

## Happenings!

### "Living in Communion with Others"

November 11, 7-10 p.m. (Living in communion as unmarried persons) & November 12, 9-11 a.m. (Marriage as a path to holiness) & 1:30-3:30 p.m. (Parenting to the kingdom). Seminar with Dr Philip Mamalakis PhD. at Saint Barnabas Orthodox Church, 3505 Cadillac Ave., Bldg G-3, Costa Mesa, 92626 This seminar will focus on how to live in the world as an Orthodox Christian in the status in which you find yourself -- Unmarried (single, divorced or widowed), Married, or Parents. To pre-register online (highly recommended) to ensure a seat: <http://stbarnabasoc.org/fall-2011/>

### Memory Eternal; Ecumenical reflections on Stalin's Ukrainian Genocide

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 5 p.m. - Memorial Service; 6 p.m. - Lecture and discussion; 7:30 p.m. Loyola Marymount University, Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts.

Join the Huffington Ecumenical Institute for an evening of liturgy and discussion featuring Bishop Daniel Zelinsky and Protospesbyter Andriy Chirovosky. Registration required. For more information call 310 338 1919 or visit: [bellarmine.lmu.edu/ecumenical](http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/ecumenical).

### Lessons & Carols

Friday, December 9, 2011, 7. pm. at St. Margaret's Roman Catholic Church; 4300 Oceanside Blvd, Oceanside 92056. Co-sponsored by St Margaret Parish and the Society of St. John Chrysostom - Western Region. Eastern clergy, please come vested for the procession. A Pre-Christmas program of sharing each others' cultural and feast-day celebrations and traditions..

### Light of the East Conference

#### *Forgiveness, a path to reconciliation*

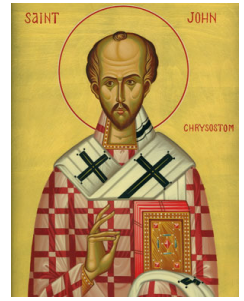
February, 2012. Exact date yet to be determined, The Conference will be held at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church 4949 Alton Parkway, Irvine 92604. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. This highly anticipated program is an all day conference hosted by the Society of St. John Chrysostom Society, Western Region.

# Light of the East

Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom  
Western Region Edition

Volume 6, Number 1

Fall, 2011



## SSJC Workshop Report

# Baptismal Catechesis East & West informs and enlightens participants

By Anne Petach

In both East and West the preparation of catechumens for baptism during the first millennium was a communal process based on the common patrimony of Church Tradition. Groups of catechumens prepared together through specific stages of instruction, scrutiny and acceptance and then received the Sacramental Mysteries of Initiation at Pascha/Easter or Pentecost.

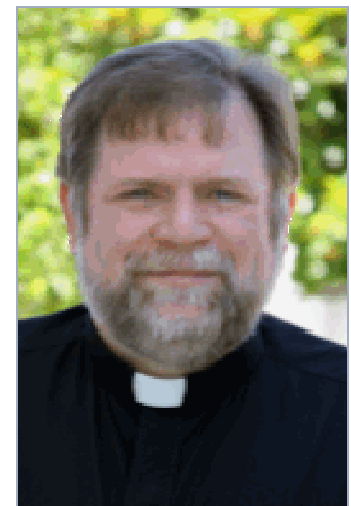
As Christianity became accepted and universal, high infant mortality led to the baptism of infants shortly after birth, in consequence, adult catechesis became individualized. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Catholic missionaries to the New World were unsure how to catechize large groups desiring baptism and begged Rome to send them guidelines. However, these were not formulated until the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) was promulgated after Vatican II (1962-65). RCIA specifically reinstates the communal aspect by leading groups of Catechumens (unbaptized) and Candidates (baptized but not in communion with the Church) through formal stages of instruction and acceptance, each with specific rituals, to Initiation at the Easter Vigil. Growth in Christian living of the Paschal Mysteries in a parish context is stressed. Now widely used, it was mandated for US diocese in 1986.

