

Christ  
Is  
Risen!

Indeed  
He is  
Risen!



# Light of the East

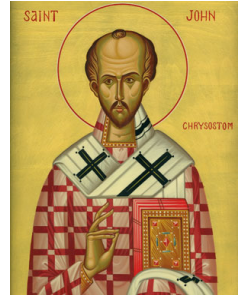
Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom

Western Region Edition

Website: [www.lightoftheeast.org](http://www.lightoftheeast.org)

Volume 6, Number 3

Spring, 2012



## Memory Eternal - His Holiness Coptic Orthodox Pope Shenouda III

Spiritual leader of the Coptic Orthodox Church, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III fell asleep in the Lord, Saturday, March 17 at the age of 88.

Tens of thousands of Egyptians thronged the Abbasiya Cathedral in Egypt's capital for the funeral Liturgy of Pope Shenouda III.

The body of Pope Shenouda III, who led the Coptic Church for 41 years, was buried on Tuesday evening at the St. Bishoy Monastery in the desert outside Cairo. The monastery was a frequent place of retreat for the pope and he had requested his burial there in his will.

The outpouring of grief among both Christian and Muslim Egyptians—many of whom considered the pope a patriotic symbol of national unity—was intense.

Praising the ecumenical commitment of the late Coptic Orthodox Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria, Roman Catholic Pope Benedict XVI offered his condolences to Orthodox Christians in Egypt on the death of their patriarch, as did His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I, Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople.

His Holiness was the 117th Pope and Patriarch of



Pope Shenouda III

the famed Church of Alexandria. His long episcopate lasted almost 41 years. As Pope of the Church of Alexandria, he headed one of the most ancient churches in the world, which traced its founding to St Mark the Evangelist who brought Christianity to Egypt during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius (ca. 42 AD). Pope Shenouda III will go down in history as one of the Great Patriarchs of the ancient Church of Alexandria, a noted Church Father and teacher, a chief defender of the faith, and a noted Egyptian leader of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. He will rank highly among the outstanding Alexandrian Church fathers like Athanasius of Alexandria.

His official title was Pope of Alexandria and the Patriarch of All Africa on the Holy Apostolic Seat of Saint Mark the Evangelist of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria. He was also the head of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria. He was a conservative figure within the Church, and was also respected

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### Happenings!

*SSJC-WR workshop*

**Praise of the Mother of God  
In Eastern & Western Traditions**

**Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m./12:30 p.m. at  
St. John the Baptizer Ukrainian Catholic  
Church, 4400 Palm Avenue, La Mesa,  
91941.**

Speakers: Eastern: Mother Sarah Elisabet Oftedal of Martha & Mary House, Escondido; Western: Joseph Cunningham B.A., S.T.M. of St. Mark Roman Catholic Church, San Marcos. Contact person: Fr. George Morelli 760 920 6350 or at [president@lightoftheeast.org](mailto:president@lightoftheeast.org).

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

*Ecumenical Prayer for  
Christian Unity*

**Celebrating Pentecost**

**Friday, June 1, 7-9 p.m. at Annunciation  
Byzantine Catholic Church, 994 North  
West Street, Anaheim 92801** Sixth Annual Roman & Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Christian Ecumenical Service of Prayer for Christian Unity.

*Oriente Lumen XVI Conference*  
**The Theology of the Laity**

**June 18-21 at the Washington Retreat  
House, Washington D.C.** Speakers: Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia (Orthodox), Archimandrite Robert Taft, S.J. (Greek-Catholic), Bishop William Lori (Roman Catholic), Sr. Dr. Vassa Larin (Orthodox), Frederica Mathewes-Green (Orthodox), Carl E. Olson (Greek Catholic). Moderator: Bishop John Michael Botean (Greek-Catholic). Register online at: [www.olconference.com](http://www.olconference.com).

*More Happenings on page 3*

## **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 has sponsored 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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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.

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

# + His Holiness Pope Shenouda III May his memory be eternal

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



It is not often that we are blessed to live in the same lifetime with one who is certainly saintly due to his ever-zealous witness to Christ during a time of unceasing and escalating attacks by Islamists, a time during which he provided loving Christ-like service to his people. Thus, it is with profound human sadness but great spiritual joy that we call to our hearts and minds His Holiness Thrice-Blessed Pope Shenouda III, the Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church that traces back to the holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark, who passed into Eternal Life in Our Lord on March 17, 2012.

