 "Orthodox" jurisdictions are listed in current encyclopedia as existing in North America comprised of genuine Orthodox churches, schismatic groups, Old Catholic jurisdictions, and indigenous American sects. The vast majority uncanonical according to Orthodox ecclesiology (Merton Encyclopedia). Including:

- Seventeen jurisdictions which are recognized as Orthodox bodies.
- Only nine are recognized as fully canonical churches (members of SCOBA), together with the Western Rite Vicariate and the Evangelical Orthodox Mission.
- Non-Chalcedonian or Oriental Orthodox churches, such as the Armenian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, and others that believe only in the one nature of the Divinity.
- Numerous bodies of Byzantine Catholic and Uniates who are "Orthodox" in theology and practice but are under the jurisdiction of Rome.
- Old Calendar bodies of various ethnic groups, some of which are scattered throughout the Orthodox world.

The above illustrates the enormity of task in bringing about Orthodox unity.

### Recommended Procedures for Achieving Unity

**Study of applicable canon law and practice with reference to ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Church in "Diaspora."** As it has been seen there is much disagreement and confusion about the interpretation of canon law, especially those dealing with jurisdictional authority. The Orthodox Church, even today, has no exhaustive canon law comparable with the Corpus iuris canonici of the Roman Church. The councils have never claimed to compose any



document of this kind and the Nomocanon itself, (a Byzantine collection of canonical and legislative texts concerning ecclesiastical life), merely summarized the few rules which had almost all been enacted by Church authority in order to settle certain definite cases. It is, therefore, not surprising that there should be disagreement about the canon law in the Orthodox Church right up to the present time and that these old laws should be interpreted in different ways. This is, therefore, part of the reason for the disunity that exists as to the governance of the Orthodox Church in the "Diaspora." Failing any consensus reached by the different jurisdictions, any study of applicable canon law must await the convening of the forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the entire Orthodox Church, which has been in the planning stage for several years and will mark the first "ecumenical" meeting of Orthodox hierarchs in over a thousand years, since the 7th Ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 787. This long-overdue meeting recently received some impetus when newly-installed Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew hosted in Constantinople in March of 1992, a synaxis, a gathering of leaders of the autocephalous Orthodox churches — the first such event in a thousand years.

**Study of historical precedents in establishment of autocephalous churches in Europe.** Any attempt to plan for church unity in America must first review the advent of autocephalous churches in the Old World. Jesus Christ founded One Church, but from the very beginning different manifestations of the One Church began to appear in terms of regional rites (such as the Byzantine and Roman, among many).

But this did not compromise the unity of the Church. Later during these Apostolic Times, the Church evolved into five areas of governance, ranked by the Ecumenical Councils, centered in the five great cities of the Roman Empire. These became the famous patriarchates of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. But even among these, several independent or autonomous churches began to evolve also (with ecclesial sanction), such as those that survive to this day; the churches of Cyprus and Mt. Sinai. Following the Great Schism of 1054, which divided the Undivided Church of the First Millennium into two antagonistic factions, East and West, the Church, for the first time lost its unity. The West went on to evolve into the monarchical Roman or Catholic Church until it was sundered again by the Protestant Reformation of the 16th Century resulting in the rampant denominationalism that exists today in the West. The East went on to evolve into the Greek or Orthodox Church under the aegis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In time, and because of the inroads of the Muslims and other demographic changes which seriously eroded the efficacy of the venerable patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, by virtue of its history and prerogatives, emerged as the leading governing authority in the East, administering and assisting its sister churches in a conciliar fashion and always on the basis of canon law. (See Figure 1 on p. 226).

The first great change in the structural unity of the Orthodox Church occurred with the rise of Russian nationalism. The relations of Russia with the Mother Church at Constantinople were severed in the 14th Century when a Russian was elected as Metropolitan of Kiev who heretofore had always been a Greek appointed by Constantinople. This fait accompli was finally resolved in 1589 when Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople journeyed there and installed a Russian, Job, as Patriarch of Moscow who later, by conciliar action, was admitted to the fifth place (after Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem).

The second change in the structural unity of the Church began to take place in the 19th Century with the progressive liberation of the Balkan peninsula from Turkish domination and the appearance of a number of new, independent states. The first of these was Greece which, after gaining its independence, declared its church autocephalous in 1830, not wishing to be under the tutelage of Constantinople which was subject to Turkish suzerainty. Twenty years later in 1850, the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the autocephaly of the Church of Greece by a synodal tomos (decree).

At the beginning of the 19th Century there were seven autocephalous or autonomous churches in the Balkans: Four of the Serbian language (Montenegro, the Patriarchate of Carlovitz, the Archbishopric of Belgrade and the autonomous Church of Bosnia-Herzegovina), two Romanian speaking (Romania and Transylvania), and one Romano-Serbian (Rucovina). Their boundaries corresponded with the administrative districts of Austria-Hungary and the Turkish Empire. With the liberation of Serbia from the Turkish yoke and the recognition of its church as autocephalous by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1879, the four Serbian-speaking churches were placed under the Archbishop of Belgrade, who was raised to the rank of patriarch in 1925. Also in 1925, the Romanian churches were united under the Patriarch of Bucharest which had been granted autocephalous status in 1885.

The case of the Bulgarian Church caused a series of troubles. The negotiations between the Bulgarian representative and the Ecumenical Patriarchate were obstructed by the existence of a large Bulgarian population in Constantinople itself. The Bulgarians claimed that these people were also subject to the authority of the new Bulgarian "autocephaly" as far as ecclesiastical affairs were concerned. A system of this kind would have been an official admission of the existence of two parallel church hierarchies on the same territory (the problem that plagues the Church in America

today). It was impossible to avoid a rupture and in 1872 the Council of Constantinople officially condemned the primacy of racialism or nationalism in church affairs. It is interesting to note that the Orthodox Church officially condemned this psychological malady just at the dawn of an epoch in which Orthodoxy all over the world was to suffer as a result of ecclesiastical nationalism. The "Bulgarian Schism" was settled in 1945; Bulgarian autocephaly was then established and recognized without any infringement of the territorial principle.

Other Orthodox churches which were recognized as autonomous or autocephalous by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the 20th Century are: Georgia in 1917 (and again in 1990); Czechoslovakia in 1923 (and since the separation of that country in 1993 into two nations, into two autonomous provinces, that of the Czech Republic and that of Slovakia); Finland, also in 1923; Poland in 1924; and Albania in 1937 (reconstituted again in 1992 after the collapse of Communism there). Today the Orthodox Church world-wide is made up of 15 autocephalous "branches" united doctrinally and in full communion with one another, unlike the situation which prevailed in the Western Church as a result of the Protestant Reformation. But while they are united in faith, they remain administratively divided. These churches, ranked in order of their precedence, are as follows:

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople  
Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa  
Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East  
Patriarchate of Jerusalem and New Zion  
Church of Russia  
Church of Serbia  
Church of Romania  
Church of Bulgaria  
Church of Cyprus  
Church of Greece  
Church of Georgia  
Church of Czechoslovakia  
Church of Finland  
Church of Poland  
Church of Albania  
Orthodox Church in America

For a more complete description of these churches see Appendix I, "A Simplified Directory of Autocephalous Churches" (p. 264).

It must be remembered that autocephaly, in the strictly canonical sense, remained a simple right for a province to elect its own bishop and to be self-governing. In the 19th Century, however, it acquired a new sense; it identified itself, at least as far as the Balkans were concerned, with the absolute independence of the new national churches. This psychological evolution was clearly linked up with the appearance of a modern form of nationalism, unknown in the Middle Ages, which always remained true to the ideal of a universal Christian theocracy. The ideologists of the new "autocephalies" were not solely responsible for this; their action was often provoked by confusion between the interests of Orthodoxy and those of modern Hellenism, as sometimes reflected in the activities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Nonetheless, the emergence of these autocephalous churches was the realization of the adoption since the Council of Nicaea by the Orthodox Church, of dividing its dioceses so that their frontiers coincided with the political frontiers of the provinces or states.

It is a regrettable fact, however, that after 1920 the "nationalization" of the Orthodox autocephalies, dispersed in different countries, gave rise to violations of the territorial principle, especially in America, where every national or ethnic group established its own jurisdiction dependent on the mother country. This violation of the territorial principle did considerable harm to the Orthodox message in the world. The unity of the Church, which is one of the essential elements of its nature, requires that Orthodox Christians, living in the same place, should form a single community and be under the authority of a single bishop. As seen earlier, the defense of this principle was the cause of the "Bulgarian Schism" of 1872. But do not the Orthodox "dispersed" in America or Europe, make a point today of being "non-canonical" and of systematically infringing this principle without any justification? Is it this problem that we all are called to correct and is the very essence of this Report.

**Resolution of the ethnic factor in American Orthodoxy.** A review of Appendix II (p. 269) lists (perhaps for the first time in one place) a chronological outline of the history of the various Orthodox ethnic groups that settled in America. Among those listed are: Greek, Russian, Syrian-Lebanese, Ukrainian, Serbian, Romanian, Carpatho-Russian, Bulgarian, Albanian, Byelorussian, and "Macedonian." It is the history of a proud people who came to the New World

with extremely limited economic resources but the carriers of an ancient faith. It is the story of our forebears who against all odds prospered and founded their homes and families here and established their pristine faith reflected in the numerous churches that were erected to the glory of God. It is also the story of ethnic achievement, of ethnic pride and of ethnic identity which nurtured them in the new land. But it is also a story of ethnic division and isolation which has impeded the development of a unified Orthodox Church in the land. The ethnic factor is one of the major problems that needs to be resolved if such a church is to evolve here. Ethnicity, however, is natural and is part of every human being's cultural ethos for the Church itself lives in a cultural milieu, hence the rise of the "modern" autocephalous national churches. The problem is, therefore, how to overcome the excessiveness of ethnicity or nationalism to make possible a united Church without denigrating the positive aspects of ethnicity; indeed, how to cultivate and preserve its nobler dimensions and preserve them as part of the cultural heritage of the Church in America. This is the task that confronts us today.

Similarly, a review of Appendix III (p. 281) reflects the various attempts that have been made in the past to bring about Orthodox unity in America. From the prophetic visions of Archbishop Tikhon on church unity along ethnic lines in 1904 and those of Archbishop Meletius in 1921, along with the pioneer work of Archbishop Fan Noli in the 1930's, and the exhortations of Archbishop Athenagoras during his long tenure in America from 1931 to 1948, and the gentle urgings of the saintly Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich in the 1950's from his residence at St. Sava Serbian Monastery in Illinois, to the concrete establishment of the Federation of Orthodox Greek Catholic Churches in America, the Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders (CEOYLA), and the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), and finally the proclamation of the autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Metropolia as the Orthodox Church in America in 1970, all were to lead hopefully to a unified Church. Despite these efforts along with efforts of Archbishop Iakovos as the permanent chairman of SCOBA, and the establishment of a Bilateral Commission to study organic unity between OCA and the Antiochian Archdiocese inaugurated by Metropolitan Theodosius and Archbishop Philip in the 1980's, real unity has not taken place.

## FIGURE 1

### MILEPOSTS ON TIME LINE OF CHURCH HISTORY

#### ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH

33 | 36 | 37 | 49 | 63 | 66 | 325 | 451 | 787 | 880 | 958 | 1054 | 1204

33 Pentecost: Birthday of Church

36 St. Andrew founds Church of Byzantium (Constantinople)

37 St. Peter establishes See of Antioch

49 Apostolic Council of Jerusalem St. James presides as bishop

63 St. Mark establishes See of Alexandria

66 SS. Peter and Paul put to death in Rome

325 First Ecumenical Council and Nicene Creed

451 Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon makes Constantinople equal to Rome

787 Seventh Ecumenical Council restores icons for veneration

880 Photian Schism — first major rupture between East and West

988 Baptism of St. Vladimir, Conversion of Russia begins

1054 Great Schism, final break between Rome & Constantinople  
1204 Sack of Constantinople by Fourth Crusade  
1274 Council of Lyon — attempt to heal schism between East and West

#### **WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AMERICA**

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#### **THE ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**1439 | 1453 | 1589 | 1672 | 1768 | 1794 | 1870 | 1822 | 1921 | 1964 | 1965 | 1970 | 1988 | 1994**

1439 Council of Florence — abortive union between East & West  
1453 Fall of Constantinople, end of Byzantine Empire  
1589 Establishment of Moscow Patriarchate  
1672 Confession of Dositheus, document of Orthodox belief  
1768 Landing of Greeks in New Smyrna, Florida — largest colonization attempt in U.S. history  
1794 Russian missionaries arrive at Kodiak Island, Alaska  
1870 First regular diocese established in America by Russian Orthodox Church  
1872 Synod of Constantinople condemns phyletism  
1921 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese established in America  
1964 Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras exchange "kiss of peace" in Jerusalem  
1965 Mutual lifting of excommunication of 1054 between Rome and Constantinople  
1970 Proclamation of autocephalous Orthodox Church in America  
1988 Millennium of Orthodoxy in Russia  
1994 Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in America

The greatest disappointment has been the failure of SCOBA. Established in 1960 primarily because of pressure from the rank and file of the Church in America as reflected through the efforts of CEOYLA which itself was organized in 1954 by the seven mainline Orthodox youth associations of Orthodox jurisdictions in America who had joined ranks for promoting Orthodox unity, amidst high expectations, SCOBA has turned out to be less than successful. Never in its over three decades of existence did SCOBA envisage the creation of an autocephalous church in America. The only project which was repeatedly discussed was the project of a Synod under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, realized through pan-Orthodox agreement. The project was supported by the Russian Metropolia in this country, which in 1924 had broken away from the jurisdiction of Moscow in order to avoid Communist control, in the hope that the American question, once raised on the pan-Orthodox level, would be solved with the agreement of the Patriarchate of Moscow. But the project was rejected by SCOBA. It was then decided to appeal to the Pan-Orthodox Conference meeting in 1965 in Chambesy, Switzerland to plan for the forthcoming Great and Holy Council. But the Ecumenical Patriarchate refused to place the issue on the agenda.

Meanwhile in 1967, Metropolitan Irenaeus of the Metropolia wrote a letter to all Orthodox patriarchs on the necessity of unity and later solicited an audience with the Ecumenical Patriarch himself. His request, which was supported by Archbishop Iakovos, was turned down in the summer of 1967 by telegram. Unofficially, Constantinople let it be known that the Metropolia first would have to settle its canonical relations with Moscow. A little earlier, the Ecumenical Patriarchate had dissolved its Russian Exarchate in Western Europe, advising its bishops, clergy and laity to return to the Moscow jurisdiction. There seems to be little doubt, therefore, that Constantinople was fully supporting the claim of Moscow to exercise jurisdiction of all the "Russians" outside of Russia and this despite its own claim that by virtue of Canon 28 of Chalcedon, all such jurisdictions of the "diaspora" belonged to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It seems that Constantinople always and consistently pushed the Metropolia towards these negotiations and opposed with equal consistency, both American autocephaly and American Orthodox unity, even under itself, because unity would, in fact, have implied a loosening of its administrative relationship with the Greek American community. SCOBA's failure, therefore, was based on the fact that it faced a stalemate because neither Constantinople nor the other "Mother Churches" were desiring Orthodox unity in America.

