

Happenings!

Sense of the Transcendent in Art and Architecture: East and West

Saturday, Sept. 18, 10a.m.-12:30 p.m.
A Society of St. John Chrysostom
Western Region workshop. St. Margaret Roman Catholic Church, Oceanside CA 92056. Presenters: Fr. Cavanaugh Wallace, Pastor of St. Margaret Church and Ekonomos Michael Courey, D.Min, Pastor of St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, Redondo Beach, CA. A free will offering will be taken. A SSJC-WR meeting will follow. Bring your own lunch.

Catholic/Orthodox *Light of the East* Conference Scheduled for Feb. 2011

A "Light of the East" West Coast Conference, *Steps to Unity; Steps to Common Witness*, featuring nationally known participants in Orthodox-Catholic dialogue, Fr. Ron Roberson, Associate Director of the USCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and Fr. Thomas FitzGerald, Dean of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Brookline, MA and Secretary of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation will take place on Saturday Feb. 5, 2011 at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, 4949 Alton Way, Irvine. CA. The Conference, open to the public, is co-sponsored by St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, Irvine, and the Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region. Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, Roman Catholic Bishop Tod Brown of Orange, and Melkite Bishop Nicholas Samra will be in attendance.

The two national speakers will discuss *Steps to Unity* in the morning session. Metropolitan Gerasimos and others will offer responses to their presentations. A panel of local speakers will discuss *Steps To Common Witness* in the afternoon session and the Conference will conclude with an ecumenical prayer

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Light of the East

*Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom
Western Region Edition*

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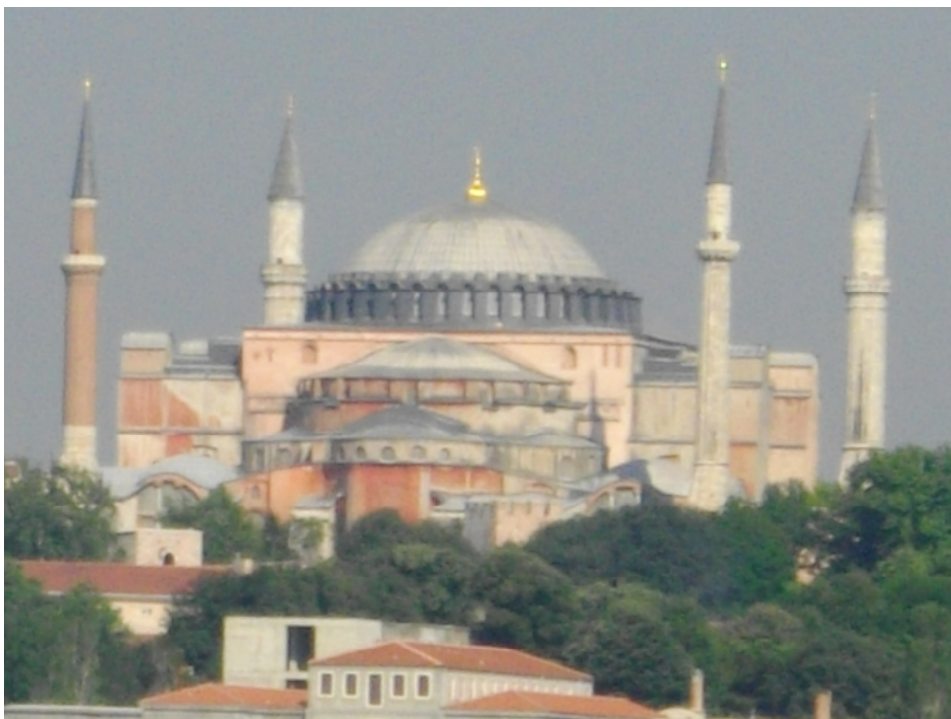
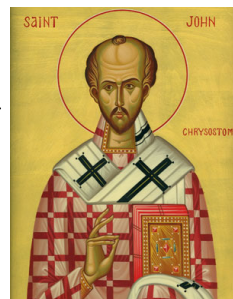


Photo by Fr. Justin Rose

Hagia Sophia, Constantinople, the greatest Byzantine Church ever, now a museum.