The Orthodox Church adheres to

*Continued on page 3*



Fr. William Fitzgerald, O. Praem.



Fr. Steven Tsihchlis, Pastor, St. Paul's

## **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**

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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.

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## **A message from the President of SSJC-Western Region**

# **The Eucharist: The heart of the Apostolic Churches**

*By the Very Reverend Father George Morelli, Ph.D.*

What distinguishes the Apostolic Churches of Christ, that is to say the Eastern Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, from all the other ecclesial communities that term themselves Christian is the Eucharist. For the Apostolic Churches, the Eucharist is the very Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ Himself. The Apostolic Churches center on the person of Christ who "embodies the presence of God in the world." (Zizioulas, 2011). All the other Holy Mysteries of the Church surround the person of Christ and are sealed by His Holy Spirit. As one of the Hymns of Pentecost in the Eastern Church proclaims: "The Holy Spirit provideth all; . . . fulfilleth the Priesthood; . . . He bringeth together all the laws of the Church. Wherefore, O Comforter, equal to the Father in Substance and the throne, glory to Thee."



Christ, incarnate as a man, ordained His Apostles, men themselves, to "Do this in remembrance of me." (Lk 22: 19). Christ's instruments, the men who are bishops and priests, continue to call down the Holy Spirit to make present the reality of Christ. The laity, the 'Royal Priesthood,' made such by their Holy Baptism, are empowered by this to say "Amen" to this action. This is a great mystery, but Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit, makes this possible. God is everywhere present and Christ is really, personally, present to those who receive Him in the Eucharist.

Let us always keep in mind what St. Paul said of those who make up the Church: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." (1Cor 12:27). However, a proviso for being a member of Christ's Mystical Body is that one must be in union with the Church. St. Paul's injunction to the Ephesians (4:4-5) informs us: "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. . . ." Let me expand this: St. Paul tells us: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2. 5).

Following St. Paul, these traditions – "one faith, one Lord, one baptism," one priesthood, one Eucharist - were passed, orally at first and then in writing, from the apostles to their successors, the bishops and priests. St. Paul (2Th 2:15) tells us what this means: "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter." St. Paul instructs the overseers of the Church: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, [bishops and priests] to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son" (Acts 20:28).

As of now, our union is imperfect. We share apostolic succession and have the same Holy Mysteries, but are unable to partake of the Eucharist in each other's Churches. It is to zealously pray and work to bring about a perfect fullness of unity of the Apostolic Churches that the Society of St. John Chrysostom exists. When this fullness is achieved the communion prayer from the Divine Liturgy will be actualized: "Divided and distributed is the Lamb of God, who is divided, yet not disunited; who is ever eaten, yet never consumed, but sanctifies those who partake thereof."

REFERENCE:

Zizioulas, J.D. (2011), *The Eucharistic Communion and the World*. London: T&T Clark.

## Holy Resurrection Monastery to relocate to Wisconsin

The monks of Holy Resurrection Romanian Catholic Monastery have announced that they will relocate to Wisconsin in the near future.

For the past three years the monastery has enjoyed the hospitality of St. Andrew Benedictine Abbey in Valyermo following the sale of their former monastic complex in Newbury Springs.

The monks hoped to purchase property and establish a permanent presence in Southern California. After an exhausting search it was determined that the cost to make any kind of purchase was prohibitive. Los Angeles County required a conditional permit that would cost \$200,000. Additionally, because of increased interest in the monastic community the members of the community determined that any facility they purchase would have to be large enough to accommodate additional members. In the end the community decided that it would be impossible to succeed in Southern California. So the monks began to search elsewhere.



### The good news!

By the grace of God, the community located an affordable facility near Green Bay, Wisconsin. Was it divine providence that the location is named for a Greek Father? The small village is named Saint Nazianz, one of the greatest of all the Greek Fathers of the Church.

An additional blessing is that the local Roman Catholic Bishop, David Ricken, was extremely welcoming. He has expressed an interest in including the monks in diocesan educational and spiritual programs.