To "fall asleep in the Lord" in the hope of the Resurrection is a great grace, prayed for by all committed Christians. A witness to the Godly passing of His Holiness recounts that on his last day "...he could not sleep and was seeing holy visions of multitudes waiting for him (the "cloud of witnesses" mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews (12: 1))."\*\*\*i\*\* May God now seat him at the front of His banquet table in His Eternal Feast of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Ardent followers of Christ know the soul of His Holiness remains alive in the Eternal Mind of God. His spirit can also remain alive in us, who can emulate his desire for the unity of the Apostolic Churches. The unity of the Apostolic Churches is the primary hope, goal, prayer and service of us who are members of the Society of St. John Chrysostom; furthermore, we pray all Christians be devoted to this unity. Christ Himself prayed for the unity of us all when He cried out to His Heavenly Father: "Holy Father, keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given Me, in order that they may be one, even as We." (Jn. 17:11)

The commitment of His Holiness of Thrice-Blessed Memory to this ecumenical effort is unquestionable. In 1973 he went to Rome and signed a declaration of common faith with His Holiness Pope Paul VI. Various news sources noted this was the first meeting of the Pontiffs since the year 451 AD. In later years, His Holiness Pope Shenouda worked toward similar understanding between the Coptic Church and other Orthodox Churches to overcome obstacles to full unity. An outstanding example was that in June 1989 His Holiness opened the *International Commission for Inter-Orthodox Theological Dialogue Conference*, which published the first "Agreed Statement" between these Churches.

Prayer, understanding and fellowship with one another are the very least we can do in the spirit and memory of this Godly Pope. May we be enlivened by one of his last words: "I pray for you my beloved children; preserve your tongues from causing any division!" \*\*\*ii\*\* May his memory be eternal!

### **ENDNOTES**

\*\*\*i\*\* personal communication with Fr. Kyrillos Ibrahim, 24 March 2012

\*\*\*ii\*\*Prayer Service, 2012 03 23, St. Mark's Coptic Church of Chicago

SSJC-WR Workship Report

# Lent - East West

**“Lent: East and West.” SSJC-WR Program, February 25, 2012; Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church, Cardiff, CA. Speakers: Msgr. Dennis Mikulanis, Pastor, San Rafael Roman Catholic Parish, Rancho Bernardo, Archpriest Fr. Bratso Krsic, St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, San Diego. Moderator: Archpriest George Morelli, SSJC-WR. President, St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, San Diego.**

*(Based on notes taken by Marian Cavadias)*

A forty day period of fast and repentance before Easter/Pascha, “Lent,” is common to the traditions of both Catholics and Orthodox, with some differences. In Holy Scripture, “forty days” represents a time of trial or chastisement ending in restoration or renewal. Easter (Pascha) is a renewal. For the Orthodox, Lent ends on the Saturday before Palm Sunday (commemoration of the raising of Lazarus), and for the Romans it ends just before the Mass on Holy Thursday. For both, Sundays during Lent are still “mini - Resurrections.” The Lenten period before Pascha is called “Great” or “Holy” Lent in the Orthodox Church as there are three other Lents.<sup>1</sup>

The beginning date depends each year on the date of Easter, calculated as: “The first Sunday, after the first full moon, following the Spring Equinox,” but the results will differ for Catholics and Orthodox because they use different calendars (Gregorian and Julian). A full explanation is in *Light of the East* Newsletter Vol. 5, No. 3.<sup>2</sup> Msgr. Dennis expressed his heartfelt hope that a common date could soon be agreed on. For the West, Ash Wednesday, with its well-known crosses of ashes marked on foreheads to the words “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return” or “Repent and believe in the Gospel,” marks the beginning of Lent. For Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholics, Lent begins with “Forgiveness Vespers” on the Sunday evening before [Ash Wednesday] and includes a ceremony of mutual forgiveness exchanged between all clergy and congregants present. Fr. Bratso told of being impressed on such an occasion by a Bishop making a full prostration before a small girl and demonstrated the full and partial prostrations used in Orthodox Lenten prayer. He described the Orthodox tradition of several preparatory, pre-Lenten Sundays, each focused on a different aspect of repentance.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are pillars of Lenten practice for both Orthodox and Catholics, for Roman Catholics, stressing promoting spiritual cleansing, reliance on God and solidarity with the poor. Official fasting guidelines for the Roman Church, though not canonically required because the Pope wants fasting to be voluntary, are: two small meals a day and one main, the two smaller together not to exceed the main. Many also give up sweets or between meal snacks.

