

Light of the East

Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom
Western Region Edition
Website: www.lightoftheeast.org



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Spring / Summer 2015

Bishop of Rome subject of Orientale Lumen

By Bob Greenwell

The 19th annual Orientale Lumen Conference, held at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., from June 15 to 18, was sponsored by the Orientale Lumen Foundation and the national Society of St. John Chrysostom. The theme of the conference was “The Bishop of Rome — Past, Present, and Future.”

Clergy, religious, and faithful from Roman Catholic, Eastern Catholic, and Orthodox faith traditions were present. Hierarchical attendees included Bishop John Michael Botean of the Romanian Catholic Church in North America, while Metropolitan Kallistos Ware of the Greek Orthodox Church of Great Britain presented one of the talks from an Orthodox perspective, and Bishop Bryan Bayda of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Canada presented another talk regarding enculturated evangelization in both Slavic and Western traditions.

Each day began with morning and evening prayer.

A Moleben to the Holy Spirit, asking for guidance, started us off. We also celebrated morning matins and evening vespers, as well as an Orthodox Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Cathedral. Jack Figel, conference chairman, gave a brief history of the conferences from 1996, and Cardinal Emeritus Theodore McCarrick of Washington, D.C., offered encouragement. Jack then showed a video of Cardinal Kurt Koch of the Pontifical Institute for Unity greeting all the participants and wishing us all a very successful conference.

Metropolitan Kallistos gave an opening statement, stating in part that “... unity is a necessity, it is imperative, and it will be a miracle of God. Our human task is to remove obstacles toward this upcoming Divine miracle.” He further quoted Psalm 118: “It is time for

the Lord to act. Let us open our hearts so that the Holy Spirit may act within each one of our hearts.”

Bishop John Michael gave a brief introduction

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Photo by Victor Vallejo

Metropolitan Kallistos (holding cross, center) leads the Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral during the Orientale Lumen Conference.

Happenings!

SSJC-WR Presentation:

The Different Translations of Holy Scripture used by Catholics and Orthodox

Presented by Professor Michael Barber, John Paul the Great University, San Diego, and

Presbytera Eugenia Constantinou, University of San Diego. Presentation is at 10 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 26 at Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church (2235 Galahd Road, San Diego). Contact Robert Greenwell at 619-644-3600 or rjgreenwell@sbcglobal.net

The Society of Saint John Chrysostom

The Society of Saint John Chrysostom is an Ecumenical group of clergy and lay people that promotes Eastern Christianity and Ecumenical Dialogue between the Eastern and Western Churches. It has sponsored the Eastern Churches Journal and the annual Orientale 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 that present information about the Eastern Churches
- Organize and conduct pilgrimages and conferences that encourage ecumenical dialogue
- Contribute to fundraising activities that 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 and Orthodox Seminaries.

Western Region

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Light of the East

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Message from the President of SSJC-Western Region



Creation is a topic of unity for East, West

By the Very Reverend Archpriest George Morelli, PhD

An exciting convergence of agreement between major Eastern and Western Churches has recently taken place on a critical contemporary moral issue: care for the environment. Orthodox Metropolitan John Zizioulas of Pergamum has labeled the issue in question “existential ecumenism” — because it deals with the problem of living out our lives on earth and cosmos, the creation God has given us dominion over. (Gn 1: 28)

One of the first modern-day alerts of the current environmental crisis occurred in the message on the Day of Prayer for Creation in September 1993 by Patriarch Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, who wrote, “During this time, brothers and children in the Lord, when international organizations, inter-state legislation and scientific research programs are united in jeremiads and lamentations to toll the bell of danger so that man might sober up in time before the coming of mass chaos, which would threaten universal order and balance in the various so-called ‘eco-systems,’ not only of our planet, but of the entire cosmos. . . .