The fact was, however, that the Metropolia did not want to go under the Communist-controlled Moscow patriarchate, nor did it want to become a "Russian" Church. Its experience since 1924 in dealing with the Communist exigency in the Russian homeland had given the Metropolia patience and maturity which finally led to direct negotiations with the Patriarchate of Moscow. These efforts bore fruit on April 13, 1970, when the patriarch and the entire episcopate of the Russian Church signed the tomos or document granting autocephaly to the Metropolia, henceforth to be known as the Orthodox Church in America. This bilateral action between Moscow and the Metropolia, instead of helping to solve the issue of canonical unity in America, further compounded it. The fact that the Church of Russia, which was the first to establish a canonical diocese in America in 1870, was giving up its canonical rights and recognized OCA as its sister church, was a fact of tremendous importance. But the Ecumenical Patriarchate, calling attention to its ancient and historical prerogatives refused to recognize the act, claiming that under canon law no Church had the right unilaterally to grant autocephaly, but only by the Ecumenical Councils and in the absence of such councils by the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the consensus of all autocephalous churches. Constantinople was joined in this position by the ancient patriarchates and most of the autocephalous churches so that to date, only four churches beside Russia — Georgia, Bulgaria, Poland and Czechoslovakia — recognize the legality of OCA's canonicity. And there the issue stands.

**Resolution of a broad range of issues affecting the local and international Church.** What must be done? If the issue of canonical ecclesiastical unity is to be resolved, much needs to be done at both the local, national and international levels. The task is almost insurmountable but unity is essential if the Church in America is to reach its full potential. Such a unity will make the Orthodox Faith accessible to all Americans, not as a foreign import — a "Russian," a "Greek," or a "Serbian," ethnic church — but as the truly Catholic and Apostolic faith, offering a canonical framework for Orthodox unity, without suppressing the wealth of legitimate pluralism of liturgical languages, traditions and customs which reflect the reality of Orthodoxy in America today. But Orthodox unity simply cannot be realized unless all the parties concerned recognize their past limitations and mistakes, and resolutely begin to build the future together. Such unity presents no threat to ethnic cultures, provided **Orthodoxy comes first**. There is simply no other way in which Orthodoxy can survive, and prosper, and develop, and pursue its missionary expansion, unless it is united in one Church where no nationality or group has any particular privilege. Other commission reports in this Project on Orthodox Renewal have already indicated the direct consequences awaiting the Church if it fails to unite in America.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon the Orthodox faithful to take stock of the worsening situation for Orthodoxy in America and apply pressure, lovingly but firmly and resolutely, upon our leaders, both clerical and lay, at the local parish, diocesan, national and international levels, to compel them to address this crucial issue realistically. This can be done by following the sage advice of the late Fr. Alexander Schmemmann in his insightful little booklet, Mission of Orthodoxy, that we should organize movements within the Church to attend to these concerns and to provide for spiritual awakening, perhaps not unlike the ZOE and similar lay movements in Greece. Such movements already have been organized, such as the Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL), Orthodox People Together (OPT), Orthodox Synergy and similar action-oriented groups who, along with concerned individuals, can suggest means by which realistic unity might be achieved and to convince our "Mother Churches" abroad of the lateness of the hour.

In addition, it will be necessary to address the broad range of pressing issues that presently confront the Church, issues such as spiritual renewal, moral concerns, outreach, missions, religious education, liturgical reform, fasting, calendar, language, finance, women's role in the Church, and many others; issues related to the unity problem, many of which have been repeatedly discussed and reported in a number of excellent documents and reports to our hierarchs and churches and which have gone ignored and unresolved for much too long. Only then will we take the first step toward that much-desired unity.

What follows in the Report are three models for canonical ecclesiastical unity in America which the Commission has carefully discussed and reviewed and presents as options for achieving such unity in America.

## POSSIBLE MODELS FOR ACHIEVING UNITY

The Commission, sensitive to its charge and aware of its significance, has received and deliberated upon a broad spectrum of opinions, aspects, and prospects on the idea for Orthodox unity. In its discussions and deliberations, it has examined and considered ecclesiastical history, Scriptural, and Patristic texts on the nature of the Church and its unity.

After consulting applicable canon law and other pertinent information regarding ecclesiastical unity, the Commission has arrived at three possible models for achieving canonical unity, which are developed and presented below. All models consider or imply arrangements for accommodating cultural identities relevant to the nature and practices of territorial churches.

- [Model A \(Autonomous\)](#)
- [Model B \(Autocephalous\)](#)
- [Model C \(Transitional\)](#)

### MODEL A (AUTONOMOUS)

Unification of all canonical jurisdictions into an autonomous (semi-independent) Church under the tutelage of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople without particular reference to ethnic identities.

#### Support for Model A

Upheld by canon law (3rd canon of 1st Constantinople and canon 28 of Chalcedon).

The Ecumenical Patriarchate is recognized by all Orthodox churches as *primus inter pares* (first among equals) and final court of appeal for all Orthodox churches (Maximos).

Despite restraints imposed by Turkish authorities, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is recognized by international law (Giannakakis and Agnides).

The Ecumenical Patriarchate has a worldwide multinational jurisdiction in Europe, Asia, North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand and, despite its "Greekness," is the only supranational Church stemming from antiquity.

The concept of "first bishop," a prerogative of the Ecumenical Throne, is a vital and necessary principle for the preservation and stability of the worldwide Church and for the fulfillment of its mission (Meyendorff, Catholicity).

Despite its harassments by Turkish authorities in Istanbul, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has indeed been able to administer and service its universal jurisdiction by virtue of its Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Chambesy (Geneva), Switzerland.

The weight of nearly 2,000 years of tradition and history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate necessitates its survival as the premier Church of Orthodoxy.

### The Argument for Model A: An Autonomous American Orthodox Church

**Background.** The need for, indeed the imperative of, a unified Orthodox Christian Church in the Americas has been presented in the introductory section of this report. From statements made by the late Patriarch Demetrius, to the realization that unification is desirable from many quarters in the laity, it is apparent that achieving unification is at least an issue for discussion, if not an objective whose time has come. The canonical order delineating church structure has not been followed in recent centuries. This structure was set forth by the one undivided Christian Church of the first centuries. Specifically, canon 2 of the 2nd Ecumenical Council of Constantinople requires one bishop in one city. Since the Great Schism of 1054, there can be and often are more than one bishop in a city adhering to the tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church and the Western Roman Catholic Church, not to

mention a plethora of "bishops" without apostolic succession in the numerous Protestant churches. Beyond that there can be and are more than one bishop of the Orthodox Church from various ethnic backgrounds. These have emerged in the diaspora because of the transplant of Orthodox faithful from their Orthodox homelands.

The questions of canonical unity of the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church in the diaspora has not escaped the attention of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Patriarchates and autocephalous churches. These churches are engaged in preparing for the Great and Holy Council of Orthodox Christianity through the work of the Pre-Conciliar Pan Orthodox Conference. Ten topics are being explored by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission, one of which focuses on the *Orthodox Diaspora*. The Commission has issued a report on organizational principles which are cited elsewhere. The five principles reflecting canonical tradition and ecclesiological practices of the Church refer to the existing situation and cite transitional steps that can be taken in the march towards unification. Issues and problems that would have to be addressed to effect unification include:

- One bishop for all Orthodox in each city or region.
- The cultural, linguistic, national needs of the parishioners.
- The structuring of the institutional church.
- Training of Clergy — the existing seminaries.
- Finances.

The above, along with others, presents a formidable array of issues that the Inter-Orthodox Commission will explore.

It is not our intent to duplicate that work which is being carried out by the knowledgeable and capable Commission members. The intent here is to provide a basic view and comment on one of the alternative courses the churches of the diaspora can take in their restructuring effort.

## The Case for Autonomy

Setting aside the multitude of issues and problems that would have to be consensually agreed to or resolved by the majority of the conferees, there is one fundamental question that this Report will concentrate on and that has to do with what the ultimate unified Orthodox Church will be. This section argues the case for an Autonomous American Orthodox Church.

In such a Church, the various currently overlapping (because of ethnic origins), jurisdictions would be unified into an autonomous or semi-independent Church under the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This means that, structurally speaking, there would be a line relationship between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and each newly autonomous Orthodox Christian Church. Thus, it becomes necessary to explore the status and importance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as a necessary prerequisite for an autonomous relationship.

## The Importance of the Patriarchate

**The Canonical Decree.** The 4th Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon held in 451 A.D., decided in canon 28 that the Ecumenical Patriarchate will appoint the bishop of the Diaspora. This canon is the basis for a line relationship between the Patriarchate and the Church in America which, at the moment, is thwarted by the ethnic paths the Orthodox jurisdictions followed in making their presence in the New World.

**The Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.** The Ecumenical Patriarchate has a worldwide multinational jurisdiction in Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and North and South America. It is the only supranational Church stemming from antiquity.

**The Ranking of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.** All Orthodox Churches recognize the Ecumenical Patriarchate as *primus inter Pares* (first among equals) and the final court of appeal for all Orthodox Churches. This historical status of "first bishop," a prerogative of the Ecumenical Throne, is a vital and necessary principle for the preservation and stability of the worldwide Church and for the fulfillment of its mission.

**The Status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.** The Treaty of Lausanne (1923) guarantees the existence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. This recognition has not prevented the Turkish authorities from restraining the operation of the Patriarchate. Harassment, especially during the last four decades, has decimated the

Greek Orthodox population of Istanbul and has put in question the continued viability and effectiveness of the Patriarchate. However, along with its Orthodox Center at Chambesy (Geneva), Switzerland, it has been able to administer and service its universal jurisdiction.

**The Roots of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Tradition.** The Ecumenical Patriarchate has history and tradition of 2,000 years rooted in Apostolic times. It has survived unprecedented assaults and vicissitudes and one must respect the human courage and resilience that have brought about that survival, inspired and nurtured, no doubt, by the Holy Spirit.

Much has been touted in recent years about roots and their importance in the self-awareness of identity and meaning on a personal as well as a group or social level. The importance of roots in the Faith is paramount, since everything, the Eucharist and the other Sacraments, is central to it, and go back to the very beginning: Christ and the Apostles.

The life of the Ecumenical Patriarchate which is the Eastern Orthodox Tradition, has a continuity that goes back to Andrew the Apostle. This tradition, these roots, cannot and should not be easily discarded. There are those who may be intimidated and frustrated by the harassments, the humiliations, the sacrifices that the Patriarchate has been subjected to and suffered over the recent centuries. But no one who understands what Christianity is all about is under the illusion that it is an ineffectual faith. Thus the conclusion must be that under no circumstances should any Orthodox Christian espouse the idea that the Ecumenical Patriarchate abandon its historical right guaranteed by treaty to be where it is. But what has all this to do with the unity of the Orthodox in the Americas and how this unity will be structured?

### **Autonomy Under the Ecumenical Patriarchate**

All of the above make a strong case for the united Orthodox expression in the New World to be an autonomous relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The reasons are compelling:

**Autonomy — A Bond That Transcends Borders.** Autonomy should not be viewed as diminishing the independence of the American Church nor does it imply foreign domination. Rather, the picture would be of a bond of continuity that transcends borders, is worldwide, and has solid roots in unshakable history and tradition that is still viable and goes back to the very beginnings of the Christian Faith.

**Autonomy — A Bond of Mutual Support and Strength.** In the circumstances of its location and existence in a hostile environment, an autonomous bond with the Church in the land that is the unquestionable leader of the free world would greatly strengthen the Patriarchate's position. Any attempts to further undermine its claim for a continued presence where it now exists would create unwelcome worldwide publicity and outrage. Moves to persecute, no matter how subtle, would run the risk of open and worldwide public awareness and condemnation. As for the Church in America, an autonomous bond with the Patriarchate would give it the kind of prestige the Roman Catholics enjoy with the Vatican. The Orthodox Church would be viewed, not as just one more independent Christian sect among hundreds, but a body of Christians of major significance on the stage of world Christianity.

**Autonomy and the Patriarchate's "Greekness."** It may be argued that unifying the many Orthodox ethnic churches in the Americas would find a stumbling block in the "Greekness" of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Here a distinction must be made between "ethnic Greekness" and "cultural Greekness." The former has the notion of bonding with the Greek state, and certainly that is not the case with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. That it has strong Greek roots cannot be disputed. Its Greekness is more cultural; that is, it reflects the currents of thought and expression that charted its course. Secure in the knowledge of the universal appeal and power of its Greekness, it did not feel constrained or reluctant to carry the Truth of the Gospel to other lands, especially to the Slavs, and to create the linguistic presuppositions in the native idioms so that the Truth of the Gospel would be comprehended and disseminated without those kinds of impediments. Thus, the Russian Orthodox, Romanian Orthodox, and Bulgarian Orthodox, are no less daughter churches of the Ecumenical Patriarchate than the Greek Orthodox. So, the creation of a unified Orthodox Church in America under the Ecumenical Patriarchate would not be the result of an artificial bonding, but one that is rooted in a very real historical tradition, thus making it stronger than what it otherwise would be.

An additional note on Greekness having to do with the Greek language: Let not a sense of inadequacy or inferiority stemming from the lack of knowledge of the Greek, coupled by some notion of xenophobia propel the American Church to shove aside the importance of Greek and the knowledge of it. It would be a calamity of colossal proportion if this were to happen for it goes way beyond any sense of pride by Greek ethnics. Greek is the language of the New Testament, the Fathers of the Church, and the Ecumenical Councils. With a plethora of Bible translations entering the



market in recent decades, the meaning of the original is often completely distorted. Thus more and more, we hear Protestant preachers in their sermons going back to the original Greek words for the precise meaning. How much more sensitive should all the Orthodox be about the importance of Greek, since it is the heritage of all of them, and indeed of all Christians.

**Autonomy and Independent Hierarchical Choices.** Autonomy is understood to be a semi-independent relationship; that is, the Patriarchate would have the prerogative to appoint the Orthodox prelates in the American Church, while the latter administers its own affairs through its own synod. This is the present ecclesiastical status of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America since its founding in 1922, except for the period between 1930 and 1977 when it did not have its own synod. However, the appointment of hierarchs in the American Church need not be devoid of input from the American flock. For example, an accommodation can be worked out between the Patriarchate and the "royal priesthood" on the American scene, whereby following the very ancient practice of the Church, the ecclesia of the faithful would make their recommendations and preferences known of several choices for hierarch from whom the Patriarchate would make the final selection.

Indeed, such was the practice at Constantinople prior to 1925 when the Ecumenical Patriarch was elected by a Mixed Council which was comprised of four metropolitans from the Holy Synod and **eight laymen** providing a strong lay element in the selection of hierarchs. Only recently, with the election of Patriarch Alexius of Moscow, 66 bishops and 66 priests **along with 66 laymen** representing the 66 dioceses of the Church of Russia, participated in the electoral process. Even today in the Church of Cyprus, laymen participate in the election of bishops.