The new facility has 25 bedrooms, 13 bathrooms, a chapel and bathrooms, commercial kitchen, offices and reception rooms and library space located on four acres of land, just three hours north of Chicago where there are many Eastern Christians. Over the past 10 years the monks of Holy Resurrection have given many educational and spiritual programs including an annual pilgrimage. No date has been set for the move.

## Shared challenges for Catholics and Orthodox

VATICAN CITY, 2 SEP 2011 (VIS) - Benedict XVI has written a message to Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, for the twelfth Inter-Christian Symposium, which is being held in the Greek city of Thessaloniki from 30 August to 2 September on the theme: "The witness of the Church in the modern world". The event has been promoted by the Franciscan Institute of Spirituality at the "Antoniano" Pontifical Athenaeum in Rome and by the Orthodox Theological Faculty at the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki.

Commenting on the choice of theme, the Pope writes: "Over the course of the centuries the Church has never ceased to proclaim the salvific mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Yet today that announcement needs to be renewed in many of the regions which first accepted it, and which are currently experiencing the effects of a secularisation capable of impoverishing the most profound aspects of man".

The Holy Father goes on: "In the modern world we are witnessing two contradictory phenomena. On the one hand there is a widespread disinterest, even a lack of sensibility, towards transcendence while, on the other, many signs suggest that a profound nostalgia for God persists in the hearts of many, expressing itself in various ways".

The current cultural, social and economic environment "presents the same challenges to both Catholics and Orthodox. The ideas that emerge from this symposium will, then, have an important ecumenical impact...Reciprocal understanding of one another's traditions and sincere friendship are, in themselves, a contribution to the cause of Christian unity".

Finally Benedict XVI, recalling how the city of Thessaloniki is indissolubly associated with the preaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles, expresses the hope that the evangelisers of the modern world will be moved by the same apostolic zeal as St. Paul.

## Baptismal Catechesis

*Continued from page 1*

traditional catechesis, but has no uniform process, and at present has no general emphasis on the *communal* aspect. Individual pastors require specific readings, liturgical attendance, and instruction in conversion of life for individual converts. An exception is "Orthodoxy 101." (<http://www.stpaulsirvine.org/orthodoxchristianity101.html>). Devised by Fr. Steve Tschlis, this ensures a communal aspect along with required instruction, and immerses the newly baptized into the life of the parish.

**For a complete workshop report,  
go to our website  
[www.lightoftheeast.org](http://www.lightoftheeast.org)**

## We all have work to do

# Because our love has grown cold

By Hieromonk Maximos

*I published this in Unirea Canton last year following the trip I took with Father Moses to Romania, following the 2010 Orientale Lumen Conference in Constantinople. As far as I know, the dispute over the monastery on the Prislop Pass is still going on. I'd appreciate any news from those who know of any recent developments @. hrmonline.org*

This past June [2010], during my travels in Romania, I found myself in a car between the regions of Bukovina and Maramure driving across the Rodna Mountains, along the winding road between the towns of Cârlibaba to the east and Bora to the west. As the car I was riding in rounded another hairpin bend, I saw what looked at first sight to be a fairy-tale castle rising from the green meadows ahead. In fact those pointed towers turned out to be the partially finished roof of a new monastery located on the Prislop Pass.

We stopped at the monastery and looked around. I had a polite conversation with the monk on duty in the church, me in my extremely bad Romanian, he in his slightly better English. I told him I was a Greek Catholic, he happily sold me some post-cards. All in all, the encounter was positive.

It was only later that I learned that this particular monastery has a strained relationship with the Greek Catholic community in that part of Maramure. The full details of the dispute remain unclear to me. But at one point, as I understand it from conversations with local Greek Catholics, the monks, or at least some of them, were actually planning to make the monastery a Catholic one. When they decided instead to become Orthodox an argument ensued. The whole thing was very messy, with a lawsuit and plenty of bad feelings all round.