Report on OL-EuroEast III

Orientale Lumen movement: “The house that Jack built”

By Father Justin Rose reporting from Constantinople/Istanbul

“The house that Jack built...” was how His Grace, Romanian-Greek Catholic Bishop John Michael Botean described the *Orientale Lumen* movement at our recent OL Euro –East III opening session. In the presence of His All Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, Bishop John Michael highlighted the great achievement of Reader Jack Figel whose patience, persistence and vision made OL Euro-East a reality.

I call *Orientale Lumen* a “movement” because the gathering of friends and colleagues that has resulted from the yearly American conferences and the periodic European conferences has grown into something more than just a series of scholarly discussions. We have forged friendships and working relationships across Church lines that often seem higher and more impenetrable than the mighty Theodosian walls that still surround the ancient city of Constantinople/Istanbul.

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The Society of Saint John Chrysostom

The Society of St. John Chrysostom is an ecumenical group of clergy and lay people which promotes Eastern Christianity and Ecumenical Dialogue between the Eastern and Western Churches. It sponsors the *Eastern Churches Journal* and the annual *Oriente Lumen* Conference. It has been in existence since 1997 in the United States and for over 70 years in England.

THE GOALS OF THE SOCIETY ARE TO:

- Make known the history, worship, spirituality, discipline and theology of Eastern Christendom.
- Work and pray that all Christians, particularly the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, will attain the fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires.
- Develop educational programs which present information about the Eastern Churches.
- Organize and conduct pilgrimages and conferences that encourage ecumenical dialogue.
- Contribute to fund-raising activities which support Eastern Christian communities and other programs in need of financial aid.
- Publish books, brochures, and other information which help explain Eastern Christianity.
- Encourage and support the study of the writings and liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.
- Promote scholarships for the study of Eastern Churches in Catholic and Orthodox seminaries.

WESTERN REGION

President,
The Very Rev. Fr. George Morelli, PhD.
Vice President, The Rt. Rev. James Babcock
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Light of the East

Official newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom Western Region is published quarterly by the Western Region of the SSJC and is distributed free of charge to all SSJC members and through churches throughout the Western Region of the USA.

Editorial contact:

Editor: Rt. Rev. Archimandrite James Babcock, hcmelkite@holycrossmelkite.org
Distribution:

451 W. Madison Ave., Placentia CA 92870

Membership:

Robert Greenwell
2700 Katherine Street, El Cajon, CA 92020
rjgreenwell@sbcglobal.net

A message from the President of SSJC-Western Region

Healing Orthodox division: A step for all the Apostolic Churches

by the Very Reverend Father George Morelli, Ph.D.

Not only are the divisions among the Apostolic Churches of the East and West sinful, but the canonical irregularity of the Orthodox Churches in the Diaspora having different overlapping jurisdictions, bishops and assemblies based on the ethnicity of Orthodox immigrants (e.g. Greek, Russian, Serbian, Syrian) rather than a single Orthodox bishop in each geographical locale is also scandalous. This past May, a groundbreaking assembly of fifty-five canonical Orthodox bishops from North America took place in New York City as a step toward resolution of this gravely harmful witness of disunity. (See page three for the results of the work of this assembly.)

The goal of the assembly, presently officially named the *North American Episcopal Assembly*, is to set the foundation for the Orthodox in the United States, including hierarchs, priests, deacons and the laity of the royal priesthood, to function as one single canonical Church. One Orthodox bishop commented that such unity may not be unanimously desired, but this unity is certainly desired by the "vast majority" of Orthodox in our country.

Thus far three committees have been decided on, the Canonical Committee, the Legal Committee, and the Pastoral Committee. Members and duties are not yet specified. In general the committees' goal will be to regularize the dissimilar practices among the various jurisdictions. For example, right now several different forms are used in the reception of converts: baptism of any and all, chrismation (by different forms) of those previously validly baptized, or by a profession of faith. Another example needing regularization is the manner of reception of Roman Catholic priests: for example: by re-ordination or by profession of the Orthodox Faith and concelebrating the Divine Liturgy.

A comment made by His Grace, Bishop Basil of the Antiochian Archdiocese, about the way the meeting was conducted was: "Archbishop Demetrios [the Assembly Chairman] simply asked if there was any objection to the item being discussed. If there was no objection, there was no need to even ask for a consensus. Everything was done unanimously. It was really a very God-blessed assembly, a fruitful time together." May this path be a model for all, bishops, priests, deacons and laity who function as instruments and disciples of the Holy Spirit as we work toward the full unity of all Apostolic Churches. Overcoming canonical irregularities among the Orthodox jurisdictions in the Diaspora is a step toward healing the separation between all the Apostolic Churches, and should be prayed for by all our SSJC-WR members. As we pray during Great Vespers of Pentecost: "The Holy Spirit provideth all; overfloweth with prophecy; fulfilleth the Priesthood; and hath taught wisdom to the illiterate."