## Conclusion

A consideration of all the above factors suggests that a unified American Orthodox Church in an autonomous relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarchate is desirable and practical for a number of reasons:

1. It would provide a unified voice for Orthodoxy in America and worldwide.
2. It will strengthen the status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate which exists in a hostile environment.
3. It will enhance the status and provide cognizant visibility and projection and weight of the American Church as a Christian body, with continuity and roots in Apostolic times.
4. It will express an appreciation for the profound riches in the teachings and traditions of the Orthodox which transcend time and space.
5. It will not trample or undermine the ethnic particularities of the parishes as they now exist.
6. It will proclaim the universality of the Orthodox Faith while at the same time recognizing that there can be a rich cultural diversity under the oneness and centrality of Christ.

## MODEL B (AUTOCEPHALOUS)

Unification of all canonical jurisdictions into an autocephalous (self-governing) Church with its own elected primate and independent of all other world Orthodox jurisdictions without particular reference to ethnic identities.

### Support for Model B

1. Canon law provides for it (23rd canon of Carthage).
2. Part of natural process of evolving Church as reflected in the establishment of modern Orthodox autocephalous churches of Europe.
3. Need for indigenous American Church to reach out to unchurched Americans as in the Great Commission of Pentecost.

4. Need to remove foreign aura of Church in America by adopting English language as vernacular of the Church to reach its youth and the great numbers who have fallen away.

5. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is a captive institution in a hostile environment subject to continuous constraints of the Turkish Government; as such, it is not an independent agency and cannot perform its religious obligations as the Great Church of Christ — center and font of world Orthodoxy (Runciman).

6. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is no longer located in a Christian environment but in a nation that is overwhelmingly Muslim, whose immediate flock has been reduced to less than 5,000 souls; as such, Constantinople has ceased to be a major metropolitan see, unworthy of being a center for world Orthodoxy.

7. It is for these reasons that the modern autocephalic churches evolved, not wishing to be subject to a patriarch under Turkish suzerainty; namely, Greece in 1830, and later Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria.

8. America is not a diaspora; it is home to millions of Orthodox Christians, more so than in the ancient patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, or Jerusalem; hence, there is a need to form an independent Church.

## The Argument for Model B: An Autocephalous American Orthodox Church

**Background.** The solemn signing of the Tomos of Autocephaly in Moscow (April, 1970) between representatives of the old Russian Orthodox Metropolia in North America and Alexius I, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, marked the culmination of a complex historical and spiritual process which began in Alaska in 1794. In that year, the first missionaries were sent to that northern land by the then-Synodal Church in Imperial Russia. The mission gradually spread southward, with special concentration in northern California. Thus, the original evangelical work of Orthodoxy proceeded from west to east, a somewhat unusual phenomenon. Later waves of immigrants from Eastern Europe necessitated the founding of parishes throughout the Eastern seaboard, as well as the Midwest. The continuity of mission in America is something that the old Russian mission has always emphasized in its bold but humble claim to be the Orthodox Church in America. In fact, a careful study of Orthodox Church history and the establishment of other autocephalous churches bears this out.

Of course, the establishment of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) caused some misunderstanding and even vituperation, but neither is exactly unknown to observers of the Orthodox scene in other circumstances as well. For the past twenty years, the OCA has been actively working for the unity of the Church in this country. As an ecclesiastical fact of life, the OCA stands as a witness to that unity as well as a genuine commitment to the American people on behalf of Orthodoxy. Her slow but steady growth is empirical proof that, for America, Orthodoxy is an idea whose time has come.

**Proposed Development in Detail.** The Model B plan for Orthodox unity in this country centers around the already existing autocephalous church, the Orthodox Church in America. The step-by-step program given below will explain in detail how such a plan might be implemented. (The following section will portray schematically the steps developed below.)

**Step 1.** The OCA, created in 1970, already makes the claim to be the Orthodox Church in America. The Church of Russia recognized this autocephaly and granted recognition to the OCA as self-governing. Various ethnic dioceses have joined (Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian), without diminution of their ethnic heritages. Formal recognition has been limited, but de facto sacramental participation with canonical churches is all but universal. Sadly, the goal of unity among the Orthodox has not yet been realized, but the OCA, as a living organism, is a fact which must be accounted for in any quest for unity.

**Step 2.** The OCA would invite all Orthodox Churches in the United States to a meeting on Church Life and Unity. The focus is that we have a theological, a spiritual problem in phyletism, the existence of a multiplicity of jurisdictions in America, which erodes and undermines normal ecclesiastical life as well as the daily spiritual life of the Orthodox people. The OCA would act as convener.

**Step 3.** All participants above are to report to their respective Mother Churches the results of the meetings. Obviously, since the direct but often unstated interests of these mother churches will be different from those of their children, opposition is to be expected. Long experience here has demonstrated incontrovertibly that persistence is the key.

**Step 4.** With the OCA as presider, the various jurisdictions are to apply for "associate membership" in an umbrella-like organization attached to each other and to the OCA. Local bishops would be free to participate in this process, but the hierarchical structure of the OCA would remain necessarily intact. The various jurisdictions would retain control of their flocks.

**Step 5.** All participants are to report to their Mother Churches the fact of such proceedings. Opposition from some quarters is to be expected.

**Step 6.** Local jurisdictions are to apply for membership in an Orthodox Church in America. Within this larger and more comprehensive body, provision would need to be made for an association of bishops, a temporary measure until a full hierarchy could be functioning as the Orthodox Church in America. One possible avenue is for a rotation of bishops in sees which have experienced multiplicity, with an agreement as to lengths of terms in the various capacities.

**Step 7.** The proclamation of a true, canonically correct Orthodox Church in America, with participants from all jurisdictions. The settlement of diocesan questions, succession, and unified mission could be worked out once the structure is functioning.

## Further consideration on Model B

### Strengths (Positives) of Conceptual Framework

1. Allows for existing structures.
2. Allows "face saving" by all.
  - a. The issue of power, prestige are laid aside in favor of unity.
  - b. OCA and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese are NOT perceived in adversarial terms.
  - c. No canons need be cited nor disputed.
  - d. The integrity of Orthodox Church bodies is preserved.

### Weaknesses (Negatives) of Conceptual Framework

The following to be expected as the norm.

1. Head of *diasporal* churches may balk.
2. Some jurisdictions may go this route, others may not.
3. Not all jurisdictions would agree to accept because of "canonical irregularities" concerning the granting of autocephaly to the former Russian Metropolia.

### Opposition to Autocephaly: The OCA Experience

It is fair to state that despite the reality of the OCA in America, its acceptance by most worldwide Orthodox churches is yet forthcoming. While the churches of Russia (which granted autocephaly), Czechoslovakia and Poland have recognized the OCA as autocephalous, most have not. Indeed, the canonical status of the OCA, even when it was the former "Metropolia," has been in dispute since 1924 when it declared itself "temporarily autonomous" of the Church of Russia. The granting of permanent autocephaly to OCA by the Church of Russia in 1970, continues the dispute. The Ecumenical Patriarch has only a tacit recognition of the OCA (as do most other autocephalous churches), until the matter can be settled by the forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church.

The granting of autocephaly to the Russian jurisdiction in America in 1970, elicited numerous formal responses from the ancient patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, as well as from the Church of

Greece, among others. In encyclicals written to Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople and Patriarch Alexius I of Moscow, in brotherly but unmistakable terms, the venerable heads of these sees objected on canonical grounds and on the basis of historical practice the unilateral action of the Patriarch of Moscow.

In addition, a number of renowned Orthodox theologians, along with several laymen, have written extensively, citing canon law and historical precedents, which in their opinions, would invalidate the granting of autocephaly to the OCA (Trempeles and Kopan). Furthermore, these theologians have pointed out that there seem to be several conditions under canon law which would specifically rule out such an act. No less an authority than Bogolepov maintains that the opinion that the Mother Church alone (in this case Moscow) is entitled to grant autocephalous status, not only has no basis in canon law, but is also inconsistent with the principles of Orthodox Canon Law. Rather, for autocephaly to become an accomplished fact it is necessary for all existing autocephalous Orthodox churches to agree to it and to accept it. In other words, one member of the Community of Orthodox churches cannot by itself introduce a new church into the community without the consent of all the other members, who are equal in status. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, just as every other autocephalous church, has the right to withhold recognition of the autocephalous status of a new church, as granted by the Mother Church. In refusing to recognize the new status of the Metropolia, the Ecumenical Patriarch exercised the basic right of every autocephalous church, especially of the first among them (Bogolepov). Perhaps the most serious obstacle to the validity of autocephaly cited by many theologians is the fact that such a status cannot be granted to a given territory unless in that territory all Orthodox churches are united into one body. The late Fr. Schmemmann, among others, has pointed out that this is the sine qua non for autocephaly in a given political territory such as the United States. This is obviously not the case in America where even the Russians had been divided into three jurisdictions (Schmemmann, Primacy 49-75). This was the reason why the Synod of Constantinople in 1872 refused to grant autocephaly to Bulgaria as it lacked such unity as well as a clearly defined political territory.

Thus, according to most Orthodox churches, what happened in the case of the Russian Metropolia (OCA) is clearly a canonical irregularity and constitutes a patent contradiction between what is the established law of the whole Orthodox Church and what has been or is done by a given local Orthodox church. It is precisely for correcting situations in which such painful irregularities have occurred that the future Great and Holy Council included in its agenda consideration of the following relevant subjects:

- The proclamation of autocephaly
- Who grants autocephaly
- Conditions and presuppositions for autocephaly
- Procedure for granting autocephaly
- Which churches today are recognized as autocephalous (Russian Autocephaly p.71).

A further point stressed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate is that on many occasions, in its great desire to maintain unity among all the sister Orthodox churches, it has exercised its privileges and prerogatives with great flexibility, and with an economy and charity dictated by love, instead of by a rigid and legalistic adherence to the letter of church law. On occasions, when the Patriarchate of Constantinople has been faced with de facto, arbitrary, or unilateral anti-canonical action, it has sought at all costs to maintain inter-Orthodox unity and to avoid division between the sister Orthodox churches by adopting an attitude of charity and understanding (as in the tacit recognition of OCA). But it has maintained that the adoption of such an attitude should not be construed to the belief that the disregarding of canonically established law should be allowed to become a regular and permanent practice (Russian Autocephaly p.71).

It thus seems that a resolution of the OCA issue must take place before canonical unity in America can begin to emerge. This will probably be effected by a renewed effort of all jurisdictions in America to bring about true canonical unity with the cooperation and blessings of the mother churches abroad, especially as reflected in the planned Pan-Orthodox synod.

## **Model B - Recommendations and Conclusions**

**Evidence from Scripture and Canon Law.** It is evident even to the casual observer that ecclesiastical life is based upon the threefold basis of Holy Scriptures, canon law, and history. These form a sacred unity whereby the Church's mission in and to this world is revealed and its very character made manifest. With reference to the particularities of Model B, several important points need to be elucidated. First among these is the character of the church as one, its unity a cause of concern for Christ Himself even as he voluntarily went to His life-giving death. In John 17, the Savior gives a summary of His wish for His disciples in the High Priestly Prayer, a call that they be one precisely because

such unity reflects the Godhead. Second, an examination of canon law reveals a certain variety of opinion as to the authority for granting self-government to a local church, and it is not the intention of this model to choose sides. It is in the third point, the history of Orthodoxy on this continent, that the strongest and most telling argument can be made for the growth and development that led to the recognition of the Orthodox Church in America in 1970.

**Evidence from History.** From the time of the first missionaries in Alaska in 1794, through the settlements in California and then in the rest of the United States, the impetus for an autocephalous church has been present. Significant efforts among the native people of Alaska led to the creation of a new diocese located at New Archangelsk (Sitka). From St. Herman through St. Innocent, first bishop, the seeds of an independent church were sown. The focus on this vision culminated in the person of Bishop (later saint) Tikhon (Patriarch of Moscow), who ordained various ethnic hierarchs to serve **both** locally and ethnically. Bishop Tikhon's words concerning the mission to America were clear and resounding; in deeds he confirmed beyond any doubt his intentions to create a structure which would become autocephalous.

The tragic events of the revolution in Russia undermined, at least, temporarily, these plans. Communication between the local Church in America and the Russian Church became increasingly difficult. New waves of immigrants arrived in the United States just as the local church's efforts at unity were thrown into a chaotic state. Bolshevik attempts to divide the Church had a profound effect on the local administration, and, with no other real choices open to her, the temporary self-governance of the "American Metropolia" became a fact. Clearly, the canonical and spiritual situation was vague and unclear.

**The Tomos of Autocephaly.** It was precisely this vague and unclear status that hampered the local church in her missionary efforts for several generations. Finally, through an almost miraculous confluence of persons and events, the American Metropolia and the Russian Orthodox Church signed the TOMOS OF AUTOCEPHALY in April, 1970. The goal of this concordat was to regularize and normalize the canonical situation of the local church, and thus, Orthodoxy on this continent. The signing of the TOMOS continues and validates the vision of St. Tikhon and the early missionaries; the original ideal of one church in America was truly "an idea whose time had come." The Russian Church correctly surmised that one canonically organized church would then be able to reach out to other Orthodox groups and jurisdictions while simultaneously pursuing serious missionary efforts among the various and varied peoples in America. In this schema, ethnicity is not denigrated but rather properly affirmed, given perspective from a spiritual point of view.

Accordingly, the OCA's goal has always been one Orthodox Church in America, with all the richness and diversity which that may entail. Indeed, the very name Orthodox Church in America is extremely important for understanding that mission correctly. The church is not to be understood narrowly and uncritically as wed to American culture and values; the church, as a pilgrim in this world, is always **IN** and **NOT OF** a particular place and culture. The Gospel's values and norms will always place them at variance with, and in contradiction to, the "established" thinking. Orthodoxy in America must witness to a set of criteria, sometimes radically outside the prevailing cultural values.

There is, then, one, unbroken mission to America, through the Russian Church's mission, and then eventually in the OCA. Unfortunately, some other Orthodox jurisdictions in America have been very slow to recognize the reality of the OCA, and others have ranged from indifferent to positively hostile. Many (although not all) other Orthodox use terms familiar to them, terms which allow them to continue "business as usual"; Russian Church, Russian Metropolia, Russian Orthodox Church, are some terms used in place of the proper OCA. From the material presented above, it should be clear that these older terms are totally inadequate to describe the spiritual and canonical reality that is the OCA.

## MODEL C (TRANSITIONAL)

An "Assembly of Bishops" to be established in yet to be defined dioceses in the "diaspora" initially based upon ethnic identities and which will determine the primatial See whose bishops would preside at all common meetings and report to the Ecumenical Patriarch until such time as the convening of the Great and Holy Council which would then approve of the multi-ethnic restructuring of these dioceses by the "Assembly of Bishops" into full-fledged canonical autocephalous Orthodox jurisdictions.