The words of Pope Francis I of Rome in his encyclical *Laudato Si* now add to this. The theological connection to God’s creative act recorded in Genesis can be immediately seen in the Holy Father’s words: “This sister [our earth] now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.”

The papal encyclical is not a scientific treatise, but a moral challenge to be aware of our past sins and repent for them by reversing the ills we have inflicted. In this regard, the Holy Father references Patriarch Bartholomew, who informs us: “For human beings ... to destroy the biological diversity of God’s creation; for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the earth’s waters, its land, its air, and its life – these are sins.” For “to commit a crime

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The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region
presents

“The Different Translations of Holy Scripture used by Catholics and Orthodox”



Saturday, September 26, 2015. 10a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Parish Divine Liturgy is at 9: a.m. All are welcome.

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Michael Barber, PhD

Professor of Theology & Scripture, John Paul the Great University, San Diego

Presbytera Eugenia Constantinou, PhD

Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies, University of San Diego



A freewill offering will be taken



Directions: 805 FWY; exit Murray Ridge Rd. N. on Murray Ridge to Encino (short distance). Rt. on Encino, then (shortly) Rt. on Galahad Rd. Left on Regency into Church parking lot. Passenger drop-off is on lower level, at rear.

**The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region business meeting immediately follows.
Those staying for the meeting should bring a packed lunch.**

The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region, is an ecumenical organization of laity and clergy of the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Eastern Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches which was established to make known the history, worship, spirituality, discipline and theology of Eastern Christianity, and to work for the fullness of unity desired by Jesus Christ.

Conference reports on efforts to restore full communion

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that our conferences are having reverberations. The Eastern Catholic bishops are now the fifteenth “region” at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, as opposed to the prior fourteen regions based solely on geography.

Jack showed another video of the pilgrimage to Rome and Constantinople last October. Pope Francis is the third pope to join in St. Andrew’s feast, shared by all on Nov. 30. Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew exchanged greetings. Francis stressed the service of the pope to the whole church, not “ruling over it.” Another pilgrimage is planned for Oct. 17-28, 2016, with an Orientale Lumen IV Conference in Constantinople (Istanbul).

Father Ron Roberson, secretary to the ecumenical commission of the USCCB and moderator for the conference, gave a brief introduction. He said that Pope Paul VI said in 1967 that the bishop of Rome could be the greatest obstacle to unity of east and west. He then introduced the first speaker, Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ, ordained in the Russian-Greek Catholic Church, and recognized as one of the foremost scholars in his field. He retired in 2012.



**Archimandrite
Robert Taft**

Archimandrite Robert’s presentation was “Were the bishops of Rome good or bad vis a vis the Christian East?” He divided the history of the last millennia into seven periods. Salient points were:

The first papal period was the time after 1054.

The second period would be the corrupt Renaissance popes from roughly 1400 until 1540.

The third period encompassed the Council of Trent and the reforms which followed until the 1860s. Trent did not condemn the Orthodox after explicitly studying the issues involved. Contacts between the Eastern Churches and the West were very positive during the period that the Ottoman Empire repressed the Orthodox, and the Jesuits actually helped the Orthodox.

The First Vatican Council of 1869-1870 was the fourth period. It did not define the pope as infallible (this is a common misconception), only the apostolic church.

The fifth period is the early modern period, including the reform of the Eucharist by Pope Pius X.

The sixth period extended from John XXIII

‘If we are to unite, we must first love one another. If we are to love one another, we must first get to know each other. It must be person to person.’

– Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

through Paul VI, including the second Vatican Council and its early implementation. The first outreach to the Orthodox in 500 years was done under Paul VI.

The seventh period is represented by the long pontificate of St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, who have all increased the contacts with the Orthodox. John Paul II apologized to the Orthodox for Western offenses committed against them. Much progress has been made toward “communion, not reunion.” Archimandrite Robert summarized by stating that relations between East and West are not as bad as they have sometimes been suggested to have been when scholars look at the actual writings over the last thousand years.