Fr. Bratso reminded that all these practices, particularly fasting, praying, prostrations, and being kind to others, have inward and outward aspects and that, today, too many people focus on the outward, or physical, aspects. Fasting is a spiritual, inner struggle that helps us to appreciate the full force of Christ’s work and to avoid a sense of self-sufficiency that excludes God, to remind us of reliance on God; as children depend on parents, so we should depend on God. When we fast, he noted, we are making an effort as part of a community and are connected with Holy Communion. It is an act of obedience to God and communion with the Body of Christ – the Church. It should be part of sacramental life. Without the community it becomes a burden. He warned that, if not practiced properly, these practices can become demonic. Both traditions stress reception of the Sacrament of Confession. Roman Catholic inter-parish Reconciliation Services followed by individual confession were described as particularly well attended. Catholics are also urged to attend Mass more frequently during the week.<sup>3</sup>

Fr. Bratso stressed that Lent is a time of “precise destination” for Orthodox Christians, a journey towards Pascha, a time of preparation, of repentance, i.e., a change of mind, of remembering the need to return to communion with God, and that, despite modern tendencies to scorn these “rules” for Lent as old and outdated,<sup>4</sup> Lent is also a time of lightness and joy in anticipation of the Resurrection.

<sup>1</sup> Before: 1) Christmas; 2) the Dormition of the Mother of God (Assumption); 3) the Feast of the Sts. Peter and Paul. Some churches use the new Gregorian calendar and some use the either the older Julian calendar or a mixed calendar to calculate dates.

<sup>2</sup> <http://lightoftheeast.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/ssjcnwsspring11.published.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> By contrast, in the Eastern Churches no Divine Liturgies are celebrated on the weekdays of Lent, only the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts, a Communion Service, See: [http://orthodoxwiki.org/Liturgy\\_of\\_the\\_Presanctified\\_Gifts](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Liturgy_of_the_Presanctified_Gifts)

<sup>4</sup>For more on the Orthodox practice of fasting see: <http://orthodoxwiki.org/Fasting>.

### More Happenings:

## **Chamber Music in Historic Sites:**

### **Cappella Romana**

*“The Byzantine Tradition: From Constantinople to California”*

**Saturday, May 26, 3:30 p.m., Pre-Concert Talk; 4 p.m. Concert, at St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 1324 South Normandie, Los Angeles 90006.** Presented by the Da Camera Society of Mount St. Mary’s College. Follow the music of Byzantium on a thousand-year journey from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Pacific Rim.

## 2012 Huffington Ecumenical Symposium

# Pan-Orthodoxy in North America: Towards a Local Church

*Based on notes taken by the editor...*

The 2012 Huffington Ecumenical Symposium was held on the campus of Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Participants were welcomed by Father Deacon Nicholas Densyenko, Assistant Professor of Theological Studies and Director, Huffington Ecumenical Institute, who also led the Morning Prayer Service.

In his keynote address, Dr. Peter Bouteneff, Associate Professor in Systematic Theology and Director of Institutional Assessment at St. Vladimir Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, NY, entitled his presentation: *Orthodoxy & Ethnicity: Making Sense of the United States Orthodox Landscape Today*.

Asking the questions, Who are We? Who am I? Dr. Bouteneff noted that the Orthodox world consists of self-governing churches, however, in America the immigrants did not seek to form a "local church," whereas Roman Catholics evolved into a local American Church. In the Orthodox situation, he noted that no church exists outside particular times and places and that cultures are vehicles for conveyance of tradition. On a pastoral level he asked, "How does theology adapt to new circumstances in languages, migrations and cultures? In immigrations, how are cherished institutions, such as ethnic culture, preserved? In America, the Orthodox Churches fulfilled this role.

Regarding ecclesiastical issues, the nature of primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople requires additional definition. What is the jurisdiction of other Orthodox patriarchs? What of the largest church (Russian)? He noted how the primacy of Constantinople is sometimes contested as in territorial disputes, and this is often felt most keenly in the West. He inquired as to where the Assembly of Bishops (which recently replaced SCOBA, (Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of America) is taking the Orthodox Church today? He asked the question, "What is motivating the Assembly on the issue of unity and how is this determined? What do the people want? The status quo?" The prevailing thought is "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." So an anomaly is tolerated; it provides ethnic security; new emigrants find comfort in their ethnic church; it is comfortable to maintain the status quo; unity can be found in confusion, and just what would a unified American Orthodox church look like? Discussion of all these issues will help clarify the future of the Orthodox Church.