The last thing I want to do is make a judgment about the rights and wrongs of that particular property dispute. Instead, I want to use the monastery on the Prislop Pass to make a more general point about the relationship between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

At the recent Orientale Lumen conference in Istanbul, Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) gave a remarkable paper on the Council of Florence. This was the council that, meeting around 1439, attempted to produce re-union between the Latin West and the Greek East. On paper it succeeded. On paper. Almost all the Orthodox representatives signed off on the re-union, as did the Pope and the Western delegates. But the union proved to be as flimsy as the parchment on which it was written.

No sooner had they returned to Constantinople (in some cases as soon as they walked off their ships!) many of the Orthodox bishops renounced the union they had agreed to in Florence. Why? Their people were opposed to it. Why was there so much opposition? Certainly there were theological disputes over such things as the filioque, the use of leavened or



unleavened bread, belief in purgatory, the role of the pope. But in the end there was an even more basic problem. This is best expressed in a remark made by an Orthodox bishop of the time and which Metropolitan Kallistos quoted in his paper. The Greeks and the Latins were divided, said this bishop, “because our love has grown cold.”

The dispute over the monastery on the Prislop Pass makes it pretty clear that, six hundred years later, our love remains cool on both sides of the Catholic/Orthodox divide. And what is happening on that rugged mountain pass is only one among hundreds of quarrels that quench the love that struggles to rise between the Catholic and Orthodox communities all through much of Eastern Europe, especially in Romania and western Ukraine.

But this is not at all bad news. I firmly believe that, if the real problem lies not so much in theological principles as in the loss of love, then the only road back to true union lies not so much across pleasant plains of academic discourse, but rather the rocky deserts and rugged mountains of human hearts.

If love is the answer, then the condition to the rekindling of love is that people should once again get to know one another. The long, agonizingly long and difficult process of resolving disputes like that on the Prislop Pass is not a distraction from the ecumenical work at hand. It is the work! It is, in fact, far more important than the deliberations of theological commissions. These talk about ideas. On the Prislop Pass it's people that matter. Love can only be rekindled the hearts of people; ideas cannot love. The Council of Florence failed largely because its supporters forgot this truth.

If this is so, then perhaps my brief encounter with the monk of that monastery, the kind words, the tiny gesture of financial support, perhaps this little moment is a small twig thrown on the pile of fuel that might, one day, set alight the fire of love that we need to reunite East and West. We need so many more such moments.

Of course, theological discussions are important. In my view, though, whatever solutions the experts in theological ecumenism can devise, the work of practical ecumenism will

*Continued on page 8*

# Ukrainian Catholic Patriarch believes in the possibility of creating one Ukrainian Church

The head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), Patriarch Sviatoslav, said in an interview to the magazine *Korrespondent* that he believes in the possibility of creating one Ukrainian Church.

According to the publication, His Beatitude asserts the possibility of communion of the UGCC with all the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches. Then journalists Anna Morozova and Iryna Solomko asked him whether he is adherent to the idea of the church's unity.

"Patriarch Sviatoslav, commented that his predecessor, His Beatitude Lubomyr, stated more than once that the one Ukrainian Church is a real possibility. First of all, because it has already existed in such state, but due to different factors it was divided into different confessions. Because there is a common ground, there are also chances that this unity will be regained. But we must step on this path of unity," said the UGCC primate.

"Back in 2005 His Beatitude Lubomyr said that we had to move from denominational confrontation to the primacy in love. Very often today many of the churches that stemmed from [the] Kyivan Church present themselves as the sole heir of this tradition. They consider the other churches as less worthy or even negate their right for existence. It is impossible to return to the original unity with this kind of thinking," added the head of the UGCC.

He also answered the question of whether he communicates with the heads of the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine, particularly with the head of the UOC-MP Metropolitan Volodymyr. "Bishop Ilariy, the representative of Metropolitan Volodymyr, was at my enthronement. Not only did he greet me but he also invited me to a meeting with the metropolitan. It was supposed to take place in the next few days, but due to the health problems of the metropolitan, the meeting was postponed.

aaaaaaaaaa



Archbishop Demetrios



His Beatitude, Patriarch Sviatoslav

Nonetheless we are preparing for the meeting and I am looking forward to it," said the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholics.