### The Argument for Model C

#### Transitional (Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission)

**Background.** The Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission for the Great and Holy Council, at a meeting on November 10-17, 1990, at the Patriarchal Center in Chambesy, Switzerland, discussed the topic of the "Orthodox diaspora" and prepared a preliminary report that has been commended to the Churches for study. The Commission brought together the official representatives of the twelve autocephalous and two autonomous churches under the presidency of Metropolitan Bartholomew of Chalcedon (now the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople) to discuss canonical unity in the diaspora.

The then Metropolitan Bartholomew, in his opening address to the delegates, affirmed that the time had come for the Churches to find a canonical solution to the organization of the Orthodox diaspora. He reminded the delegates of the remarks of the late Patriarch Demetrius, who said during his 1990 visit to America:

*It is truly a scandal for the unity of the Church to maintain more than one bishop in any given city; it contravenes the sacred canons and Orthodox ecclesiology. It is a scandal that this is exacerbated whenever phyletistic motives play a part, a practice soundly condemned by the Orthodox Church in the last century.*

We may also add here the similar remarks made by Patriarch Alexius II of Moscow during his recent visit to the United States, who expressed the hope that "a single multi-national Orthodox Church" evolve in America ([New York Times](#), Nov. 22, 1991, A8).

The first Pan-Orthodox Pre-Conciliar Conference called by the Ecumenical Patriarch to prepare for the convening of a Great Council, was held in 1976. This Conference established a list of ten topics which would be examined by the Church prior to the convening of the Great and Holy Council. The work of the Inter-Orthodox Commission is to study systematically these topics and prepare position papers. Thus, the work of this Conference led to the convening of the Second Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference in 1982, and to the Third in 1986.

Among the topics discussed at the Third Conference was the question of the "Orthodox Diaspora" which was assigned to several Churches for their deliberation. At the November, 1990 meeting of the Commission the reports of the "Orthodox Diaspora" produced by the Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Russia, Romania, Greece and Poland were reviewed. A detailed analysis of these reports was provided by Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, Secretary for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Synod (See Appendix V, p. 288).

Following much discussion, the Commission unanimously adopted a number of recommendations that have been submitted to the Churches. Certain themes remain to be discussed by the Inter-Orthodox Commission. Among these is the recommendation with regard to the various regions where an "Assembly of Bishops" should be established. Moreover, the Commission must also review the organizational principles that can guide the proper development of the Church in the new lands. The report takes note of five principles that reflect the canonical tradition and ecclesiological practices of the Church. They are as follows:

1. The organization of the parishes in each diocese should be open to the possibility of the existence of parishes that serve the particular cultural, linguistic, national needs of their parishioners. These parishes will be under the jurisdiction of the local diocesan bishop.
2. There shall exist only one bishop in each city or in a clearly defined region.
3. The boundaries of dioceses shall be clearly established.
4. In each region where there is an "Assembly of Bishops," it will be necessary to determine the regional dioceses and the primatial See, whose bishop will preside at all common meetings. Until such time that the region becomes autocephalous, the presiding hierarch will commemorate the Patriarch of Constantinople.
5. The project of canonical restructuring shall be accomplished by the "Assembly of Bishops" in each place prior to the convocation of the Great and Holy Council and in accordance with established canonical procedures.

The preliminary report concludes by affirming that the Orthodox Churches are committed not to do anything which would hinder the process of the canonical organization of the various regions of the *Diaspora*. This would preclude the establishment of the new dioceses in addition to those in existence. Furthermore, the report calls upon the Mother Churches to do everything possible to bring about the normalization of canonical order on the basis of the principles noted above.

**Discussion.** It is obvious from the Inter-Orthodox Pre-Conciliar Preparatory Commission's Text on the Orthodox Diaspora that was adopted at Chambesy on November 10-17, 1990, that serious consideration is being given by the Orthodox Churches to the resolution of the problem of Orthodox churches in the diaspora, especially in the light of the forthcoming Great and Holy Council. The development of this transitional plan for achieving canonical unity in the diaspora, which will be presented for adoption at the Fourth Pre-Conciliar Conference which is scheduled to meet in the near future, provides for an alternative plan which has the backing of the entire Orthodox Church and therefore has a greater degree of successful promulgation. Furthermore, this model is in keeping with Orthodox canonical tradition and ecclesiological practice and will thus pre-empt any charges of schism or anti-canonical conduct as was the case with the establishment of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) in 1970.

The establishment of an "Assembly of Bishops" in North America (certainly to be one of the regions to be designated for such an assemblage), draws attention to the very important role of bishops in fostering unity and underscores the need for continuing study of the role of the episcopate in the Church. Nonetheless, such a body will provide the necessary leadership for achieving canonical unity in America given the fact that (unlike SCOBA), it will have multi-jurisdictional sanction and support from the entire Orthodox world.

The implementation of this model will cause fewer divisions and dissension in the Orthodox jurisdictions in North America and will be a better guarantee of success provided it is activated with no inordinate delays and procrastinations (which have marked current attempts for unity), given the snail-pace that describes the preparation and convening of the Great and Holy Council.

Efforts to achieve unity of Orthodoxy in the diaspora, as the Commission realizes, is not only a practical matter of structural adaptation but also implies a theological vision. Discussion of ecclesiology and Church structures cannot be separated from discussion of the Church's mission and witness. In this respect, it is important to investigate in greater detail the particularities of the Orthodox situation in the United States and Canada, for as the Commission also realized, the situation of the Orthodox in the diaspora varies considerably from region to region. Certainly in North America there are a number of cultural and even legal circumstances that have impeded Orthodox unity and cooperation. At the same time there have been a number of significant developments, both on local and national levels, which have served to foster unity.

## A CONCLUDING THOUGHT AND PRAYER

Any view of the Church in America cannot escape the reality that it is fragmented and broken, without the inner spirit and moral resources to proclaim the Gospel entrusted to Her by the Lord. Up to now, a plethora of jurisdictions in America has made any thought of unity strictly theoretical. In fact, one must be an accomplished Church historian merely to assimilate the details of Orthodoxy's history in America. The passage of time has seen, not unity, but a growth of factionalism and rank un-Christian behavior. The story of Orthodoxy in America is often one of unfortunate occurrences, everything but unity. When one confronts the state of Orthodoxy in America, it is obvious much work needs to be done. The disunity has created a situation that is apparent to the most casual observer, at cross-purposes to the truth of the Gospel as given over and over in Christ's call to unity. Orthodoxy's shortcomings in terms of mission, education, and morality can all be explained in these terms. Simply put, if we choose a path other than the Lord's, we shall surely suffer. And, to some degree, we have.

The work of this Commission on Unity is central, and in one sense, prior to all other work. The very life of the Christian community depends upon unity; without it, there is not very much to say (and little we can do). A critical test of this lies in the fact that many, perhaps even some in our own ranks, do not comprehend the reality of Orthodoxy on these shores. Soon we shall celebrate 200 years of the Faith on this continent. Would that the work of this Commission will begin a dialogue within the Church by her members, hierarchs, clergy and people. We have faced the past and the present; let us look now to a real future.

The Commission members brought to this discussion many points of view which are reflected in this report. The Commission also feels that it should not recommend a specific course of action. Rather, its work has provided a

unique overview of historical and contemporary Orthodoxy, coupled with some very well-developed models for unity. However, this work does not in any way preclude other creative approaches to the problem.

The Commission presents this report in the hope and the expectation that it will stimulate a healthy discussion among all spectra of the faithful on this most important issue. All should be mindful of one caveat — not to fall into the trap that believes the Church's ills can be rectified by structure and process only. Ultimately, the issue of unity is a manifestation of spiritual fullness. With humility that banishes egos and self-centered interests, and with prayer on bended knee, opening hearts to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Orthodox *pleroma* will see its way to implement the will of God on this all-important issue of Orthodox unity. Amen.



## NOTES

1. For an in-depth treatment on the Council of 381 and the primacy of Constantinople, see John Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1983) pp. 121-142.
2. For an insightful look into the complexity of this problem see John Meyendorff, "Contemporary Problems of Orthodox Canon Law," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. XXII, No. 2, (Summer, 1977), pp. 41-50.
3. The encyclical was republished in 1950 upon the occasion of the opening of the Holy Year at Rome when Pope Pius XII once again issued a call for all non-Roman Christians to "return to the fold." An English translation of the entire epistle appears in *The Reply of the Orthodox Church to Roman Catholic Overtures on Reunion: Being the Answer of the Great Church of Christ to a Papal Encyclical on Reunion* (New York: Brotherhood Zealots of Orthodoxy, 1950). A later translation with additional comments appears in *Orthodox and Catholic Union* (Seattle, WA: St. Nectarios Press, 1985).
4. For a fuller development of this term see John Meyendorff, *The Vision of Unity*, (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987), pp. 139-144. For a different view see Demetrios J. Constantelos, "The Orthodox Diaspora: Canonical and Ecclesiological Perspective," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. XXIV, Nos. 2 and 3, (Summer/Fall 1979), pp. 200-211.
5. Information on the Orthodox jurisdictions in America has been extrapolated from the following: Leonid Soroka & Stan W. Carlson, *Faith of Our Fathers: The Eastern Orthodox Religion* (Minneapolis: Olympi Press, 1954), pp. 15-31; Stephan Themstrom, ed., *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980) passim.; and Charles H. Lippy and Peter W. Williams, eds., *Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience*, Vol. I, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989), pp. 325-344.
6. According to Professor Charles Moskos, the exact number of Greek Orthodox Christians in America is more likely to be in the area of 900,000 to 1,100,000. See the OCI Commission Report on Faith, Language and Culture beginning on P. 17 of this volume.
7. Membership statistics and other information about American Orthodox groups have been extrapolated from the following: *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1990* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, 1990), pp. 56-57; *World Almanac Book of Facts 1991* (New York: 1991), pp. 609-610; and *The Universal Almanac 1990* (Kansas City, 1990); J. Gordon Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions* 3rd ed. (Detroit: Gale Research, Inc. 1989).
8. Both of these are in the Antiochian Archdiocese. For the conversion of the Evangelical to Orthodoxy, see Peter E. Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox: A Journey to the Ancient Christian Faith* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, 1989).
9. A series of conferences held between mainline Orthodox and the Oriental Churches is reportedly resolving the issue of Monophysitism between the two bodies of churches. See Thomas FitzGerald, "Toward the Reestablishment of Full Communion. The Orthodox-Orthodox Oriental Dialogue," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. XXXVI No. 2, (Summer 1991), pp. 169-188.
10. For a synoptical overview of the canonical sources of Orthodox theology, see John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), pp. 79-90. 256 257
11. Initial descriptions of the proposed Council can be found in *Towards the Great Council: Introductory Reports of the Interorthodox Commission in Preparation for the Next Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church* (London: S.P.C.K., 1972) and in Stanley Harakas, *Something is Stirring in World Orthodoxy* (New York: The Orthodox Observer Press, 1972). For more recent developments see: John Panagopoulos, "The Orthodox Church Prepares for the Council," *One in Christ*, Vol. XIII, (1977), pp. 229-237; and Ion Bria, "L'espoir du Grande Synode Orthodoxe," *Revue theologique du Louvain*, Vol. VIII (1977), pp. 51-54.

12. Appreciation is acknowledged to Peter E. Gillquist for the general format of "A Time Line of Church History." The content, however, has been revised by the Commission. See also his *Becoming Orthodox: A Journey to the Ancient Christian Faith*, (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), pp. 52-533

13. Autocephalous status not fully recognized.

14. For the full ramifications of the issue of autocephaly see: Alexander Schmemmann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), passim; Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, esp. pp. 17-48 and pp. 107-118; and Bogolepov, passim.

15. On the development of SCOBA and the structural organization of the various Orthodox jurisdictions in America see Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *Profiles in Belief: The Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada*, Vol. 1: Roman Catholic, Old Catholic, Eastern Orthodox (New York, 1977) pp. 61-116.

16. For the record, these groups were: American Carpatho-Russian Youth (ACRY); American Romanian Orthodox Youth (AROY); Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs (FROC); Greek Orthodox Youth of America (GOYA); Serbian Singing Federation of America (SSFA); Syrian Orthodox Youth Organization (SOYO); and Ukrainian Orthodox League of the United States (UO L).

17. For a fuller picture of these events from one person's perspective see Meyendorff, *The Vision of Unity*, pp. 15-110.

18. For the full text of the position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to Moscow's unilateral action, see: *Russian Autocephaly and Orthodoxy in America* (New York: The Orthodox Observer Press, 1972); Panagiotis N. Trempelas, *The Autocephaly of the Metropolia in America*, translated and edited by George S. Bebis, Robert G. Stephanopoulos and N. M. Vaporis (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross School of Theology Press, 1973); and Andrew T. Kopan, "The Autocephaly of the Russian Metropolia," *The Orthodox Observer Quarterly*, Vol. XXX VI, No. 608 (November, 1970), pp. 7-8. For a rebuttal to Kopan see Meyendorff, *Vision of Unity* pp. 50-53.

19. For an excellent account of the ZOE movement see Demetrios J. Constantelos "The Zoe Movement- in Greece," *St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring, 1959), pp. 1 1-25.

20. Interestingly enough, the publication of Fr. Vasile Hategan's (Romanian Orthodox), monumental newspaper, *Orthodox Unity*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (July, 1990), published upon the occasion of the Ecumenical Patriarch's visit to the United States; and Katherine Valone's (Greek Orthodox), article "An American Orthodox Church: Its Time Has Come," in the August 18, 1991 edition of the *Greek Press of Chicago*, offers some suggestions. See also James Steve Counelis "Polls and Ecclesia: Toward and American Orthodox Church," *Diakonia*, Vol. 7 No. 4 (1972), p. 310-325.

21. See Leonidass C. Contos, 2001: *The Church in Crisis* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1981); "Report to His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos," in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 3 (Fall, 1989), pp. 283-306; Alexander Schmemmann, "The Problems of Orthodoxy in America," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*: "The Canonical Problem," Vol. VIII, No. 2 (1964), pp. 67-85; "The Liturgical Problem," Vol. VIII, No. 4 (1964), pp. 164-185; and "The Spiritual Problem," Vol. IX, No. 4 (1965), pp. 171-193; and Demetrios J. Constantelos, "Religio-Philosophical Issues and Interreligious Dialogues in Eastern Orthodox Christianity Since World War II," in *Religious Issues and Interreligious Dialogues*, Charles Wei-hsun Fu and Gerhard E. Spiegler, eds., (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989), pp. 369-411, among others.

22. An excellent account of such accommodations was presented by Rev. Demetrios J. Constantelos in a presentation entitled "Ethnic Particularities & the Catholicity of the Church," at the Third Annual Meeting of the Orthodox Christian Laity, Nov. 11, 1990, in Chicago, to be published in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* (forthcoming). See also his *Understanding the Greek Orthodox Church* (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1990); also his "The Greek Missionary Background of the Christianization of Russia and the Respect for its Cultural Identity," in *Theologia* (Athens, 1989).

23. For an excellent treatment of this historical fact see Constantelos, "The Orthodox Diaspora," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, pp. 206-209, op. cit.