We saw a video, narrated by Metropolitan Kallistos, on the “Eastern Christian Churches: Who We are and What We Do.” The Metropolitan stated that “if we are to unite, we must first love one another. If we are to love one another, we must first get to know each other. This must be person to person.”

Bishop Bryan presented “Enculturated Evangelization.” He contrasted the approach of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the Greeks who first evangelized the Slavic peoples, with the miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which brought at least

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OL considers infallibility in view of the entire church

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9 million people into the Faith within the first ten years of the image's appearance.

Sts. Cyril and Methodius set themselves first to understanding and penetrating the language, traditions, and cultures of the Slavic peoples. They furthered the development of culture and literature by making the spoken word into a written alphabet and language. They went back to the past to understand the present reality and to help order a Christian future.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe apparition fused the Spanish and the indigenous cultures over the next generation. Everything in the image represents something symbolic to the indigenous peoples. Bishop Bryan concluded his talk by saying everyone is important in the work of evangelization and ecumenism. It is up to each one of us to find what is our particular task.

Metropolitan Kallistos spoke to a full auditorium and outlined the four ways in which Catholics and Orthodox are seeking unity:

- The "filioque" may be the easiest to resolve. The Churches need to agree on whether the procession of the Holy Spirit is a single procession: "from the Father," or a double procession: "from the Father and the Son."
- "Purgatory:" The Orthodox don't use that word, but prayers for the faithful departed are generally more common in the Eastern church than in the Western church. The Orthodox reject the concept of purgatory as a prison with torture, but certainly accept the concept as a hospital for final healing before entry to heaven.
- The Immaculate Conception: The Orthodox do not accept the premise of St. Augustine that we all have "inherited guilt." The Orthodox celebrate the Holy Conception of St. Anna on December 9. Like the Western church, there are only three "conception" feasts that are celebrated: Annunciation on March 25, Conception of John the Baptist on September 23, and the December 9 feast.
- The papal claims of primacy and infallibility: Does the bishop of Rome have supreme jurisdiction in the churches of the Christian east? The Orthodox acknowledge the bishop of Rome as having a primacy of honor but not a primacy of

jurisdiction.

Does the bishop of Rome possess a charisma different from that of other bishops?

What does infallibility really mean, according to Vatican I? Is it the whole apostolic church that possesses infallibility, or just the bishop of Rome? The Orthodox position, except for Russian Orthodoxy, is that the bishop of Rome possesses a primacy of humility, service, and love for the whole apostolic Church. The bishop of Rome, successor of Peter, has the charism of Peter. The Russian church accepts a primacy of honor only.



**Metropolitan
Kallistos Ware**

Both Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew have rejected a theological minimum to achieve joint communion. They have both emphasized that the spirituality and worship of all the apostolic churches must be considered in any fruitful dialogue.

A meeting of the national Society of St. John Chrysostom was held. Everybody enthusiastically endorsed an *Oriente Lumen XX* to be held in June 2016 at the Franciscan Retreat Center on the campus of the Catholic University of America.

Dr. Aristeides Papadakis, a retired professor of Byzantine history, traced the history of east-west relations from 1054, which involved individuals only, not a schism between churches. East-west contacts continued. The pope called for the 1st crusade not only to protect all pilgrims, east and west, to the Holy Land, but also to help strengthen the Eastern empire, which had recently lost most of Asia Minor to the Seljuk Turks.

The Orthodox East first heard claims of papal infallibility in 1204, when the 4th crusade sacked Constantinople and the pope appointed Latin Patriarchs in the east. The real victim of the crusades was not Islam, but Eastern Christianity and Christian unity. Ecclesiastical "colonialism" and Latinization slowly caused the break between east and west, while the papacy radically changed and adopted features of the western monarchical tradi-

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OL urges attendees to continue working for unity

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tion while undergoing a progressive growth in papal authority. Dr. Papadakis stated that the Eastern patriarchs' teaching authority was always independent of Rome's, and various other differences became compelling. The schism was a lengthy, developing process up through the 18th century, when the Antiochian church split into Antiochian Orthodox and Melkite Catholic.