### **Historical and Ecclesiological Perspectives on Orthodoxy in America**

The presentation of Fr. Radu Bordeianu of Duquesne University was entitled *Primacy, Nationality, and the Quest of*

*Orthodox-Catholic Unity*. Fr. Radu pointed out that the main issue upon which dialogue is currently stalemated is Primacy. Some of the issues which need resolution are: what is the primacy for union in communion, unity versus uniformity, noting that variety enriches the church, unity in faith and dogma. He noted that unity in teaching does not guarantee unity in the episcopacy. The Bishop is the symbol of unity. Synodality - conciliarity - consensus is required of the entire church. He noted that the bishop must transcend ethnic and political divisions, and that there is still no consensus regarding what to do about the old and new calendars, which in some cases has caused a break in Episcopal and Eucharistic communion.

The ideal would be to have "One" Synod with no overlapping jurisdictions - "Eucharistic communion is possible," he said, "without solving divisions." Unfortunately, division is tacitly accepted by the Mother Churches. He noted, regarding papal infallibility and primacy, that the Orthodox Church needs to provide concrete solutions. He asked questions, "Why postpone Eucharistic communion? What about a ministry of universal service?" He reviewed that the structure of the Roman Catholic Church consists of local, regional universal governing bodies, but questioned where the Roman curia and synods fit into this scheme. He noted that the Pope of Rome could claim moral and canonical authority but not universal jurisdiction, where primacy should reside in the local church. Currently, Rome has not asked the Orthodox to believe everything it has proclaimed, but rather only that which has been proclaimed in the first millennium.

Sr. Susan Wood, a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth Kansas who is a professor and chair of the Department of Theology at Marquette University presented: *North American Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue: A Vision of the Possible*. She noted that the North American Theological Orthodox/Catholic Consultation is currently examining what Orthodox/Catholic unity would look like in the future. Will full communion come from the top down? No! It cannot, because the Orthodox Church is structured differently from the Roman Church. The solution would be to work from the bottom up. The path would consist of subsidiary structures that would lay the groundwork for communion on an ecclesial level. The ideal would be first unity of the Orthodox in America. But more than informal grassroots work is required for full communion. There are possibilities. Mutual recognition that there is one church founded by the apostles; the issue of how the Roman Catholic would recognize the Orthodox and how would the Orthodox recognize the Catholic Church and by what authority? A beginning might be to recognize baptism by each church and not just by economy.

Removal of the filioque. She noted that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops cannot do this unilaterally. Finally, respect diversity; nothing needs to change in one another's tradition. What about concelebrating? This cannot take place without the establishment of full communion first; and she noted that some precedent has been set by Pope Benedict and Patriarch Bartholomew at a liturgy in Rome where the Pope was the celebrant and the patriarch was the presider, the filioque was not used and both gave homilies and blessings.

Sr. Wood also noted that the Eastern Churches face more restrictive policies. She spoke of the differences regarding synodality. Regarding mission: both churches have issues of common concern and evangelization. Regarding subsidiarity, she pointed out that when lower authorities fail to act then higher authority intervenes. The two churches (East & West) have yet to explore together what is possible, such as the acknowledgment of each other's election of bishops. More discussion is needed regarding overlapping jurisdictions, the calendar issue, and membership in more than one synod.

### **Session 2: Open Doors, Open Dialogue Local Church Structures**

Dr. Will Cohen of the University of Scranton chose the topic: *Why Ecclesial Structures at the Regional Level Matter: Communion as Mutual Inclusion*. Dr. Cohen noted that there is no local level without a regional level. Quoting Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, "Local and universal exist within one another. Neither can live in isolation. Every local church is present in the universal church, the Body of Christ." Recognition, however, begins with regional communion. Collegiality is the coming together of the regional church. Regarding the mission of the regional church, Dr. Cohen noted that dialogue with nations must be regional. Consultation will require mutual inclusion. As an example he cited the occasion when Archbishop Oscar Romero celebrated one national Mass for the entire nation, resulting in recognition from both El Salvador and Rome. The universal church must recognize the regional church.