Besides, Patriarch Sviatoslav noted that the UGCC actively cooperates with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC-KP): "We are actively cooperating with them within the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations. We have agreed to create the Council of Churches from churches that stemmed from St. Volodymyr's Baptism, which would help us to accomplish many good things together." – RISU, June 8.

## Byzantine Endowment

The University of Notre Dame announced in September it is establishing an endowed chair in Byzantine theology.

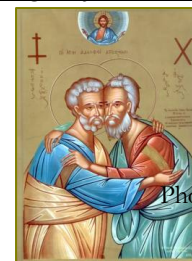
Archbishop Demetrios Professorship in Byzantine Theology, named in honor of the primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, will be a central component of the Indiana school's efforts to expand the scope of its Medieval Institute to include teaching and research of the Eastern Roman Empire.

"The new chair in Byzantine Theology will complement the mission of our Institute and more broadly, the university's acknowledged strengths in patristic and Western medieval theology," said Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, president of Notre Dame.

His Excellency, Archbishop Demetrios is the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, President of the Holy Eparchial Synod and Chairman of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas.

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 Websites: [www.oltv.tv](http://www.oltv.tv) [www.olconference.com](http://www.olconference.com)



Dear Friends in Christ,

Like you, we have fond memories of our time at the annual Oriente Lumen Conference - not only for the fellowship but for the progress we made, together, in advancing the ecumenical dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

But without your help, the 2011 conference may have been the last. Please let us explain.

This recent Oriente Lumen XV Conference was attended by more than 100 clergy and lay people. For the first time, recordings of Conference Plenary Sessions were available online soon after each session, and these recordings were downloaded more than 2600 times. The *National Catholic Register* published a feature story on the Conference's theme, "Rome and the Communion of Churches: Bishop, Patriarch or Pope," and the Ancient *Faith Radio* website made audio recordings of plenary sessions available to their listeners.

These conferences are having an impact and making a difference. Our message is getting out across the world, and interest is growing.

But, from the beginning, the Oriente Lumen Conferences have operated at a deficit - expenses have simply exceeded revenues. In the past, our mutual friend Jack Figel has not only volunteered to organize the conferences, but has personally covered the \$5,000 to \$10,000 deficit each year for 15 years. That is a great deal of money, and Jack can no longer afford to cover those expenses.

That's why, two years ago, the Oriente Lumen Foundation was founded as a charitable and tax-exempt organization. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible.

While this year's OL Conference was a marvelous success in all other respects, it again did not generate enough income to cover all of its expenses. More than \$4,000 is still owed - mostly to pay travel expenses for the outstanding speakers that give the conference such meaning and value.

Without those speakers, the Conference will have less value. And without your help, there will be no Conference in the future.

We are asking for your financial assistance in covering this year's deficit - and perhaps putting some seed money away for the next Conference. Any tax-deductible amount you can donate -- \$25, \$50, \$100 or more - will be greatly appreciated, and is vitally needed. In fact, for a donation of \$100 or more, you will receive a free Thank You gift CD or DVD of a lecture by Metropolitan Kallistos or Archimandrite Robert Taft - simply complete the enclosed donation form and return it in the enclosed envelope. Select your gift on the form. Or you can donate online by going to: [http://olconference.com/OL Donate.html](http://olconference.com/OLDonate.html) and making a secure donation today.

Your support is deeply appreciated. The ecumenical work of the Oriente Lumen Conferences is having a profound impact ... but without your help that work may come to a halt.

May God bless you,

Metropolitan Jonah  
 Orthodox hutch in America  
 Orthodox Co-Patron

Bishop John Michael  
 Romanian Catholic Church  
 Catholic Co-Patron

Marlene McCracken  
 OL Conference  
 Participant

PS. Mark your calendar to attend the Oriente Lumen XVI Conference on June 18-21, 2012 in Washington D.C.