24. For an excellent account of this difficult period of the Ecumenical Patriarchate see G. Georgiades, "The Greek Church of Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Modern History*. Vol. XXIV (March- December, 1952), pp. 235-250.

25. The Archdiocesan constitutions of 1922, 1927 and 1977 provided for a canonical synod. The constitution of 1930 did not. The synodical system was abolished then in order to heal the wounds inflicted upon the Church by the Venizelist/Royalist feud which had divided the community. The Ecumenical Patriarchate dispatched Archbishop Athenagoras to America with strong centralized powers to end the divisions. The synodical system was restored in 1977. See James Steve Counelis "Historical Reflections on the Constitutions of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 1922-1982," *Album of the 24th Clergy-Laity Congress* (San Francisco: 1982), pp. 36-43. For a notable history on the development of the Greek Orthodox Church in America see George Papaioannou, *From Mars Hill to Manhattan: The Greek Orthodox in America Under Athenagoras I* (Minneapolis, Light and Life Publishing Company, 1976), passim.

26. For a good account of the role of the "royal priesthood" in the governance of the Church see Alexander Schmemmann, *Clergy and Laity in the Orthodox Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, n.d.). For a more formal account-see Jerome I. Cotsonis, *The Place of the Laity Within the Ecclesial Organism According to the Canon Law of the Eastern Orthodox Church* (Greek text; Athens, 1956), pp. 15-17. See also, Athenagoras Kokkinakis, *Parents and Priests as Servants of Redemption* (New York: Morehouse-Gorham Company, 1958) Chs. XXI XXII.

27. On the election of the Ecumenical Patriarch see: "Orthodox Eastern Church," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1911 ed., Vol. XV, p. 33y; for the election of bishops in Cyprus see: Mario Rinvulcri, *Anatomy of a Church: Greek Orthodoxy Today* (London: Burns & Oates, 1966), p. 119.

28. *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. XV, Nos. 1, 2 (1971), devoted its entire double issue to the history and reason for the Russian Orthodox Church in America's application for autocephalous status from the Moscow patriarchate. In that issue see especially the contribution of senior Orthodox theologian, Alexander Schmemmann, "A Meaningful Storm: Some Reflections on Autocephaly, Tradition and Ecclesiology," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. XV, (1971), pp. 3-27.

29. *The Illuminator* (Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh), May-June, 1991. Also see *The Orthodox Church*, Fall, 1992.

30. For the full text of these encyclicals see: "The Four Ancient Patriarchates Condemn Russian Autocephaly in America," *The Orthodox Observer Quarterly*, Vol. XXXVII, Nos. 619, 620, & 621 (Oct., Nov., Dec., 1971), pp. 1-28; later published as *Russian Autocephaly and Orthodoxy in America* (New York: The Orthodox Observer Press, 1972).

31. The fact is that, historically speaking, the Ecumenical Patriarch has never granted autocephaly to any local church; in various circumstances, each of these merely declared autocephaly, and the fact was later recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchs. Such was the case with the Churches of Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and even Greece. Therefore, the OCA is within an historical process of considerable antiquity and awaits the validation of this as did those venerable Churches preceding it.

32. This was indeed reflected by St. Innocent's advice for American Orthodoxy when as missionary bishop in Alaska and Siberia from 1841 to 1868, he admonished the faithful on December 5, 1867: "Appoint a new bishop from among those who know the English language. - - ordain to the priesthood for our Churches converts to Orthodoxy from among American citizens who accept all its institutions and customs. Allow the vicar bishop and all the clergy of the Orthodox Church in America to celebrate the Liturgy and other services in English. . . . To use English rather than Russian (which must sooner or later be replaced by English) in all instruction in the schools to be established in San Francisco and elsewhere to prepare people for ordination and missionary work." See Paul D. Garrett, *St. Innocent: Apostle to America* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Theological Press, 1979), pp. 276-277. See also *Again Magazine*, Vol. XIV No. 4, (December 1992), p. 30.

## APPENDICES TO ORTHODOX UNITY

### LAMENT

*We bear the guilt for the scandal of the lack of communication and lack of community of spirit among the orthodox Churches. Today when all men are nothing, we do not unite. We who are the universal Church do not live this reality and do not witness to it. . . . There is no worse scandal than that of divided Orthodoxy. Let us understand this clearly and repent. It is never too late. Let us humbly take our part in the great work of inter-Orthodox rapprochement in a spirit of faith, hope and love. Let us play our part in knocking down the walls of chauvinism, ethnicism, isolationism and autocephalism. Let us become aware of and declare the fact that we are not alone and that we cannot live alone...*

**ZOE Brotherhood (Greece)  
Atkines Magazine (1964)**

- Appendix I — A Simplified Directory of Autocephalous Churches**
- Appendix II — Histories of Orthodox Ethnic Groups in America**
- Appendix III — Attempts at Orthodox Unity in America**
- Appendix IV — Standing Conference of Orthodox Canonical Bishops in the Americas**
- Appendix V — Orthodox Diaspora (Adopted Text)**

## APPENDIX I

### A SIMPLIFIED DIRECTORY OF AUTOCEPHALOUS CHURCHES

| CHURCH                                    | JURISDICTION                                                                                                    | TRADITIONAL FOUNDER & DATE                                                                                  | CANONICAL STATUS                                                                                                                                                     | PRESENT HEAD & TITLE                                                                      | EPISCOPAL SEAT       |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople | Turkey. Parts of Greece, Mt. Athos, Northern and Western Europe, No. and So. America, Australia and New Zealand | St. Andrew the Apostle<br>36 A.D.                                                                           | 451: Patriarchate                                                                                                                                                    | Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop Constantinople and New Rome                  | Istanbul, Turkey     |
| Patriarchate of Alexandria                | All of Africa                                                                                                   | St. Mark the Evangelist<br>62 A.D.                                                                          | 325: Patriarchate                                                                                                                                                    | Patriarch Parthenius III<br>Pope of Alexandria                                            | Alexandria, Egypt    |
| Patriarchate of Antioch                   | Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran                                                                                      | St. Peter the Apostle<br>37 A.D.                                                                            | 325: Patriarchate                                                                                                                                                    | Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch and the East                                             | Demascus, Syria      |
| Patriarchate of Jerusalem                 | Palestine (Israel) Jordan, Arabia and Mt. Sinai                                                                 | St. James the Lesser<br>55 A.D.                                                                             | 451 Patriarchate                                                                                                                                                     | Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem and Holy Zion                                             | Jerusalem, Israel    |
| Church of Russia                          | Russia                                                                                                          | St. Andrew the Apostle.<br>Conversion and baptism of Prince Vladimir of Kiev and Russian people<br>988 A.D. | 1037: Under Constantinople<br>1448: Autocephalous<br>1589: Patriarchate                                                                                              | Patriarch Alexius II Moscow and All Russia                                                | Moscow, Russia       |
| Church of Serbia                          | Yugoslavia                                                                                                      | SS. Cyril and Methodius<br>867-886 A.D.                                                                     | 1219: Autonomous (St. Savas)<br>1346: Patriarchate (of Pec)<br>1766: Under Constantinople<br>1832: Autonomous<br>1879: Autocephalous<br>1920: Patriarchate of Serbia | Patriarch Paul of the Servs, Archbishop of Pec and Metropolitan of Belgrade and Carlovitz | Belgrade, Yugoslavia |

|                          |                          |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                             |                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Church of Romania        | Romania                  | Orthodoxy introduced in 1st Christian centuries by missionaries to roman seaport colonies on the Black Sea | 1359: Under Constantinople<br>1885: Autocephalous<br>1925: Patriarchate                                                                                                                                | Patriarch Theocristus of Romania, Archbishop of Bucharest and Metropolitan of Ungro-Vlachia | Bucharest, Romania     |
| Church of Bulgaria       | Bulgaria                 | Baptism of Tsar Boris by Patriarch Photius, 864 A.D. Also SS. Cyril and Methodius, 867-886 A.D.            | 917: Patriarchate (Tsar Simon)<br>1018: Under Constantinople<br>1235: 2nd Patriarchate<br>1767: Under Constantinople<br>1872: Schismatic (until 1945)<br>1945: Autocephalous<br>1961: 3rd Patriarchate | Patriarch Maximum of Bulgaria                                                               | Sofia, Bulgaria        |
| Church of Cyprus         | Cyprus                   | St. Barnabas the Apostle<br>46 A.D.                                                                        | 325: Under Jerusalem<br>413: Autocephalous                                                                                                                                                             | Archbishop Chrysostom of New Justinia and Cyprus                                            | Nicosia, Cyprus        |
| Church of Greece         | Greece                   | St. Paul the Apostle<br>51 A.D.                                                                            | 451: Under Constantinople<br>1850: Autocephalous                                                                                                                                                       | Archbishop Seraphim of Athens and All Greece                                                | Athens, Greece         |
| Church of Georgia        | Southern Russia (Iberia) | St. Andrew the Apostle<br>44 A.D.                                                                          | 325: Under Antioch<br>451: Under Constantinople<br>1089: Autocephalous<br>1811: Under Moscow<br>1917: Autocephalous-Catholicate                                                                        | Catholicos-Patriarch Elias II of Georgia and Metropolitan of Tiflis                         | Tiflis, Georgia        |
| Church of Czechoslovakia | Czechoslovakia           | SS. Cyril and Methodius<br>867-886 A.D.                                                                    | 1346: Under Serbia (Pec)<br>1766: Under Constantinople<br>1923: Autonomous                                                                                                                             | Archbishop Dorotheus of Prague and All Czechoslovakia                                       | Prague, Czechoslovakia |
| Church of Finland        | Finland                  | Orthodox Monks<br>1100-1300 A.D.                                                                           | 1809: Under Moscow<br>1918: Independent from Russia<br>1923: Autonomous                                                                                                                                | Archbishop John of Kalelia and All Finland                                                  | Koupio, Finland        |
| Church of Poland         | Poland                   | Orthodoxy introduced by missionaries from Russia during Middle Ages                                        | 1593: Under Moscow<br>1917: Under Constantinople<br>1924: Autocephalous                                                                                                                                | Metropolitan Basil of Warsaw and All Poland                                                 | Warsaw, Poland         |

|                                           |                          |                                                                                                        |                                                                                       |                                                   |                       |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Church of Albania <sup>2</sup>            | Albania                  | SS. Cyril and Methodius<br><br>867-886 A.D.<br><br>Also dates back to Apostolic Times (See Rom. 15-19) | 1346: Under Servia (Pec)<br><br>1766: Under Constantinople<br><br>1937: Autocephalous | Archbishop Anastasium of Tirana and All Albania   | Tirana, Albania       |
| "Orthodox Church in America" <sup>3</sup> | United States and Canada | St. Herman of Alaska, 1794<br><br>(Archimandrite Joseph Bolotov)                                       | 1794: Under Moscow<br><br>1924: Temporarily Autonomous<br><br>1970: Autocephalous     | Metropolitan Theodosius of all America and Canada | Washington, D.C., USA |

## NOTES TO APPENDIX I

1. This Simplified Directory was compiled by Andrew T. Kopan and was originally published in The Goyan Magazine, Vol. IX, No. 1 (Winter, 1962), pp. 18-19ff. Thereafter, an updated version has appeared annually in the Yearbook of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

2. The See has been vacant since the advent of the Communist regime in Albania. With the demise of Communism there, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has appointed Bishop Anastasius of Greece as Patriarchal Vicar and Exarch to visit Albania for the restoration of the autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church. The Illuminator (Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh), May-June, 1991. In August of 1992, Anastasius was enthroned as Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania.

3. The Canonical status of the "Orthodox Church in America," the former "Metropolia," has been in dispute since 1924 when it declared itself "temporarily autonomous" of the Church in Russia. The granting of permanent autocephaly to OCA by the church of Russia in 1970 continues the dispute. The Ecumenical Patriarchate has only a tacit recognition of OCA (as do most other autocephalous churches), until the matter can be settled by the forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church. The Illuminator (Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh), May-June 1991. Only the churches of Russia, Czechoslovakia and Poland recognize OCA.

## APPENDIX II

### Chronological History of Ethnic Orthodox Jurisdictions in America (up to 1990)

#### Greek Orthodox

- 1528 - First Greek explorers arrive in the service of Spain.
- 1767 - Greek colonists settle in New Smyrna, Florida.
- 1864 - First Greek Orthodox church in New Orleans.
- 1892 - Second and third churches in Chicago and New York.
- 1893 - Bishop Dionysius, first Greek hierarch comes to America.
- 1921 - Archbishop Meletius (later Ecumenical Patriarch) visits U.S.A.
- 1922 - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese established, Archbishop Alexander.
- 1922 - St. Athanasius Seminary established, Astoria, N.Y.
- 1923 - Dioceses established in Chicago and Boston; San Francisco in 1927.
- 1930 - Archbishop Athenagoras succeeds Alexander.
- 1937 - Holy Cross Theological School established.
- 1948 - Archbishop Athenagoras elected Ecumenical Patriarch.
- 1949 - Archbishop Michael enthroned.
- 1959 - Archbishop Iakovos enthroned.
- 1978 - Archdiocese reorganized into synodical system: 10 dioceses.
- 1990 - Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrius visits U.S.A.
  - Population: Original immigrants = 600,000; present = 2.3 million.
  - Greek Orthodox today organized into one main jurisdiction: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North & South America, with a membership of approximately 2,000,000 in 579 parishes; some insignificant break-away groups and a splintered Old Calendar jurisdiction also exist.

#### Russian Orthodox

- 1741 - Vitus Jonassen Bering explores North Pacific in the service of Russia.
- 1783 - First Russian colonization in Alaska.
- 1794 - First Russian Orthodox church established in Kodiak Island, Alaska.
- 1812 - Russian settlers, Ft. Ross, California.
- 1815 - St. Michael Church, Sitka, Alaska, established.
- 1848 - First diocese (of New Archangel) established at Sitka; Innocent first bishop.
- 1870 - Independent Diocese of Alaska and Aleutian Islands created.
- 1872 - Diocese transferred to San Francisco by Bishop John.
- 1879 - Bishop Nestor head of Diocese.
- 1888 - Bishop Vladimir.
- 1905 - Diocese relocated to New York by Archbishop Tikhon (later Patriarch of Moscow); Archbishop Eudokim follows Tikhon in 1914.
- 1908 - Seminary established by Bishop Tikhon at Minneapolis.
- 1919 - First Sobor held at Pittsburgh; Bishop Alexander heads Diocese.
- 1921 - Bishop Platon, reigning bishop.
- 1924 - Second Sobor in Detroit: Diocese proclaims itself independent of Moscow; Metropolitan Platon chosen ruling bishop.
- 1934 - Bishop Theophilus succeeds Metropolitan Platon; FROC established.
- 1938 - St. Vladimir Seminary established in New York.
- 1950 - Metropolitan Leontius heads Church.
- 1970 - Church declares itself autocephalous: OCA established. 1976 - Metropolitan Theodosius elected head of OCA.
  - Population: Less than 50% of 1.5 million Russian immigrants to U.S.A. were ethnic Russians, hence Orthodox Christians; Population today - 1 million plus.
  - Russians split today into three factions:
    1. Orthodox Church in America: 1,000,000; 440 parishes.



2. Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia: 100,000; 197 parishes.
3. Patriarchal Church: 10,000; 38 parishes.

## Syrian-Lebanese (Antiochian)

- Part of Arab migration to U.S.A., 90% Christian, 10% Muslim.
- 1878 - First Syrian family arrives in U.S.A.
- 1890 - Accelerated immigration from Syria and Lebanon.
- 1892 - Syrian Mission of Russian Orthodox Church founded.
- 1895 - Rev. Raphael Hawaweeny brought from Russia to supervise Syrian Church.
- 1901 - Rev. Hawaweeny consecrated first Orthodox bishop in America.
- 1914 - Metropolitan Germanus of Lebanon sent to U.S.A. by Patriarch of Antioch.
- 1917 - Bishop Aftimius of Brooklyn succeeds Bishop Raphael.
- 1924 - Bishop Victor, first Archbishop of Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese.
- 1924 - Bishop Emmanuel succeeds Bishop Aftimius on other side.
- 1936 - Bishop Anthony Bashir consecrated in New York.
- 1936 - Bishop Samuel David, his rival, consecrated in Toledo.
- 1958 - Michael Shaheen succeeds Bishop Samuel David in Toledo.
- 1966 - Archbishop Philip Saliba succeeds Archbishop Anthony.
- 1975 - Two Syrian factions united under Archbishop Philip, one of the most consistent and insistent spokesmen for a united American Orthodoxy.
- 1977 - Patriarch Elias IV of Antioch visits U.S.A.
  - Estimated population of Antiochian Orthodox = 280,000 in 125 parishes; Melkites = 25,000 in 28 parishes; and Maronite = 30,000 in 50 parishes, both united with Rome.
- 1985 - Patriarch Ignatius IX of Antioch in America: meets with Evangelical Orthodox.
- 1987 - Evangelical Orthodox accepted into Church.

## Ukrainian Orthodox

Two waves of migration: 1870-1914 and 1945-1951 of approximately 500,000, most members of Slavic Uniate group in communion with Rome (Byzantine Catholic).

- 1918 - Mass defection from Uniate Church due to pioneer work of Fr. Alexis Toth (1853-1909) of Minneapolis, leads to establishment of Independent Ukrainian Church under Russian Mission.
- 1924 - Bolshevik Revolution leads to splintering groups; Bishop John Teodorovich from Kiev proclaimed bishop (self-consecrated), leads to more splintering, especially between American and Canadian branches.
- 1931 - Further defection from Uniates brings about establishment of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America under Ecumenical Patriarchate with Joseph Zuk as first bishop, elected at first convention.
- 1937 - Bishop Bohdan succeeds Bishop Joseph under Ecumenical Patriarchate.
- 1949 - Archbishop John Teodorovich and Archbishop Mstyslaw unite their two factions to form the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States and Canada under independent jurisdiction.
- 1950 - Ukrainian emigres form Ukrainian Autocephalic Church under Archbishop Gregory.
- 1954 - Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Exile under Metropolitan Polycarp.
- 1955 - St. Andrew Theological College established in Winnipeg, Canada.
- 1966 - Bishop Andrew succeeds Bishop Bohdan under Ecumenical Patriarchate.
- 1987 - Bishop Vsevolod succeeds Bishop Andrew under Ecumenical Patriarchate.
  - Today Ukrainian Orthodox are divided into three jurisdictions:
    1. Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada; 140,000; 250 parishes.
    2. Ukrainian Orthodox Church of U.S.A.: 85,000; 92 parishes.
    3. Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America (Ecumenical Patriarchate), 30,000; 28 parishes (balance of Ukrainians are Byzantine Catholics).

## Serbian Orthodox

- Early Serbian migration to New Orleans and southern coast, and to San Francisco in mid-19th Century; an estimated 175,000 Serbs emigrated to America.

1894 - First church established in Jackson, CA; later in Chicago and in Pennsylvania.  
 1921 - Charter to organize diocese given by Patriarch of Serbia.  
 1923 - St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville, Ill., established; became diocese headquarters.  
 1926 - Bishop Mardary consecrated first hierarch of Serbian Orthodox diocese.  
 1940 - Bishop Dionysius arrives in U.S.A. to assume leadership of Church.  
 1943 - Arranges for mass immigration of refugees fleeing persecution in Yugoslavia; among them, the pious Bishop Nicholas Velimirovic who had served as administrator of Serbian churches in the 1920s.  
 1963 - Schism in the Church due to politics in Yugoslavia; two jurisdictions evolve in U.S.A.; one under Patriarchate of Serbia (under control of Communist regime; other independent of Patriarchate under Bishop Dionysius.  
 1964 - Bishops Fimilian, Stefan and Gregory assume control of Patriarchal Church.  
 1976 - Lawsuits decided in favor of Patriarchal (canonical) Church.  
 1977 - Bishop Dionysius moves headquarters to Grayslake, Ill., builds new Gracanica Monastery.  
 1978 - Bishop Christopher (native of Texas), bishop in Patriarchal Church.  
 1984 - Bishop Irenaeus succeeds Bishop Dionysius as head of "free" Church.  
 1991 - Schism healed with two parallel jurisdictions merging eventually into one.  
 1992 - Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Paul visits U.S.A. to confirm healing of schism. Today Serbian Church exists in two parallel jurisdictions:

1. Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church for the U.S.A. and Canada: 100,000; 80 parishes.
2. Metropolitanate of New Gracanica for U.S.A. and Canada: 30,000; 55 parishes.

## Romanian Orthodox

- Romanians appeared sporadically in U.S.A. before 1870s; some were in California gold rush of 1849; some served in Civil War; between 1870 and 1900, about 18,000 immigrants arrived, mostly from Moldavia and Transylvania; by 1920 an estimated 85,000 had arrived.

1890s- First two Romanian churches in Canada.  
 1904 - First church established in America at Cleveland, Ohio.  
 1918 - Abortive attempt to unite Romanian churches into episcopate.  
 1923 - Youngstown, Ohio meeting established episcopate; remained inactive.  
 1930 - Forty parishes chartered under Patriarchate of Romania.  
 1935 - Bishop Polycarp Monusca consecrated for American diocese.  
 1937 - Vatra Romaneasca established in Grass Lake, MI; diocese center.  
 1939 - Bishop Polycarp returns to Romania and is marooned by outbreak of war; Romanian Orthodox bishopless until 1950 as a result.  
 1950 - Romanian Diocese declared "autonomous" at Detroit convention.  
 1952 - Layman Valerian Trifa elected bishop; consecrated by uncanonical Teodorovich Ukrainian faction.  
 1950 - Remnant Romanians accept Bishop Andrew Moldovan from Romania.  
 1966 - Bishop Victorin Ursache succeeds Bishop Andrew.  
 1985 - Archbishop Valerian deported from U.S.A., succeeded by Bishop Nathaniel Popp, first American-born hierarch.

- Currently, two Romanian jurisdictions:

1. Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (OCA): 55,000; 83 parishes.
2. Romanian Orthodox Missionary Archdiocese: 15,000; 14 parishes.

## Carpatho-Russian Orthodox

- Migrations from the eastern provinces of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, namely Moravia, Slovakia and Ruthenia (now Czechoslovakia), and from Galicia in the western Ukraine and the Carpathian Mountains in present-day Romania make up this jurisdiction; between 1880-1914 some 140,000 emigrated to America; today number over 600,000; by 1920, 78% lived in urban areas of Middle Atlantic States.

1891 - Beginning of defections from Uniate (Catholic) Church to which their ancestors were forced to belong by Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (1596).  
 1916 - Carpatho-Russian eparchy established within Russian Mission.  
 1936 - American Carpatho-Russian Diocese established under Ecumenical Patriarchate; Bishop Orestes consecrated at Constantinople (1937).  
 1951 - Christ the Savior Seminary founded at Johnstown, PA, diocese center.

1966 - Bishop Orestes elevated to rank of Metropolitan.  
 1986 - Bishop Nicholas succeeds Metropolitan Orestes.  
 - Today, Carpatho-Russians are divided among four jurisdictions:  
 1. American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church (under Ecumenical Patriarchate): 115,000; 70 parishes.  
 2. In the Orthodox Church in America: 200,000.  
 3. In the Patriarchal Russian Church: 18,000.  
 4. Balance of 225,000 are Byzantine Rite Catholics.

## Bulgarian Orthodox

- Bulgarian immigration to America initially from Macedonia and later from Kingdom of Bulgaria: 50,000 came between 1900-1910; 70,000-100,000 today.

1907 - First church established in Granite City (Madison), IL.  
 1922 - Bulgarian Orthodox Mission established by Holy Synod in Bulgaria.  
 1938 - Mission raised to Diocese with Bishop Andrew as head in New York.  
 1947 - Diocese elevated into Archdiocese for U.S.A., Canada and Australia.  
 1963 - Dissension in Archdiocese over ties with Communist homeland.  
 1964 - Faction breaks away and establishes diocese under Russian Church Outside Russia.  
 1972 - Archbishop Andrew dies; Bishop Joseph succeeds him.  
 1976 - Breakaway faction under Bishop Cyril joins OCA.  
 - Bulgarian Orthodox divided today among three jurisdictions:  
 1. Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church (canonical): 120,000; 21 parishes.  
 2. Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church (noncanonical): 105,000; 18 parishes.  
 3. In the Orthodox Church in America.

## Albanian Orthodox

- Albanians first came to the U.S.A. at beginning of 20th century; today an estimated 70,000 Albanian Americans in U.S.A.; almost all Orthodox Christians.

1908 - First Albanian Orthodox Church established in Boston under Ecumenical Patriarchate.  
 1908 - Ordination of Fan S. Noli, Harvard educated Albanian immigrant into priesthood by Russian Orthodox Bishop Platon; later elected Bishop.  
 1932 - Returning from Albania where he served as Prime Minister, Bishop Fan Noli organizes independent Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese, serving as its head until his death in 1965.  
 1950 - Bishop Mark reorganizes Albanians into independent diocese under the Ecumenical Patriarchate.  
 1971 - Fan Noli group joins OCA as ethnic diocese.  
 - Albanian Orthodox divided into two jurisdictions today:  
 1. Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America (OCA): 45,000; 16 parishes.  
 2. Albanian Orthodox Diocese in America (Ecumenical Patriarchate): 7,000; 10 parishes.

## Byelorussian Orthodox

- A Slavic people from western Russia who migrated to America between 1880 and 1914; numbers today between 175,000 to 200,000; most absorbed into the Russian Orthodox Church of North America (now OCA).

1949 - Post-World War II immigrants establish independent ethnic jurisdictions; autocephalous diocese established in Cleveland, Ohio.  
 - Today, Byelorussians are divided into two groups:  
 1. Byelorussian Autocephalic Orthodox Church in U.S.A. (Archbishop Mikalay).  
 2. Byelorussian Orthodox Church under jurisdictions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

## "Macedonian" Orthodox

- Macedonian Americans, relatively small group emigrating from southern Yugoslavia in early 20th Century but identified themselves as Bulgarian Orthodox: some 50,000 in U.S.A.

1959 - Patriarch of Serbia forced by Communist Government to recognize schismatic Macedonian Orthodox Church for Republic of Macedonia in Yugoslavia.

1962 - First Macedonian Orthodox Church organized in Gary, Ind.

1963 - Archbishop Dositheus emigrates from Yugoslavia to lead mission.

1967 - Dositheus named Metropolitan of Macedonian Church under jurisdiction of Holy Synod of Republic of Macedonia in Yugoslavia.

- Today, there are 11 active parishes under Bishop Cyril in Skoplje, Yugoslavia and known as the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

## Miscellaneous Orthodox

A number of other ethnic Orthodox churches in the U.S.A., too small to be organized into a diocese and consisting of only a few parishes each. Among them are:

1. Estonian Orthodox Church in Exile.
2. Finnish Orthodox Church.
3. Slavonic Orthodox Church in Exile.
4. "Turkish" Orthodox Church.

## RECAPITULATION

Of several jurisdictions listed above, two are multi-ethnic.

### **Under Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople:**

1. Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.
2. American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese U.S.A.
3. Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America and Canada.
4. Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America.
5. Byelorussian Orthodox Church.

### **Under Orthodox Church in America:**

1. Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.
2. Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church.
3. Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese.
4. Exarchate of Mexico.

## APPENDIX III

### ATTEMPTS AT ORTHODOX UNITY IN AMERICA

1. Pioneer work of itinerant priests Agapius Hocharenko (Ukrainian) and Ambrose Vrettos (Greek-Russian) and others in serving early ethnic parishes in 19th Century America.
2. Effort of Archbishop Tikhon in 1904-1906 to establish a multinational church jurisdiction in America with ethnic dioceses, under the Metropolitanate of Moscow (Meyendorff Vision 15-16).
3. Vision of Archbishop Meletius of Athens of a united Orthodoxy under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople during his first American visit in 1918. Later as Ecumenical Patriarch in 1921, he expressed hope for a united "American Orthodox Church" (Barringer 13).
4. Synodical degree of Ecumenical Patriarch-elect Meletius IV in 1922 reassigning churches in the "Diaspora" to the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.
5. Instructions of Patriarch Sergius of Moscow in 1925 to Russians in heterodox lands to ally themselves with Orthodox of other ethnic backgrounds in times of trouble.
6. Pioneer work of Albanian Archbishop Fan Noli for Pan- Orthodox unity in the 1930s.
7. Call for unity by Greek Archbishop Athenagoras during his American tenure, 1931-1948.
8. Establishment of "Federation of Orthodox Greek Catholic Churches in America" by Greek, Russian, Antiochian and Lebanese jurisdictions, which provided a semblance of unity, 1943-1960 (Surrency).
9. Establishment of SYNDESMOS in Paris in 1953 as an international youth movement for the purpose of encouraging Church unity and cooperation worldwide.
10. Founding of the Council of Eastern Orthodox Youth Leaders of the Americas (CEOYLA), in New York in 1954 by seven mainline Orthodox youth organizations for the purpose of promoting Church unity in the Americas.
11. Statement by famed theologian Hamilcar Alivizatos at 2nd Assembly of World Council of Churches in Evanston, IL, calling for a united Orthodox Church in America in 1954.
12. Establishment of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) at New York in 1960, at the prompting of CEOYLA, to work for church unity at the highest levels.
13. Ecumenical Patriarchate begins series of Pan-Orthodox conferences in Rhodes, Greece in 1961 and again in 1963, 1964 and 1968, in preparation for convening a major Pan-Orthodox Council to address pressing theological issues; subsequent conferences held in Athens and Geneva, Switzerland; most Orthodox churches in attendance.<sup>1</sup>
14. Staging of largest ever Pan-Orthodox Vespers and Unity Festival with the participation of all American hierarchs at Pittsburgh Stadium in 1963 under CEOYLA auspices.
15. Request of SCOBA to place issue of ecclesiastical unity in America on agenda of a Pan-Orthodox meeting in Geneva, rebuffed by Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1965.
16. Christmas 1966 letter from Metropolitan Irenaeus of Russian Metropolia to all heads of autocephalous churches on church unity in America.
17. Establishment of autocephalous Orthodox Church in America in 1970 and its consequences:

- a. Refusal of Ecumenical Patriarchate to recognize autocephaly of OCA.<sup>2</sup>
  - b. Church of Russia calls upon Ecumenical Patriarchate to grant autocephaly to Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in U.S.A. to work out accord of unity with OCA.
  - c. Patriarchate of Alexandria advocates theory that all ethnic Orthodox Christians in America accept jurisdiction of Ecumenical Patriarchate as per canon law (Meyendorff Unity 100-102).
  - d. Patriarchate of Antioch supports theory of autocephalous churches in America in that administrative independence is the road to unity.
  - e. Church of Romania supports notion of ethnic ties with mother churches.
18. Ecumenical Patriarchate places issue of unity of Orthodox churches in "Diaspora" on agenda of forthcoming "Great and Holy Council" at Inter-Orthodox meeting Geneva, Switzerland in 1976.
  19. Conference of American Orthodox hierarchs at Johnstown, PA on Orthodox unity, 1978, under the chairmanship of Archbishop Iakovos.
  20. Evangelical Orthodox received into Antiochian jurisdiction by Metropolitan Philip in 1987.
  21. Establishment of Bilateral Commission to study organic unity between OCA and Antiochian Archdiocese in 1981; after a series of meetings, joint encyclical issued, 1989.
  22. Patriarch Elias IV of Antioch issues call for church unity in pastoral visit to America (Barringer 13).
  23. Preliminary report on Orthodox Diaspora and unity issued at the Ecumenical Patriarchate Center in Switzerland in 1990 by Preparatory Commission for the Great and Holy Council.
  24. Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrius speaks to OCA's Metropolitan Theodosius in Washington, D.C. during 1990 visit to America on the scandal of disunity in America.
  25. Ecumenical Patriarchate and OCA issue joint statement on conclusion of talks following visit of OCA delegation led by Archbishop Peter of New York to the See of Constantinople, 1991 (Orthodox Church News, June 12, 1991).
  26. First publication of Orthodox Unity by Fr. Vasile Hategan, 1991.
  27. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew hosts OCA delegation led by Metropolitan Theodosius at the Phanar for talks on unity, 1993 (The Orthodox Church February, 1993, 1 & 3).

### NOTES TO APPENDIX III

1. For information in what is being hailed as the first "ecumenical" council in over a thousand years (the last one for the Orthodox Church was held in 787 A.D.), see Harakas, Something is Stirring in World Orthodoxy, op. cit., and Towards the Great Council (Chambesy, Switzerland: Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 1972). passim.
2. For the ramifications and discussions on this issue see Bogolepov, Trempelas, and Schmemmann, "The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology," pp. 49-75; also Andrew T. Kopan, "The Autocephaly of the Russian Metropolia," Diakonia, Vol. VI, No. 2 (1971), pp. 186-189.

## APPENDIX IV

### STANDING CONFERENCE OF CANONICAL ORTHODOX BISHOPS IN THE AMERICAS

**Archbishop Iakovos**

**Metropolitan Philip**

**Chairman**

**Vice Chairman**

**Metropolitan Joseph**

**Very Rev. Paul Schneirla**

**Secretary**

**Recording Secretary**

**Bishop Nicholas**

**Rev. Milton B. Efthimiou**

**Treasurer**

**Consultant**

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Most Rev. Archbishop Victorin  
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## APPENDIX V

### Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission Chambesy, November 10-17, 1990 ORTHODOX DIASPORA Adopted Text

#### Introduction

The Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission met at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambesy from November 10 through 17 under the Chairmanship of His Eminence Metropolitan Bartholomew of Chalcedon and with the representatives and their advisers of all the Orthodox Churches participating in the project of determining an Orthodox consensus on the topic of the "Orthodox Diaspora."

After the opening address of the Chairman and the reading of the report of the Secretary, His Eminence Metropolitan Damascene of Switzerland, regarding the preparation for the Great and Holy Council, the Commission discussed in detail the whole question of the "Orthodox Diaspora" based on the contributions of the Holy Orthodox Churches, and arrived at the decision to submit its proposal on the question to the coming Fourth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference.

1. a) The Commission stated that every Orthodox Church is unanimous that the problem of the Orthodox Diaspora be resolved as quickly as possible and that it be organized in a way that is in accordance with Orthodox ecclesiological tradition and the canonical praxis of the Orthodox Church.

b) The Commission also stated that during the current phase it is not possible to follow exactly the Church's strict canonical order in this matter. For this reason, the Commission arrived at the conclusion to propose the creation of a transitional structure that would prepare the groundwork for a strictly canonical solution to the problem that will be based on principles and directives defined below. This preparatory phase should not go beyond the convocation date of the Great Council of the Orthodox Church, so that the Great Council might confirm the canonical solution to the problem.

2. a) As the canonical solution to the question is being prepared, the Commission proposes that "Episcopal Assemblies" be created in each of the regions defined below bringing together all the canonically recognized bishops of that region, who will continue in their relationship with their current jurisdictions during the transitional phase.

b) The Assemblies will be comprised of all bishops of each region, who are in canonical communion with all the Holy Orthodox Churches. They will have as their president the primate of the jurisdiction of the Church of Constantinople, and in his absence, the president will be according to order of the diptychs. The Assemblies will have an executive committee formed from among the presiding hierarchs of the various jurisdictions that exist in the region.

c) The work and responsibility of these Episcopal Assemblies will bear witness to the unity of Orthodoxy. They will begin to develop a common ministry for all Orthodox living in the region; to project inter-Orthodox cooperation in the relationship with other confessions, as well as in the society at large; to cultivate theological and religious education; etc. Decisions on matters will be made by majority vote (of the Assembly members).

# **POSTSCRIPT: PROGRESS AND REGRESSION**

## **on the Constitutions of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 1922-1982**

**by Dr. James Steve Counselis\*\***

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The sixtieth anniversary of the organizational establishment of the American Archdiocese is an event to celebrate joyfully. And given the fact that the constitutional structure of this church was changed in 1977, it is an apt opportunity to reflect historically on the constitutional structure of this church. Also, it is an appropriate opportunity to reflect upon practical Orthodox ecclesiology in the American legal milieu. For purposes of this discussion, the church structures in Canada and Latin America will be excluded, each requiring a separate study.

Within the American political doctrine of the separation of church and state, the formation and operation of churches is a private matter for people to group themselves under the legal structure of a non-profit corporate body. Under this American legal structure, the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America was incorporated under New York statute in 1921. This corporate charter and the uniform parish by-laws made thereunder constitute one part of the legal structure of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America. A second element in the archdiocesan constitutional structure is, collectively, the several archdiocesan constitutions granted by the Ecumenical Throne. These constitutions are of 1922, 1927, 1931, and 1977, the last being the current document under which this Archdiocese operates. The third of these constitutional elements in the structure of the American Archdiocese are the over 450 independent, separate parish church corporations, which govern directly all parochial resources and provide direct parochial services to the members of the parishes. But before this structure of documents can be reviewed with profit, the nature and principles of American constitutionalism and Orthodox Christian ecclesiology require delineation.

### **AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONALISM:**

Professor of History Andrew C. McLaughlin of the University of Chicago gave the 1932 Anson G. Phelps Lectures at New York University. This lecture series was titled, "The Foundations of American Constitutionalism." In these justly famous lectures, McLaughlin characterized American constitutionalism by five institutionalized ideas: (1) the social compact; (2) representation; (3) the constitutional convention; (4) the reign of law; (5) federalism. From these notions have risen the democratic expectations of American Orthodox Christians for an ecclesial structure that comports with the American constitutional experience.

The American Orthodox Christian buttresses these democratic notions theologically when he construes the church as the Eucharistic Community of right believers and as a royal priesthood or holy nation, wherein all persons are equal before the footstool of God. For the American Orthodox Christian, the Apostolic Counsel of Jerusalem, documented in the Book of Acts, is the model of the collegium of saints on earth who gather to elect their deacons and other clergy, who gather to make useful rules for church governance, and who gather to decide in the presence of the Holy Spirit the teachings or dogmata of the Church. The ecclesiological concerns of laymen in the United States are not unique, for the Cotsonis documents the same concerns among laymen of the Church of Greece. In a significant way the Puritan Divines of New England and American Orthodox Christians meet in the twentieth century.

### **ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ECCLESIOLOGY:**

Orthodox Christian ecclesiology is discussed in one of two contexts. The one context is in Eucharistic theology; the other is in canon law. In the first context, the Church is construed theologically as the praying Eucharistic community, wherein the whole spiritual edifice of the Church is constructed and Orthodox Christian anthropology finds its finest expression. The context of canon law construes the Church as a legal body within the cultural framework of Roman law as it evolved in the Christian Byzantine East. From within this framework, the canon law is the one half of the Byzantine code that has survived to this day. Unfortunately, Eucharistic theology and its theology of man has not been instructive in the formation and implementation of the canon law.

The 1921 articles of incorporation contain the following language on the purposes of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America:

*To edify the religious and moral life of the Greek Orthodox Christians in North and South America on the basis of the Holy Scriptures, the rules and canons of the Holy Apostles and the seven Oecumenical Councils of the ancient undivided church as they are or shall be actually interpreted by the Great Church of Christ in Constantinople and to exercise governing authority over and to maintain advisory relations with Greek Orthodox Churches throughout North and South America and to maintain spiritual and advisory relations with synods and other governing authorities of the said church located elsewhere.*

The reference to Holy Writ, canons of the church councils and the Ecumenical Throne's jurisdictional competence to interpret these sources placed an hierarchial and undemocratic system of church governance within the purview and control of American law. Byzantine monarchy and its caesaropapistic pretensions are part of the model of Orthodox Christian church governance. The model of the Orthodox bishop in canon law is that of the emperor-bishop — a caesaropapistic notion that has been reversed for churchmen by modern historical experience into "ethnarch" or "head of nation." Canon law defines dioceses as fiefs and benefices. Canon law regulates clerical and lay statuses within the church, especially episcopal status and relations among bishops, synods, and churches. Canon law defines and regulates a bishop's religious, administrative, legislative, and judicial functions. Canon law defines the clergy as a guild; and a synod of bishops as government. And canon law defines the substance of theological creed, *viz.*, the issues which define "right believers" or "orthodox" from "other believers" or "heterodox," whatever their type.

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who calls you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.*

—I Peter 2:9

Without the practical restraint of the Emperor and Roman law or the restraint of current civil governments of nation-states, canon law defines the church hierarchically in absolute terms with the bishop as absolute monarch.

In her history, the Orthodox Church has had to be flexible and to adapt to a wide range of political; social and economic systems. In the United States, America's democratic ethos does not tolerate extreme arbitrary behavior of anyone, clergy or no. Indeed, American democratic expectations are that there is accountability for everyone's behavior in this world, regardless of status. In particular, there is accountability for everyone's behavior in this world, regardless of status. In particular, there is a restraining effect upon gross absolutism because American civil law guarantees to every church member his or her say and vote. And in the American version of the Greek Orthodox Church, lay participation in the control over real estate and fiscal resources has an added restraining effect upon arbitrary clerical behavior of whatever type. There is the further fact that several Orthodox bishops have been brought into civil courts, the effect being to reduce arbitrary episcopal behavior over time.

There is a creative tension in the American Archdiocese between the American democratic ethos and Byzantine ecclesial autocracy. Out of this creative tension, this writer believes that a new mode of episcopal service is evolving within American Orthodox Christian church life. It is a model of episcopal service that is built upon the theological anthropology of the Church. The traditional Orthodox episcopal model of emperor-bishop is being replaced by the ideal of Christ as rabbi and *kathegetes*. This mode of episcopal service is more American and Orthodox than Greek Orthodox as evidenced by the church's historical practice in modern times.

### **CONTINUING CONSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

A document-by-document comparison of the four constitutions of this American Archdiocese reveals five continuing constitutional characteristics, each of which is found in the current 1977 church constitution.

The first structural characteristic of the American Archdiocese is the fact that it is an international rather than a national church. In name and operations, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America comprehends Canadian, Latin American and United States parishes and diocesan structures. The practical degree to which the Chancellor's administration has been effective over the years in serving multinational parochial needs requires study. But the presence of parishes throughout the western hemisphere requires at least parochial clergy for these established communities.

The establishment of an hierarchical ecclesial structure with an archbishop for the whole archdiocese, bishops or dioceses, and priests for parish churches is the second continuing constitutional characteristic. Also, this hierarchical principle extends above the American Archdiocese to that of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Each of the four constitutions explicitly states the superior jurisdiction of the Great Church of Christ over the American Church.

The third continuing constitutional characteristic is the autonomous status of the American Archdiocese. The appointment of all bishops, the approval of all churchwide legislation, and the direct control over all bishops, the approval of all churchwide legislation, and the director control over all theological, inter-religious and inter-church relations are all current prerogatives of the Ecumenical Throne. For the most part, the practical matters of internal governance and policy are not subject to detailed scrutiny and control by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

CHART NO. 1.

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHS  
SINCE 1923\*

**Gregory VII 1923**  
**Constantine 1924-25**  
**Basil III 1925-1929**  
**Photius II 1929-1936**  
**Benjamin I 1936-1946**  
**Maximus V 1946-1948**  
**Athenagoras I 1948-1972**  
**Demetrius 1972-1991**  
**Bartholomew 1991-present**

\*Basil K. Stephanides, *Ekklesiastiki Istoría: Ap. Archis Mechri Simeron* [Church History: From the Beginning until Today] (Greek text: Athens: Starr Publishers – A.E. Papademetriou 1948), p. 739.

Lay representation in some form at all levels of church governance is the fourth characteristic that continues across all four constitutions. Church congresses, diocesan assemblies, councils of all varieties and levels, and parish trustees are the typical organs for lay participation along with the lower clergy. With the exceptions of parish church boards of trustees, the parish clergy participate as equals.

The last characteristic is the mention and support of specific archdiocesan institutions for education and philanthropy. In particular, a theological school or seminary is mentioned in all four constitutional documents.

All five of these continuing constitutional characteristics of the American Archdiocese embodied in the 1977 constitution also, are important to recognize. They represent the historical common denominator of requisite ecclesial institutions that fit a hybrid American Orthodox Church at this time. But a document-by-document review of these four archdiocesan constitutions reveals some other facts of importance.

#### **PROGRESSIVE CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS:**

Three important constitutional developments over the 1922-1982 period can be construed to be progressive. The first of these is the increased scope of Orthodox Christians under the jurisdiction of the American Archdiocese. In the 1922 and 1927 constitutions, only Greek-speaking Orthodox were considered to be within archdiocesan purview. The 1931 constitution broadens the archdiocesan jurisdiction to other Orthodox Christians who are not Greek-speaking. The 1977 constitution reads: "The Archdiocese of North and South America serves all Orthodox living in the western hemisphere. Such an umbrella statement is most progressive when contrasted to the 1922 and 1927 constitutions.