Adam DeVillie, assistant professor of theology at the University of St. Francis, Fort Wayne, Indiana presented *An Ecumenical Gift Exchange: Synodality and Primacy in the Search for Christian Unity*. He began by explaining the importance of synodical structures. For Roman Catholics he explained that local and national episcopal synods are not real synods. He cited calls by Pope Paul VI, Fr. John Meyendorf, Yves Congar, O.P., Patriarch Maximos IV, and Fr. Robert Taft, S.J., among others calling for the recovery of synodality in the Patriarchal Churches.

Why synods? Citing John Zizioulas: "theologically synods and primacy are the necessary means to realize and guarantee the balance between the many and the one, a balance that, in the Church, is supposed to mirror the Trinity, between the oneness of the divine nature and the diversity of the divine Person." Synods with primacy, then, are supposed to be ecclesial

embodiments of the relationship of communion that forever obtains within the Godhead. A wide range of people help create success. It shows that the church is open to learning. Election of bishops must include laity, clergy as well as hierarchy. He noted that the Eastern Catholic Churches have true synods, but not the Roman Church. Historically, there is no monopoly of Roman hierarchy appointing bishops. Since bishops represent all the faithful, they must be elected by the faithful.

He recommended that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops follow the example of the Orthodox Church in America. In conclusion, he noted that there is no one model in the Christian East and that Roman Catholics should learn, implement and show that we are sisters churches. The Orthodox must respond by overcoming fractionalization and its inability to call a Council. Both churches need each other.

### **Session 3: Beauty and Aesthetics in Harmony: Unity in Liturgical Music**

Alice Hughes, co-founder of PSALM (Pan-Orthodox Society for the Advancement of Liturgical Music) and the Liturgical Singing Seminar, spoke about *Unity in Diversity: The Beauty in Stylistic Choices*. Quoting Nancy Forest-Flier, she stated that "everything we do must be done in beauty, with grace." "Beauty serves to prepare the soul for encounter with God," (Nicholas Arseniev). She recounted her journey to Orthodoxy, noting that in PSALM the participants began to learn from one another. She believed that there is a need for more education, noting that there is a wide variety of musical styles; that it is important to understand the musical ethos in which a particular community worships. What works in one place may not work in another. Some difficulties to be overcome are different levels of education, the fact that some may feel threatened by jurisdictional differences. There is need to work for understanding and acceptance, establish trust and to discover commonalities.

Tony Alonso of Loyola Marymount University presented: *In Splendid, Varied Ways: Unity and Diversity in Post-conciliar Liturgical Song*. He recommended the examination and appropriateness of liturgical music per situation and pastoral needs in light of strengthening and forming the faithful. Everything must be considered: age, culture, language, education. Alien forms should be avoided. Cheap and trite clichés and popular forms should be avoided. He noted, however, that the church has admitted various styles throughout the ages. He felt that Roman Catholic music has moved away from the liturgical setting. He recommended singing the liturgy, not at the liturgy. Some styles can be stumbling blocks to congregational participation. Song is essential to participating in liturgical worship.

The way music shapes us is a profoundly complex process, and style has a profoundly crucial role; however, style cannot become the primary point of liturgical worship.

## Huffington Ecumenical Symposium

Continued from page 5

### The Dynamics of Parish Decay: An Open Dialogue

Dr. Michael Plekon is professor in the department of Sociology/Anthropology and in the Program in Religion and Culture at Baruch College of the City University of New York. His presentation, *The Church has left the building: The Local Church in the Culture and Society of the 21st Century* noted that emerging communities do not want to dedicate all their resources to maintaining a building. The Church is the people, not the building. Yet a community must have a location. Its home may be a house (Dura Europa), rented space. It may even meet in the outdoors as some churches did during the Soviet persecution in Russia and Ukraine. The Church is in the world.

Membership declines may be a result of aging members or economics or cultural shifts. What to do? Adapt! One cleric can serve multiple communities. Rent space from another church or vacant building; form a regional parish; parish may not be run by a priest but rather by members of the community itself. Clergy themselves may need to adapt, returning to a model of the early church - "the worker priest," who is employed in a secular occupation.

Dr. Michael Horan, Professor of Religious Education and Pastoral Theology at Loyola Marymount University, presented *Before the Church leaves the building...Is intra-parish dialogue possible?* Citing the growth of secular Catholicism, he presented some chilling statistics: one in ten Catholics are non-practicing, nominal and/or are theologically illiterate.