Attention SSJC-WR members, Dues are due!

Yes! It's time once again for members to renew their membership in the Society of St. John Chrysostom, Western Region. Annual dues are \$50. Proceeds are used to defray the printing of this newsletter and for stipends for our bi-monthly workshops. Please send your dues to our Treasurer, Bob Greenwell at 2700 Katherine Street, El Cajon, CA 92020. Your support is appreciated.

Full text of message of First Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Hierarchs in North and Central America

We glorify the name of the Triune God for gathering us at this first Episcopal Assembly of this region in New York City on May 26-28, 2010 in response to the decisions of the Fourth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference held at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Switzerland, from June 6-12, 2009, at the invitation of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

Gathered together in the joy of the Feast of Pentecost, we humbly recognize our calling, in our unworthiness, to serve as instruments and disciples of the Paraclete, who “holds together the whole institution of the Church” (Hymn of Vespers of Pentecost).

We honor and express gratitude to the Primates and Representatives of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches who assembled at the Ecumenical Patriarchate from October 10-12, 2008 to affirm their “unswerving position and obligation to safeguard the unity of the Orthodox Church” (Chambésy Rules of Operation, Article 5.1a) and emphasized their will and “desire for the swift healing of every canonical anomaly that has arisen from historical circumstances and pastoral requirements” (Message of the Primates 13.1-2).

We call to mind those who envisioned this unity in this region and strove to transcend the canonical irregularities resulting for many reasons, including geographically overlapping jurisdictions. For, just as the Lord in the Divine Eucharist is “broken and distributed, but not divided” (Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom), so also His Body comprises many members, while constituting His One Church.

We are grateful for the gift of the doctrinal and liturgical unity that we already share, and we are inspired by our leaders, the Heads of all the Orthodox Churches throughout the world, who proposed that which we painfully yearn for in this region, i.e., the “swift healing of every canonical anomaly” (Message of the Primates 13.2). We are also grateful that they established a fundamental process toward a canonical direction and resolution.

We are thankful to almighty God for the growth of Orthodoxy, for the preservation of our traditions, and for the influence of our communities in this region. This is indeed a miracle and a mystery.

During our gathering, and in accordance with the rules of operation of Episcopal Assemblies promulgated by the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Pre-Conciliar Conference, we established:

1. A registry of canonical bishops (Article 6.1)
2. A committee to determine the canonical status of local communities in the region that have no reference to the Most Holy Autocephalous Churches (Article 6.2)
3. A registry of canonical clergy (Article 6.3)
4. Committees to undertake the work of the Assembly, among others including liturgical, pastoral, financial, educational, ecumenical, and legal issues (Articles 11 and 12)

5. A committee to plan for the organization of the Orthodox of the region on a canonical basis (Article 5.1).

In addition to the above, we agreed that a directory would be created and maintained by the Assembly of all canonical congregations in our region.

We as Episcopal Assembly understand ourselves as being the successors of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), assuming its agencies, dialogues, and other ministries.

Moreover, at the formal request of the Hierarchs who have jurisdiction in Canada, the Assembly will submit to the Ecumenical Patriarch, in accordance with the rules of operation (Article 13), a request to partition the present region of North and Central America into two distinct regions of the United States and Canada. Additionally, at the request of the Hierarchs who have jurisdiction in Mexico and Central America, the Assembly will likewise request to merge Mexico and Central America with the Assembly of South America.

As Orthodox Hierarchs in this blessed region, we express our resolve to adhere to and adopt the regulations proposed by the Pan-Orthodox Conferences and approved by the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, and to do everything in our power by the grace of God to advance actions that facilitate canonical order in our region.

We confess our fidelity to the Apostolic Orthodox faith and pledge to promote “common action to address the pastoral needs of Orthodox living in our region” (Chambésy, Decision 2c). We call upon our clergy and faithful to join us in these efforts “to safeguard and contribute to the unity of the Orthodox Church of the region in its theological, ecclesiological, canonical, spiritual, philanthropic, educational and missionary obligations” (Article 5.1) as we eagerly anticipate the Holy and Great Council.