Msgr. Paul McPartlan, the acting Dean of Theology at Catholic University of America, led a theological discussion of the role of the bishop of Rome, with a focus on the unifying effect of communion



Monsignor Paul McPartlan

between the eastern and western churches. He stated the Pope Francis has focused on a dialogue on the unity and primacy of the pope in the church as communion, not a pyramid. Meetings last year in May and in November have moved this dialogue forward. The Orthodox churches preserve their unity through synodality. Primacy

and synodality need to be balanced somewhere along a horizontal line.

"Jurisdiction" is a second-millennium concept and should be dropped from any discussion. Vatican I concentrated on "jurisdiction," which is not fully adequate to a 21st century task of renewal.

He explained that the Roman Catholic view is that the primacy of the bishop of Rome should be to resolve disputes which cannot be resolved at a local or regional level, call ecumenical councils, and serve as a center of universal communion.

We then closed the annual meeting with a lively question and answer session.

Bishop John Michael celebrated the Akathist to the Mother of God in the Ukranian Nation Shrine.

The final speaker of the conference was Father Tom Rosica, the director of "Salt and Light TV," the Canadian Catholic national TV channel. He is also on the staff of the Holy See Press Office.

He began his discussion by stating that the "Aggiornamento" of Vatican II was to adjust to current times, since a council had not been held

in 400 years. The gift of "Ecumene" discussed at Vatican II is to move forward the Unity of all Christians, as Jesus prayed at the Last Supper (John 17). Pope Francis has given all of us four insights:

St. Paul was a builder of bridges wherever he went, not of walls. He praised the Athenians for their "shrine" to an "unknown god."

Pope Francis warned all Christians against keeping their key in their pocket, and not opening the doors for all. Ideology distances people from the Church.

When St. Peter speaks of the Church, he speaks of "living stones," not edifices.

In Jesus' parable of the king inviting guests to the banquet, many of the invited guests make excuses rather than share the king's joy. The king then has his servants go out to the "highways and byways." While this was meant for the leaders of the Jews in Jesus' time, it also applies to all of us today. Jesus is the "Great Truth" we all must encounter personally. It is difficult to listen to Jesus when many people in today's world believe that the world revolves around themselves.

After a final question and answer panel discussion, we shared a final lunch and, with many warm "goodbyes" among friends old and new, we all resolved to see each other again next year, to spread the word that we are getting very close to intercommunion, and that we need to work and pray daily and diligently for this.

*The Society of St. John Chrysostom
Western Region*

WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

*Full membership: \$50; Associate:
\$40; Parish Membership: \$100. For
full information call 714-985-1710*

*and ask for Fr. James, or e-mail
secretary Anne Petach at:
secretary@lightoftheeast.org*

Ecumenical Patriarch reinforces Pope's creation call

By Jim Trageser

In two articles in June, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew endorsed Pope Francis' recent encyclical on the care of creation.

In the June 18 edition of Time magazine, Bartholomew wrote, "The truth is that, above any doctrinal differences that may characterize the various Christian confessions and beyond any religious disagreements that may separate the various faith communities, the earth unites us in a unique and extraordinary manner."

Bartholomew pointed out that Eastern Christians have also been advocating for protecting the planet's natural resources for many decades — and that if one is honest about it, since the earliest days of the Church.

But in light of the present cultural and political debates about global warming and pollution, Bartholomew praised Francis' encyclical, writing, "Therefore, the Pope's diagnosis is on the mark: 'We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis which is

both social and environmental.'"

And in an ecumenical note, Bartholomew wrote that, "In the third year of our brother Pope Francis's blessed ministry, we count it as a true blessing that we are able to share a common concern and a common vision for God's creation."