These secular Catholics find the church to be overly proactive, shallow, anti-science, repressive, exclusive and have serious doubts about its claims. These "Secular Catholics" need to listen more humbly. Inside the building evangelical Catholics are at odds with Liberal Catholics and there is tension over the interpretation of Vatican II. Examples: Conservatives find Vatican II, good but needing refinement, while others find Vatican II to be the work of the Spirit, while yet others don't care about Vatican II. The first two groups need to dialogue. They need to define what Catholic identity is. Is it spiritual or ethnic? Theological or canonical? What it should be is a Catholic vision of sacramental mediation "communion" We may discover that we are united more than we know. It must be meaningful in a new world.

There needs to be a change in dynamics. The Church may be smaller and more involved. It needs to be incarnational, involving people, food, liturgy, music. It needs to be more welcoming. But then what? What's the plan?

### Session 5 - The Cross and Social Action: Towards Common Ground

Representing FOCUS, North American (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve), Fr. Justin Matthews spoke on *Orthodox Christians and Social Action: Taking up the Cross*

He quoted a new saint, Mother Maria of Paris: "Piety, where is the love that moves mountains?" He cited the following affirmations: 1. Love of Neighbor: Take the youth out of the church and meet the poor. 2. Take Social Action out of the church and into the world. 3. Create a space for healing for transformation and healing ministries where the iconostasis joins heaven and earth. Where we see one another as God sees us.

Social Action ministry. Remove barriers: We need a common culture where the clergy and hierarchy have more in common with the people in the parish than with each other. We need to connect to other jurisdictions. Often the clergy don't challenge the people. Often there is suspicion, resulting in excuses as a result of lack of trust. With strict administrative control there is no way to minister. The process of creating ministry is often unknown, i.e., how to get funding without the approval of the hierarchy or diocese. Too much emphasis is placed on keeping ministry Orthodox, resulting in the exclusion of valuable non-Orthodox assistance.

We need to cultivate spiritual trust. Keep it simple. Be human, be Orthodox, lay aside all earthly cares. Too often the Church is top heavy. Where there are too many priests or deacons, convert them to expanding the concept of serving the poor.

Dr. Francine Cardman of the School of Theology and Ministry at Boston College titled her presentation: *Catholic Social Ethics and Orthodoxy: Finding Common Ground*. Theory comes from practice. She noted that the New Testament does not speak about ethics but it does speak about Christian Life, i.e., Ephesians 4, 1 Thessalonians 2:12 and Colossians 1:10, all speak of unity of life in the Spirit and the unity of humankind. Churches don't exist for themselves but for humanity.

She further cited the teaching of the Fathers, noting that the Desert Fathers practiced charity and hospitality by: Discernment (what does this person need); Simplicity; Welcoming emigrants; Bread (food heals); Hospitals; the healing of souls and prisoners.

The Greek Fathers understood that common humanity endows common dignity. Thus the emphasis on responsibility to our neighbor, to the least among us. Thus we are implored to give away excess food and goods which nature intended for all. Food is a basic human right We are to protect the environment. We should all work toward a common goal, a way of life which leads to God. This applies to structures - not just persons. We need to restrict structures that perpetuate poverty. Regarding this she asked, "What is the Church? What is the Church for?" Eucharist is the banquet for all. If we can't eat together, how do we feed the world? In ministry we must witness our faith in how we live personally. We must ask, "What does it mean to be church in this place?" The laity must act together locally and beyond.

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann in *For the Life of the Word* wrote, "We consume the body and blood of Christ. We are what we eat." St. Augustine, "We are what we love." Loving the poor is the way we love Christ. "How can we say we love God if we don't love our neighbor?" (1 John).

THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM  
Western Region  
*Presents:*

*Praise of the Mother of God:  
In Eastern and Western Traditions.*

Saturday, May 19, 2012  
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

St. John the Baptizer Ukrainian Catholic  
Church

4400 Palm Ave.  
Mesa, CA 91941  
(619) 464-8783

<http://stjohnthebaptizer.org/administration.html>

Contact: Fr. George Morelli, SSJC-WR President:  
(760) 920-6530, [president@lightoftheeast.org](mailto:president@lightoftheeast.org)

Eastern: Mother Sarah Elisabet Oftedal,  
Martha and Mary House, Escondido, CA

Western: Joseph Cunningham B.A., S.T.M.  
St. Mark's Roman Catholic Church, San Marcos, CA

Directions: I-5 to 1-805 S to I-8 East, exit 13A (Spring St.),  
Left onto Spring St., Left onto Palm Ave. to 4400 Palm Ave.