The Assembly concluded with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Friday, May 28, 2010 at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral in New York City with prayers offered for the victims of the current disaster on the Gulf Coast.

Of the 66 Hierarchs in the region, 55 were present at this Assembly. *Press Release, May 28, 2010.*

2011 Light of the East Conference

Continued from page 1

service. Registration fee of \$20.00 includes lunch. For further information contact Fr. Steve Tschlis, pastor of St. Paul's, Irvine: father@stpaulsirvine.org or (949) 733-2366. To be added to the e-notification list for this and other events contact SSJC-WR Secretary, Anne Petach: apetach@sbcglobal.net or (818) 347-0758 (voicemail). Newsletter readers are urged to disseminate information about this Conference.

Oriente Lumen movement - “The house that Jack built”

Continued from page 1

For the first time, I eagerly touched the Royal Doors in *Hagia Sophia* and stood in the center of her magnificence agape with wonder and awe. I was equally awe-struck, however, as a Greek Catholic presbyter, by kissing the hand of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch and by sitting in a place of honor in a Greek Orthodox monastery on the island of Patmos.

The OL conference in Istanbul had a familiar format to the ones I had attended in Washington, D.C. and San Diego, except that we had most evenings free. This was a welcome respite since we did not stay at the conference site, but travelled to special events along with the usual talks and panel discussions.

Monday evening we listened to the wise words of His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew and Bishop John Michael, our moderator. We had the chance to renew old acquaintances at the customary social hour that followed.

Tuesday morning we packed up early and got on a boat to go to the Island where Halki Seminary sits empty, closed down by the secular Turkish government. Halki is a beautiful complex, pristinely maintained in the hope that it will one day again receive Orthodox seminarians. We had two erudite talks there, one from Metropolitan Kallistos on the Council of Florence and one on Canon Law by Archbishop Cyril (Vasil S.J.), the new Secretary (second in command) at the Oriental Congregation in Rome. Considering the steep incline of the hills on the island, we were all grateful for the horse-drawn carriages that took us to and from the seminary.

Wednesday we listened to Archimandrite Robert Taft S.J. give an excellent talk about the Liturgy and Church Councils. We then had the privilege of joining the Ecumenical Patriarch during a pastoral visit to one of his parishes in Istanbul. Since,

by law, we cannot dress as clergy in Istanbul, most of us carried our *exo-rason* and *skufos* with us and put them on within the confines of the church or monastery we visited. I regretted that choice in that beautiful but steamy parish Church that morning. I will never again complain about the heat in San Bernardino, CA!

After the Liturgy, we again joined his All Holiness for one of the most beautiful events I will ever witness. At Baloukli monastery, the site of the shrine of the Theotokos-the Life Giving Spring, we prayed the memorial service with the Ecumenical Patriarch at the tomb of Patriarch Athenagoras. I do not know how many Ecumenical Patriarchs are entombed at this convent or how long this has been a custom, although it would not surprise me if this were a post-Ottoman tradition. At any rate, I was utterly without words, praying at the tomb of Patriarch Athenagoras, the Greek Orthodox patriarch who, at the

beginning of Vatican II, told my Melkite Patriarch, Maximos IV that he represented the Orthodox Church at the Council. The seed that those visionaries planted more than 40 years ago is beginning to bear some fruit.

Although it would have been difficult to follow that experience with anything greater, we did thoroughly enjoy our last stop that day. We had a tour and Vespers at the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Praying in the Church of St. George



His All Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew and clergy of the Patriarchate sing the Trisagion at the tomb of Patriarch Athenagoras at the Baloukli Monastery.

Photo by Lynn Cisneros

with the relics of St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory the Theologian was a fitting end to a day spent with the living Patriarch of Constantinople and the relics of his predecessors.

Although the “conference” ended on Thursday with erudite talks from Sister Vassa (Larin) and Dr. Richard Schneider, the wonderful things that Jack planned for us continued through the weekend.

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Oriente Lumen movement...

Continued from page 4.