*All baptized in Christ, you have all clothed ourselves in Christ; and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*

— Galatians 3:27-28

When all four constitutions are examined side-by-side, the second progressive development is the rising level of generality of goals. The 1922 constitution contained only one goal, viz. the cultivation and improvement of the religious and ethical life of Greek-speaking Orthodox. In 1927, the teaching and maintenance of the Orthodox Christian faith and the teaching of the "prototype language of the Gospel," viz., Greek, were added. However, the 1977 constitution states the archdiocese's purposes in the following:

*The purpose of the Archdiocese is to administer the life of the church in the Americas according to the Eastern Orthodox faith and tradition, sanctifying the faithful through the divine liturgy and the holy sacraments and edifying the religious and ethical life of the faithful in accordance with the holy scriptures, the decrees and canons of the holy apostles and the seven ecumenical councils of the Ancient Undivided Church, as interpreted by the practice of the Great Church of Christ in Constantinople. As to its ecumenical activities, both inter-Christian and inter-religious, the Archdiocese shall follow the position and guidelines established by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.*

Certainly, the raising of the purposes of the American Church to a higher level of generality is progressive, to say nothing of including ecumenical activities within archdiocesan concerns.

The third progressive constitutional development is the return to a synodical structure with a decentralized form of canonical dioceses and bishops. The constitutions of 1922 and 1927 provided synods; but the constitution of 1931 provided for a single canonical archbishop, quite monarchical in power and type. With the 1977 constitution, the movement toward decentralization was accomplished. This canonical pattern provided an overall solution to the problem of greater lay and lower clergy participation in the governance of a hierarchical church. It is in this sense of greater participation in the decision-making of an hierarchical church that the synodical form of church governance can be construed to be progressive.

### **CONSTITUTIONAL RETROGRESSIONS:**

From the viewpoint of American Orthodox Christians, a document-by-document review of the four constitutions reveals that two retrogressions have occurred. These retrogressions are: (1) the participation and approval of the archdiocesan constitution by laymen and lower clergy; (2) the method of selecting bishops.

The constitution of 1922 was developed and approved by the 2nd Clergy-Laity Congress in 1922. This constitution was intended to be temporary, a document to be revised in two years. The revision did not occur until 1927, and it was approved at a general meeting in the then Cathedral of St. Basil in Chicago. As to the monarchical constitution of 1931, it is a well-known fact that it was imposed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek Government. And as for the 1977 constitution, it was never presented at a referendum at any Clergy-Laity Congress, though a small committee of bishops, lower clergy and laymen participated in its construction. It appears that the Ecumenical Patriarchate was more Christian and more trusting in the past than in the present.

The method of selecting bishops has also retrogressed since the 1922 and 1927 constitutions. In these two earlier constitutions, the Clergy-Laity Congress had the opportunity to submit the names of three clergymen for transmission to the American Synod of Bishops. They, in turn, would nominate one of the three, sending that candidate's name on to Constantinople. The Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate would accept the decision of the American Synod and would elect that candidate to episcopal office. No such process is available in the 1977 constitution; and certainly nothing is said in the 1931 constitution. In the 1977 constitution there is a vaguely worded reference to the American Synod of Bishops consulting with the Archdiocesan Council on which laymen and lower clergy are present. However, the Ecumenical Patriarchate reserves the right to name bishops to American dioceses. Obviously, the ancient tradition of the local diocese selecting its own bishop and proclaiming him "Axios," is dead. There is no doubt

that the 1922 and 1927 constitutions were superior to the 1977 constitution in both the constitutional procedures and the method of selecting bishops.

#### **AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONALISM AND THE ARCHDIOCESAN CONSTITUTION OF 1977:**

For the American Archdiocese, it is in the parish church that the fullest meaning and most direct application of American constitutional principles are found. Certainly, the acts of a group of religious faithful coming together to form a parish church and incorporate it illustrates the social compact characteristic of McLaughlin's understanding of American constitutionalism. Certainly, the election of boards of trustees and the general assembly meetings of the church corporation constitute the institutionalization of representation in the best sense of the word and practice. And the creation of on-going corporate by-laws under state law through specific procedures for the church corporation to follow illustrates the basic ideas of constitutional convention and the reign of law. However, there is little doubt that the concept of federalism is not an applicable principle for a single parish church, lest two or more parish churches come together under some confederal or federal arrangement. McLaughlin's principles project our understanding of the Orthodox parish church of this Archdiocese to be by nature an American constitutional structure.

At the level of the Archdiocese, however, McLaughlin's principles of American constitutionalism are not fully present. The original 1921 incorporation of the Archdiocese resulted from a meeting; and the constitutions of 1922 and 1927 were ratified by congresses. These actions of laymen and clergy reflected the principle of social compact and partially the notion of the constitutional convention. But the 1931 and 1977 constitutions were installed in specific and bald denial of American constitutional notions — indeed, contrary to American Orthodox Christians' democratic expectations. Though it is true that the enactment of uniform parish by-laws is still a function of the Clergy-Laity Congress (even though they are approved by Constantinople), this is so because the reign of law through New York corporate statutes can not be shut down totally by ecclesial behavior that is Byzantine and autocratic. It appears that American civil law has a higher regard for the dignity and integrity of religious people than does an official church whose theological anthropology espouses the same principles.

Representation at the Clergy-Laity Congresses and Diocesan Assemblies is probably the one constitutional characteristic that still obtains. But this too, is the result of the reign of law where American corporate law guarantees each church member a say and a representative vote.

The principle of federalism is seen operating in the pragmatic relations of the several Orthodox parish corporations to the American Archdiocese. Through the assignment of clergy and the application of the Uniform Parish By-Laws, a type of confederal structure obtains, though this structure is being eroded over time by a gradual amending process of these by-laws.

*He loves us and has washed away our sins with his blood, and made us a line of kings, priests to serve his God and Father.*

— *Revelation 1:6*

The degree to which the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America conforms to American principles of constitutionalism rests upon the determined vigilance of American Orthodox Christians to see to the application of the reign of law in all ecclesial affairs. And more precisely, the power of the Congresses and Assemblies of the Church to frame and pass resolutions is theologically important. The Church in assembly and prayer theologizes, proclaiming the "Good News" through current concerns and issues of society and polity, through the application of theology to ecclesial order and affairs, through the defense of the Church against her internal and external enemies, and through the advocacy and practice of the theological pedagogy for agape. Indeed, every Congress and Assembly of the American Church should conclude its sessions with the apostolic formula. "it is good to the Holy Spirit and to Us."

## CONCLUSIONS:

Through the sixty years of the constitutional elaboration of the American Orthodox Church, the American Archdiocese has a straight development. There is no doubt that the American Archdiocese represents one of adaptive forms of the Orthodox Church through her nineteen centuries of history. And it should not come as a surprise that the American Orthodox ecclesial structure will take longer than sixty years fully to be indigenized. This writer believes that the development of an operative democratic church within the title of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America is inevitable, though he may not live to see it. Further, this democratization will occur only when the American Church takes seriously the theological anthropology of the Church and sees that the anthropology becomes the structural basis of a Christ-like church — a Christ-like ecclesiology in living practice. The true ecclesial independence of the American Orthodox Church rests in the achievement of a Christ-like ecclesiology, for creativity, wisdom and piety will be her gifts. The Church is one priesthood of believers, clergy and lay, with one Head—the Christ.

At the 1892-1893 Columbian Exposition, the World Parliament of Religions met in Chicago simultaneously. The Church of Greece was represented by the Most Reverend Dionysios Latas, Archbishop of Zante (1835-1894). To the knowledge of this writer he was the first Greek orthodox prelate to visit the United States. At this international meeting, Archbishop Dionysios made a brief presentation on the Church. He closed that presentation with this wonderful historic prayer:

*Almighty King, High Omnipotent God, look upon humankind; enlighten us that we may know Thy will, Thy ways, Thy Holy Truths; bless Thy Holy Truths; bless Thy Holy Church. Bless this country. magnify the renown people of the United States of America, which in its greatness and happiness invited us to this place from the remotest parts of the earth, and gave us a place of honor in this Columbian Year to witness with them the evidences of their great progress, and the wonderful achievement of the human mind.*

Prophetic prayer! Amen.

## ENDNOTES

1. Certificate of Incorporation of [the] Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, 17 September 1921, (Certified True Copy, County Clerk and Clerk of the Superior Court, New York County, New York File No. 7650. This text is also in Basil T. Zoustitis, *The Greeks In America and Their Work* (Greek text: New York: D.C. Divry, 1954, 1954) pp. 133 135.
2. Constitution of the Greek Archdioceses of North and South America, 11 August 1922. Certified True Copy, Greek Text, from *Patriarchikos Kodix: Synodikon Tomon ka: Sigillion, anef Chronologia*, Tome 979, pp. 1-11. The Archive of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and New Rome, Istanbul, Turkey.
3. Constitution of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, [12- 14 October 1927], *Ibid.*, 97-1 11.
4. Constitution of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, 10 January 1931. Certified True Copy Greek text. The Archives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and New Rome, Istanbul Turkey.
5. *Charter of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America*, 29 November 1977 (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1978).
6. For a Complete listing of archdiocesan institutions and parishes, see: Demitri Gemelos and Reverend Kosmas Karavellas (eds.), *Year Book 1982* (New York, NY: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 1982).

7. Andrew C. Mclaughlin, *The Foundations of American Constitutionalism* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1932).
8. John D. Zizoulas, "The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church," in John Meyendorff and Joseph McLelland (eds.), *The New Man: An Orthodox and Reformed Dialogue* (New Brunswick, NJ: Agora Books/Standard Press, 1973), pp. 1 07-131.
9. I Pet. 1:9-10.
10. Gal. 2:26, 28; Col. 3:11; Rev. 1:16.
11. Acts 1-23-26; 6:1-7; 15-1-31.
12. Jerome I. Cotsonis, *The Place of the Laity within the Ecclesial Organism according to the Canon Law of the Eastern Orthodox Church* (Greek text; Athens, 1956), pp. 15-17. See also, Athenagoras Kokkinakis, *Parents and Priests as Servants of Redemption* (New York, NY: Morehouse-Gorham Company, 1958), Chs. XXI-XXII.
13. Zizoulas, *op. cit.* See also: (1) Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, translated by A. E. Moorehouse (London: The Faith Press, Ltd., 1966); (2) Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* ([Crestwood, NY]; St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973)
14. For an overview of canon law sources, see: John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York, NY; Fordham University Press, 1974), Ch. VI. For an English translation of the traditional *Pedalion of Agapius and Nicodemus*, see D. Cummings (trans.), *The Rudder. . .* (Chicago, IL.: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1957). For English translation of Byzantine civil and canon law, see: (1) Clyde Phart (trans. and ed.) *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmodian Constitutions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1952); (2) Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.) *A select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. . .* (Cincinnati, Ohio: The Central Trust Company, 1932). Vols. XII-XVII.
15. 1921 Articles of Incorporation. *op. cit.* Pg. 5.
16. During the 1920's Venizelist-Royalist controversy over American church control, the American civil courts were used often to control arbitrary episcopal behavior regardless of political persuasion. Also for local control issues, civil suits and injunctive relief had been sought to control clerical behavior. To the knowledge of this writer, no systematic study of this matter has been made for any of the ethnic Orthodox Churches. For a sample, see, John Papas (ed. and publisher), *Greek Church in the Courts* (Printed booklet: Stanford, Conn: n.d., 1945?). This does not mean, however, that court cases involving the Orthodox Church have not made their imprint upon American case law involving religious societies. In a rapid review of encyclopaedic articles, titled, "Religious Societies" in *Corpus Juris Secundum* (1952) and *American Jurisprudence* (1973) some 28 cases were readily identifiable by title in the footnotes of these articles. Most of these cases involved the Russian Orthodox Church. The most significant case seems to be one ruled upon by the United States Supreme Court *viz.*, *Kedroff v. St. Nicholas Cathedral of the Russian Orthodox Church*, 344 U.S. 94, 97 L.Ed. 120, 73 S.Ct. 143. For the Greek Archdiocese under Archbishop Athenagoras, some legal problems are described in: George Papaioannou. *From Mars Hill to Manhattan. . .* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1976). pp. 98-121; and some of the legal documentation is found in Papas, *supra*.
17. James Steve Counelis, "Polis and Ecclesia: Toward an American Orthodox Church," *Diakonia*, Vol. VII, No. 4 (1972), — 310-325. Also, see: (1) Charles A. Frazee, *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece, 1921-1852* (Cambridge at the University Press, 1969); (2) L.S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1958); (3) Mario Rinvolucri, *Anatomy of a Church; Greek Orthodoxy Today* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1966).



18. 1922 Const., art. 1, 4; 1927 Const. art. 1, 4; 1931 Const. art. 1; 1977 Const., art 1, 4.
19. 1922 Const., art. 4, 8, 9; 1927 Const., art. 1, 4; 1931 Const. art. 6; 1977 Const., art. 5, 7, 8, 9.
20. 1922 Const., art. 2, 3; 1927 Const., art. 2a, 3; 1931 Const., art. 3; 1977 Const., art. 2, 3.
21. 1977 Const., art. 2, 11, 13, 14.
22. 1922 Const., art. 12, 13; 1927 Const., art. 13, 13; 1977 Const., art. 12.
23. 1922 Const., art. 24; 1927 Const., art. 23; 1931 Const., art. 12, 13, 14; 1977 Const., art. 18, 19, 24. 1922 Const., art. 2; 1927 Const., art. 2, 25. 1931 Const., art. 2, 26. 1977 Const. art. 1, 27. 1922 Const., art. 1, 28. 1927 Const., art. 2, 29. 1977 Const., art. 2, 30. 1922 Const., art. 7; 1927 Const., art. 7.
31. 1931 Const., art. 6.
32. 1977 Const. art. 6
33. Zoustis, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
34. 1927 Const., art. 28.
35. The Most Reverend Damaskinos, Metropolitan of Corinth and Patriarchal Exarch, Encyclical of May 20, 1930 (?), Zoustis, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-201; The Most Reverend Damaskinos, Metropolitan of Corinth and Patriarchal Exarch, Encyclical of December 30, 1930. (Original text copy distributed to parishes in writer's Library.) Also Mr. Paul Manolis, having amassed Greek Government documentation for this period is preparing an historical study for publication.
36. 1922 Const., art. 16-19; 1927 Const., art. 18-20.
37. 1977 Const., art. 13-14.
38. I Pet. 2:9-10; Cal. 1-18.
39. Basil Atesi. *Brief Episcopal History of the Church of Greece from 1833 until Today* (Greek text; Athens, A. T. Pountza, 1948), Vol. I, pp. 122- 123.
40. The Most Reverend Dionysios Latas (Archbishop of Zante, "The Greek Church," [Address given on September 13, 1893], in John H. Barrows (ed.), *The World's Parliament of Religions... The Columbian Exposition of 1893* (Chicago, IL; The Parliament Publishing Company, 1893), Vol. I, pp. 114, 352-359. An illustration depicting Archbishop Dionysios appears on p. 357.

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