*A freewill offering will be taken.*

The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region business meeting immediately follows Program. Those staying for the meeting should bring a packed lunch. Info: Bob Greenwell: (619) 644-3600; [treasurer@lightoftheeast.org](mailto:treasurer@lightoftheeast.org)

*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.*

La



## Roman Catholic Church in Holy Land to switch to Julian calendar for the celebration of Pascha

*From CatholicCulture.org*

The Catholic churches of the Holy Land plan to observe Pascha/Easter according to the Julian calendar, the head of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land has announced. The change could come as early as next year.

Father Pierbattista Pizzabella explained that the change was prompted by a desire to strengthen ecumenical ties between Catholics and Orthodox, and also by pastoral concern for the many families in the Holy Land that include both Catholic and Orthodox believers.

The Orthodox churches set the dating of Paschas according to the Julian calendar. For some years the Orthodox observe Pascha/Easter on the same day as Catholics; in other years the dates may differ by either one week (as it does this year) or 5 weeks. The change in the liturgical calendar for Catholic churches would not apply to the basilicas in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, which draw thousands of Catholic pilgrims for Easter and Christmas every year. Those basilicas are governed by agreements that date back to the Ottoman empire, and include detailed accords on when feasts are to be celebrated.

*(Editor's comment: In fact the Melkite-Greek Catholic Churches and some of the Latin/Roman Catholic Churches in the Holy Land have unofficially celebrated Holy Week and Pascha together for a number of years. Unofficially, some of the Orthodox Churches have celebrated Christmas on December 25 according to the Gregorian calendar together with their Catholic brothers and sisters. This grass roots ecumenism, although without official approval, certainly set the tone for the hierarchy to respond. The response of the The Franciscan Custodians of the Roman Catholic Shrines of the Holy Land is a welcome response to what in fact was already taking place. A united church is a more powerful witness to world, especially in these troubled and difficult times in the Holy Land and throughout the entire Middle East.)*

## Antiochian Orthodox Patriarch comments on the violence in Syria

"... we stand shocked at the killing of innocents and increase in bloodshed, this is because every drop of blood which falls on the soil of this nation from which we come and to which we belong pains and sorrows us. Here we refer to the killing of one of the priests of our Church in Hama, the Reverend Father Basilios Nassar, who offered himself as a martyr on the altar of service, imitating the Lord who said, "The Good Shepherd, lays down his life for the sake of the sheep. We condemn any attack on holy places such as the monastery of Saydnaya, as they are holy and inviolable," Ignatius IV, Patriarch of An-

## Pope Shenouda III - Memory Eternal

*Continued from page 1*

within the Muslim community.

Born Nazeer Gayed Roufail on the 3rd of August 1923, he became a monk in 1954 under the name Father Antonios the Syrian after joining the Syrian Monastery of the Ever-Virgin Mary the Theotokos, where he was later elevated to the priesthood. In 1962, Pope Cyril VI summoned Fr. Antonios to the patriarchate where he consecrated him General Bishop for Christian Education and as Dean of the Coptic Orthodox Theological Seminary, whereupon he assumed the name Shenouda, which was the name of a Coptic saint, Saint Shenoute the Archimandrite, and two previous popes: Shenouda I (859–880) and Shenouda II (1047–1077). Saint Shenoute the Archimandrite was instrumental in flourishing the Monastic Movement, active in Ecumenical issues, a noted Church teacher and writer, and an Egyptian Leader. Pope Shenouda III maintained the legacy of the name he carried.

Pope Shenouda served as Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria since 14 November 1971, presiding over a worldwide expansion of the Coptic Orthodox Church. During his papacy, he appointed the first-ever bishops to preside over North American dioceses that now contain over two hundred parishes (200 in the United States, 23 in Canada and one in Mexico), up from four in 1971, as well as the first bishops in Australia and the first bishops in South America. Shenouda was known for his commitment to ecumenism and had, since the 1970s, advocated inter-denominational Christian dialogue. He devoted his writings, teachings and actions to spread and propagate the rules of understanding, peace, dialogue and forgiveness.

*From Wikipedia, The New York Times and Light of the East staff.*

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