On Friday, we packed up and spent the day touring some of the most important Churches in Istanbul. I was really glad that I had visited *Hagia Sophia* earlier in the week so that I could benefit from the commentary of Dr. Schneider, our itinerant tour guide for the day. I had gotten the initial “gaping” out of the way in my first visit! Battling a terrible cold, Dr. Schneider was a trouper that day providing a unique perspective on the places we visited. Aside from the Great Church, we visited the *Chora* with its exquisite icons and *Blachernae*, where a palace once stood and where the Turks finally breached the walls on May 28, 1453. It was there that the *Akathistos* hymn was composed and first sung. We sang “Triumphant Leader...” in several languages while we visited there. Finally, we spent time at the Church of Sts. Sergios and Bacchos, now a functioning mosque. The dancing beauty of this structure sang to us of the ingenuity of Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora.

After all that, it was to the airport and off to Izmir, the modern city where ancient Smyrna, of St. Polycarp fame, once stood. On Saturday we had a wonderful time tromping around the ruins of Ephesus. At the Church of St. John the Evangelist we prayed before the Evangelist’s simple tomb and listened carefully to Archimandrite Robert Taft point out interesting Byzantine features in the church ruins. Many of us succumbed to the temptation of posing for pictures in the baptismal font!

The ruins of Ephesus were quite instructive. We walked inside the remains of the Cathedral Church where the Third Ecumenical Council took place. I strained to hear the debates of the Fathers who had condemned Nestorius as a heretic. A few of us quietly sang the Troparion to St. Mark of Ephesus who had resisted the reunion of the Council of Florence.

After a wonderful but long ferry ride to the Greek island of Patmos, we had a brief tour of the cave-shrine where St. John the Evangelist wrote the *Apocalypse*. Metropolitan Kallistos told stories and shared insights that made the visit memorable. Since the Metropolitan is an idiorhythmic monk of the monastery there, we received the royal treatment when we went from the cave of St. John up to the main monastery. The monks

received us with generous hospitality. We had a tour of the Catholicon, or main Church, and then of parts of the monastery culminating in a visit with the Abbot in his sitting room. We were all disappointed that our schedule did not permit a longer stay, but we had to make it back to Turkey to catch our flight back to Istanbul so that we could go home.

The next morning I sat with my long-time friend, Father Maximos of Holy Resurrection Monastery, where I am an idiorhythmic monk drinking tea with *Hagia Sophia* behind us and looking up at *Hagia Eirene* before us. As we sifted through pictures on our cameras, it was difficult to believe that all of the things I have written about happened in such a short time. After a while, Father Deacon Moses of Holy Resurrection and my parishioner, Lynn Cisneros, joined us after successfully plundering the Spice Bazaar. We all took a leisurely stroll down to the *Hippodrome* so that we could get some photos there as well. None of us were moving too quickly since we had all felt the weight of the important things we had witnessed in the preceding days and were tired from the exertion of the whole experience. It was good to have one more day to put this extraordinary time into focus.

In all, I have noted a change in my own focus. I realize after spending so much time with the Greek Orthodox Patriarch that I do not even know the name of the Greek Orthodox priest at the parish less than a mile away from mine! The real power of the *Oriente Lumen* movement is that it brings people together as friends, as sisters and brothers in Christ. Petty name calling and jurisdictional posturing melt away in the warm embrace of two people who would never have met if it were not for the OL Conference or the OL movement or Jack Figel. I hope that we continue to move toward real union. I hope that our friendships and the pain of not being able to Break Bread together at the same Altar motivates us, goads us to seek true union and true healing of the Body of Christ.

Father Justin is Pastor of St. Philip the Apostle Melkite Greek Catholic Mission, San Bernardino, CA and a Novice Associate of Holy Resurrection Monastery

“Now is the time to take a step toward unity”

Zenit, May 6. The time is now for the Orthodox and Catholic Churches to take a step toward unity, and for Benedict XVI and the Orthodox Patriarch of Moscow to meet, says the Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus.

Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk said this on May 4 at the international conference held in Rome on “The Poor Are the Precious Treasure of the Church: Orthodox and Catholics Together on the Path of Charity.”

During the conference, which was promoted by the Sant’Egidio Community, participants reflected on the reception

of the most frail in our societies, the testimony of the Fathers of the Church, and the challenges dictated by new social problems.

According to Metropolitan Filaret, the time has come to take decisive steps toward unity, reported the country’s Catholic news service.

The Orthodox leader added that both Churches seek to establish full unity, and stressed that he has come to this conclusion based on the fraternal dialogue and the meetings that they have held with representatives of the Catholic Church.