# NEW AND RECENT RECORDINGS

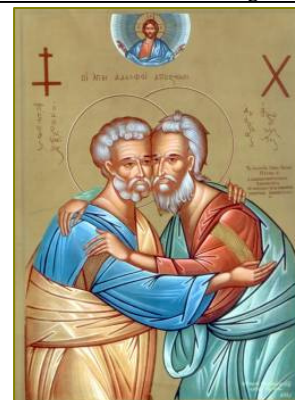
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## Because our love has grown cold

*Continued from page 4*

At least a generation or two longer.

And there are signs of hope. I stayed for several days in a small monastery of nuns in Bucharest known as Stavropoleos. There I encountered strong women of faith who treated Father Moses and myself with great friendship respect without in any way compromising their own Orthodoxy. We could pray together, eat together, even laugh together, even though we knew we knew we could not yet commune together.

To the experts in ecumenism places like Romania might seem like the problem: all those fights and all that unpleasantness. I disagree. I think these quarrels may be just those sparks needed to ignite that love without which we are doomed only to artificial unions, false starts.

*This entry was posted on September 9, 2011 at 10:32 am and is filed under [Articles by monks](#), [Grass roots practical ecumenism](#), [Greek Catholics vs. Orthodox](#), [Monasticism](#), [Recent Update](#), [Romania](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0 feed](#). You can [leave a response](#) or [track back from your own site](#).*

### **On the other hand something positive:**

## ...warm wishes to the Pope of Rome from the Romanian Orthodox Patriarch

His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church addressed this message of congratulation to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XIV, on the occasion of the anniversary of sixty years since his ordination as priest and of six years since his enthronement as Bishop of Rome:

Your Holiness,

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Your Holiness' ordination to priesthood and the 6th anniversary of Your enthronement as the Bishop of Rome, we send You warm wishes for everything that is good and much help from God in the pastoral work that You unfold for the wellbeing of the Roman Catholic Church and in promoting the values of the Christian faith in the world of today.

As spiritual shepherds of the Christian Church, we are called - especially in this time of crisis, which generates uncertainty, confusion and material shortages for many of our fellow human beings - to defend and promote the spiritual values coming out of the Gospel of Christ's love for all humanity.

We pray Christ our Lord, "the Chief Shepherd" (1 Peter 5:4), to keep Your Holiness in good health and give You peace and joy.

Many and blessed years!

With deep esteem and brotherly embrace in Christ the Lord,  
† DANIEL

Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church. – Press Release, Romanian Patriarchate, June 29.

## Bound to live together: religions and cultures in dialogue

### ***Sant'Egidio Meeting for Peace – Munich 11-13 September 2011***

On September 11, an international meeting of prayer for peace organized by the Community of Sant'Egidio, the twenty-fifth since its inception in Assisi in 1986, opened with a Eucharistic celebration at Munich Cathedral, Germany. Some two thousand people including politicians, journalists and academics, and many members of the Sant'Egidio Community from various European and other countries and clerical representatives of different world religions were welcomed by Cardinal Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of Munich-Freising.

#### **The representatives**

The Roman Catholic Church was represented by some twelve Cardinals and archbishops and lay-people from Europe, South America, India and Africa, while Eastern Catholic Churches were represented notably by three Patriarchs: Antonios of Alexandria of the Coptic Catholic Church, Gregorios III of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church and Ignatius Joseph III of the Syrian Catholic Church. Melkite Archbishops Elias Chacour and Jean Jeanbart were also present. The Eastern Orthodox Churches were represented by Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church and by Metropolitans of the Ecumenical, Antiochian, Russian and Romanian Patriarchates and of the Albanian, Greek and Cypriot Churches and of the Coptic and Syrian Orthodox Churches. Protestant Churches represented included French, Czech, Lutheran and Anglican denominations. Distinguished representatives of the Jewish, Islamic, Druze, Zoroastrian, Hindu, Buddhist, and Shinto faiths and denominations were also assembled and would later participate as speakers and leaders of discussion in panels.

This year's program focused on the relationship and dialogue of Christianity and Islam. The main presentation was given by His Beatitude, Gregory III.

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