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

In a separate article the next day in the New York Times, Bartholomew co-wrote a piece with Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, in which they jointly called for stronger religious responses to environmental degradation. This article did not cite Francis' encyclical (it was written in response to a recent report by the Lancet Medical Journal and University College London), but made similar arguments about a shared Christian imperative to protect the creation the Lord gave us. The two primates wrote, "As repre-

sentatives of two major Christian communions, we appeal to the world's governments to act decisively and conscientiously by signing an ambitious and hopeful agreement in Paris during COP 21 at the end of this year."

Morelli

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against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God."

It is clear that consumerism, greed and power have to be replaced by a spiritual respect for creation, what Metropolitan John calls ecological asceticism, "restraint in the consumption of natural resources [and] immense waste of natural materials."

Thus, let us, inspired by "existential ecumenism," heed the words of newly canonized St. Paisios of the Holy Mountain:

"This grass is an icon; this stone is an icon; and I can kiss it, venerate it, because it is filled with God's grace. The world is not for us to take things from, but a place where we cast off our passions and desires."

Briefly ...

Armenian Catholic Patriarch falls asleep in the Lord

Armenian Catholic Patriarch Nerses Bedros XIX Tarmouni was called home to the Lord on June 25, in Lebanon He was 75.



Nerses Bedros XIX Tarmouni

Patriarch Bedros had led the Armenian Catholic church since 1999.

He was raised in Cairo, where his family had fled during the Armenian Genocide in their native Turkey. Born Pierre Taza in 1940, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1965 in Cairo after graduating from Armenian Leonine Pontifical College in

Rome. In 1990, he was ordained bishop of Alexandria and Sudan.

He was named successor to Hovhannes Bedros XVIII Kasparian in 1999, leading the roughly 1 million members of the Armenian Catholic Church. (The Armenian Catholic Church is in full communion with Rome, but uses the same liturgy as the Armenian Apostolic Church.)

New Armenian Catholic Patriarch chosen

On July 24, Bishop Krikor Gabroyan was elected Bedros' successor, becoming Patriarch Krikor Bedros XX Gabroyan.

Born in Aleppo, Syria, in 1934, he was ordained to the priesthood in Lebanon in 1959 following seminary in Rome. He was named bishop in 1977, serving as Apostolic Exarch of France until 1986, when he was named Primate and Armenian Catholic Eparch and Bishop of France, which he held until his 2013 retirement.



Patriarch Krikor Bedros XX Gabroyan

Following the passing of Bedros XIX, he was named administrator of the Church, until his election as Patriarch.

Los Angeles gets three auxiliary bishops

The Vatican announced in late July that Pope Francis had appointed three new auxiliary bishops to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, while accepting the resignation of Auxiliary Bishop Gerald Wilkerson. Wilkerson had recently turned 75, the age at which bishops offer their resignation to the pope.

Appointed as auxiliary bishop were:



Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Brennan

- Monsignor Joseph Brennan, 61. He has served as vicar general and moderator of the curia in the Archdiocese for the last two years. The Van Nuys native was ordained to the priesthood in Los Angeles in 1980, and has served in various assignments throughout the Archdiocese in the decades since.



Auxiliary Bishop David O'Connell

- Monsignor David O'Connell, also 61, and pastor of St. Michael's Parish in Los Angeles. He was ordained in 1979 in Los Angeles after attending university in his native Ireland. He is known for working with local community leaders and officials to counter the gang violence that has too-often threatened families in his parishes.



Father Robert Barron

- Father Robert Barron, 55, president of the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Illinois. The Chicago native founded Word on Fire Catholic Ministries in 2000, and is a popular author on Catholicism.

The three men join the four currently serving auxiliary bishops: Bishops Edward Clark, Thomas Curry, Oscar Solis and Alexander Salazar.

A date has not yet been set for their ordination to the episcopate.