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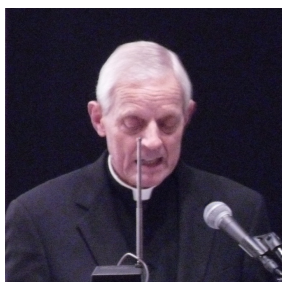
Oriente Lumen Conference XIV

Two nearly identical Oriente Lumen Conferences were held in June, one at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey and the second at Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, Washington D.C.

This year's theme was "Councils of the Church." Plenary speakers included, Metropolitan Jonah, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America; Archbishop Donald Wuerl, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Washington D.C.; Archbishop Cyril Vasil from the Congregation of Eastern Churches, The Vatican; Archimandrite Cyril Hovorum, Director of Religious Education, Russian Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow; Archimandrite Robert Taft, S.J., Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome; Fr. John Behr, St. Vladimir Seminary, Orthodox Church in America; Father Thomas FitzGerald, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School, Brookline, MA.; Fr. George Gallaro, Sts. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA.; and Mr. Elias Damianakis, Iconographer and Lecturer, Tampa Bay, FL.

Following is a brief summary of some of the presentations:

His Excellency, Donald Wuerl's presentation focused on



Christ's question to the apostles, "Who do you say that I am?" He then explained that the first four Ecumenical Councils were the Church's dogmatic answer to this question. He noted that the decision of the Council of Nicea focused on who Jesus was presented in non-biblical language. Although we take this for granted today, this was a

momentous decision at the time.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah's presentation focused on the relationship between conciliarity and hierarchy in the Church.



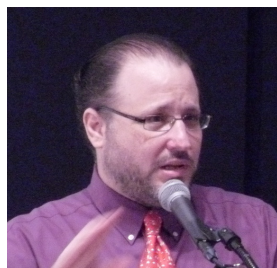
Fr. Robert Taft, S.J. presented a paper on the development of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and how the councils affected its development



Fr. Peter Galadza's presentation was titled, "How many Ecumenical Councils? - A test case for Eastern Catholic Theology." He proposed that councils with the title "Ecumenical" which took place after the 7th Ecumenical Council should be considered "general"



councils in the West and should not be considered on the same level as the first seven councils.



Orthodox iconographer Elias Damianakis spoke on how the councils have personally affected him in his Christian life of faith.

Fr. John Behr explained the differences between



"universal ecclesiology" and "Eucharistic ecclesiology" and how these two concepts can be reconciled. He noted that no Pope of Rome ever attended an Ecumenical Council but remained "above the fray" and was therefore considered a court of appeal even to a council. Ironically, he commented, that "Perhaps we Orthodox have not called an ecumenical council in over 1200 years, not because we don't have an emperor to call it, but because we don't have a pope who won't be there."

Pentecost prayer for Christian unity

St. Archangel Michael Coptic Orthodox Church in Santa Ana was the location for a special plea to the Holy Spirit to assist our spiritual leaders in resolving the issue that divide the body of Christ. Centered on the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost, participants from the Coptic Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Melkite-Greek Catholic Churches joined in an evening prayer taken from various traditions seeking the blessing of the Holy Spirit. The homily was given by Fr. Eamon O'Gorman. Following the service participants gathered for fellowship in the parish hall.

Now is the time...

Continued from page 5

On Wednesday, Metropolitan Filaret visited the Holy Shroud of Turin and Cardinal Severino Poletto, archbishop of Turin.

"The impression is so profound that one cannot express the joy one feels," commented the Orthodox representative after seeing the Shroud.

Metropolitan Filaret, in this post since 1978, received the recognition of "Hero of Belarus" in 2006, by decision of president Alexander Lukashenko, in recognition of his service to the spirituality of his country.

The Society of St. John Chrysostom W.r. welcomes you to become a member. Dues are \$50 per year. For additional information call 714 985 1710 and ask for Fr. James.

SSJC Workshop Report

What can we do to achieve unity between Eastern Catholics and Eastern Orthodox?

Those who attended the most recent St. John Chrysostom Society workshop at San Rafael Roman Catholic Church in Rancho Bernardo were enlightened by the presentation given by Fr. George Morelli and Msgr. Dennis Mikulanis.

Speaking first, Fr. George, Asst. Pastor St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, San Diego and Licensed Clinical Psychologist & Marriage & Family therapist, Coordinator, Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Ministry of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese and President of the Society of St. John Chrysostom, Western Region began with an examination of the role of St. Peter in the early church. Fr. George noted that regarding the profession of faith of St. Peter, the Eastern Orthodox Church has always considered this "profession" of the Divinity of Jesus to be the 'rock,' the foundation, of all who are members of His Church. He added that "It is noteworthy that Jesus did not speak of plural Churches, i.e., that He would found many Churches, but my Church, singular. He would found one Church. The Church is one."

Taking the participants through the commissioning of the apostles to make disciples of all nations, Fr. George gave examples of how the church developed through the ages and the challenges it faced which led to different emphasis and understanding of doctrinal matters.

For example, regarding Trinitarian Theology, the West focused on the unity of the Persons: Father, Son, Holy Spirit while the East focused on the individuality of the Persons, the monarchy of the Father, who begets the Son and from whom the Spirit proceeds. He skillfully enumerated the points of emphasis in East and West regarding Adam's sin and its consequence; salvation, historical divergence, papal primacy, unilateral doctrinal proclamations, patristic tradition, theology, spirituality, the filioque, the crusades, the Council of Florence, uniatism, the Second Vatican Council and its special consideration of the Eastern Churches, the current Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, and the Balamand Statement.

Looking to any possible reunion between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, Fr. George pointed to the resumption of dialogue, a potential reconciliation mindset and the possible psychological effect of such a reunion.

Msgr. Dennis Mikulanis, Pastor, San Rafael Parish & Vicar for Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs, Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego addressed the issue of Healing the Schism between East and West by providing a brief synopsis of the history of the original split, stating that the causes of the break in unity were more political than theological, and that the series of unfortunate events leading to the break were not only unnecessary but, in effect, illegal. The legate of the pope to Constantinople, Cardinal Humbert, acted on his own initiative to excommunicate Patriarch Michael Cerularius. However, once done, the unstoppable ball of schism was set rolling. Subsequent socioeconomic and political forces deepened the wound between East and West which has persisted to the present day. It wasn't until the mutual lifting of excommunications between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I that serious Catholic/Orthodox Dialogue began to take place. With starts and stops the two churches have made remarkable progress to effect what Pope John Paul II called the "...Church breathing with both lungs." There are still issues that divide East and West such as the role of "ecumenical" councils of the Church, the *filioque* and, most contentious of all, the role of the Bishop of Rome, the pope, in the authority of the Church. Despite these difficulties there are several hopeful signs of a growing sense of unity. Among these are John Paul II and Bartholomew meeting and speaking to the Church together in St. Peter's Basilica, sitting in identical chairs both of which are on the floor, neither one nor the other even slightly elevated.

THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

-Western Region-

The Transcendent in Art and Architecture ~ East and West

Saturday, September 18, 2010

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

St. Margaret Roman Catholic Parish,
4300 Oceanside Blvd., Oceanside, CA
92056

(760) 941-5560 ~

www.oceanside4christ.com

Directions: From the 78 Fwy., exit College Blvd/North, to Oceanside Blvd.

Right onto Oceanside Blvd. Church is a short distance on N. side of Oceanside Blvd.

Contact: Fr. George Morelli: (760) 212-4888, SSJC-Western Region President

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Speakers:

**Fr. Cavanaugh Wallace,**

Pastor, St. Margaret's Parish,  
Oceanside, CA

**Rev. Fr. Michael K.**

**Courey, D. Min,**

Economos, St. Katherine Gr.  
Orthodox Church, Redondo  
Beach, CA

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A freewill offering will be taken

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**The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western  
Region business meeting: 1-2 p.m.**

**Those staying for the meeting should bring a  
packed lunch.**

**Info: A. Petach: 818.347.0758 (Voicemail);  
[apetach@sbcglobal.net](mailto:apetach@sbcglobal.net).**

## Call for churches to own up to past misdeeds

The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches should own up to their past misdeeds and work to restore communion, according to a Jesuit liturgical expert Robert F. Taft, S.J., a former professor of Eastern liturgy at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. Fr. Taft, said that the rift between the churches was sustained primarily by offensive actions—not theological differences.

"The main problem that we Catholics and Orthodox face in our ecumenical dialogue is not doctrine but behavior," Father Taft said. "The issue is not that Catholics and Orthodox do not know how to pray and believe and live Christianity in the right and true apostolic way. The problem is that we do not know how to act."

Father Taft delivered "Perceptions and Realities in Orthodox-Catholic Relations Today," on June 28 at Fordham's Rose Hill campus in the Bronx, N.Y.

He pointed to Catholic "uniatism"—aggression against another church—as a major problem blocking fruitful dialogue between the religions. He added that although the Orthodox faith has been victimized, it also refuses to admit its own misdeeds.

"Western Christianity's historic defects of imperialism, power and domination led to the crimes for which Pope John Paul II asked pardon in Rome on the first Sunday of Lent in 2000," Father Taft said. "Metropolitan Kallinikos of Piraeus—an official spokesman of the Orthodox Church of Greece—responded by ...declaring there was nothing for which Orthodoxy had to ask pardon."

Father Taft advocated a system of "ecumenical scholarship and theology"—a new way to study Christian tradition that seeks to reconcile and unite, rather than to confute and dominate. To accomplish this, the Catholic and Orthodox churches must recognize one another as historic apostolic sister churches, he said.

"For Catholics, such an 'ecumenical theology' must mean an end to declarations on the nature of the priesthood that exalt the celibate clerical state of the Latin tradition in a way that is demeaning to the thousands of legitimately married eastern clergy," he said.

"It might also mean Catholic theologians realizing that Latin scholastic theology of the Eucharist is 'a' theology and not 'the' theology."

The point of this new ecumenical theology is not that Catholics and Orthodox never disagree. "What it does mean, is that at the official level, disagreements can be discussed truthfully and courteously, without invective, rudeness and slander," Father Taft said.

His was the first keynote at "Orthodox Constructions of the West," a three-day conference that examined how Orthodox authors created artificial categories of "East" and "West" and then used that distinction as a basis for self-definition.

### BOOK RECOMMENDATION

## Encountering the Mystery

### *Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*

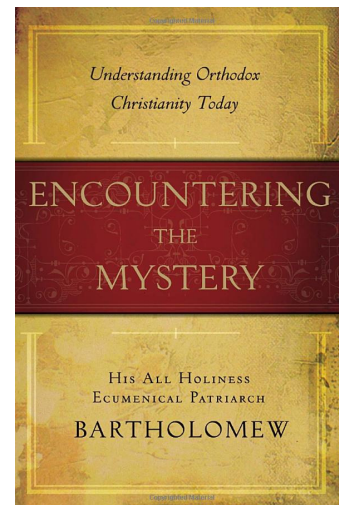
*Publisher: The Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group, division of Random House Inc. New York*

*Author: His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew*

*ISBN: 978-0-385-51813-0*

*Length: 236 pages*

*Edition: Hardcover*



In the forward by His Grace, Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, he begins with "not theory, not philosophy, but experience." This apt description sets the tone for the experience of what it means to encounter God as mystery as understood in the Orthodox Christian tradition.

Here is an opportunity for readers to gain some insight into the world of the Orthodox Church which numbers some 300 million people throughout the world. His All Holiness then moves into an explanation of the of song and space within the worship of Orthodoxy, a virtual experience of heaven on earth through liturgy and iconography. This is followed by a basic presentation of principles and perspectives of Eastern Christian spirituality and theology and how we draw from the wisdom of the Fathers of the Church to help enlighten our understanding of God as "Mystery."

His All Holiness provides a critical chapter on the necessity of freedom and love, "Freedom is as much a part of the ministry in the Orthodox way as it is of baptism in the Christian life." He then uses the example of monasticism as a response to the need of freedom from all earthly cares as a method of submission to God's will which leads to the contemplation of the divine light. He points out that Orthodox Christians are primarily formed in the liturgy which is not identical to prayer itself. "Prayer," he teaches, "is the touchstone of a person's spiritual life." He also comments on improper prayer, which can never be reduced to a private act, an occasion of selfish complaint.

His All Holiness is known for his teaching on ecology and thus there is an inspiring chapter on the wonder of God's creation. Subsequent chapters deal with "conscience and human rights," "Social justice, poverty and globalization" and our divine calling to transform the world. He comments on the Ecumenical Patriarchate and interfaith dialogue and concludes with a section on "War and Peace, Conflict and Dialogue." The book climaxes with an epilogue, "The hope that lies with us" Just the type of encouragement we need to live our faith according to the teachings of the Our Lord Jesus Christ presented to us by the hierarchy whom God has deigned to lead us.