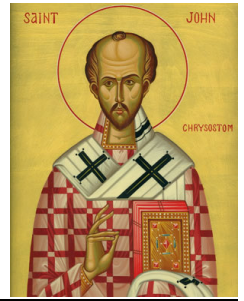




Archpriest George Morelli and Monsignor Dennis Mikulanus at SSJC workshop on Sin, Confession & Reconciliation. (See Page 3 for details)

Light of the East

Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom
Western Region Edition



Volume 3, Number 3

Spring, 2009

Happenings!

East & West: Cultural Dissonance & the Great Schism of 1054

Thursday, April 23, 6:15 p.m. reception, 7:15 p.m., Huffington Ecumenical Institute lecture at Loyola Marymount University, University Hall 1000—Ahmanson Auditorium, 1 LUM Dr. Los Angeles 90045. RSVP 310 338 1917 or by email at hei@lmu.edu.

Mary East & West

Saturday, May 2, 10 a.m. at San Philip the Apostle Melkite-Greek Catholic Mission, 923 West Congress Street, San Bernardino, 92510. Sponsored by The Society of St. John Chrysostom—Western Region. Speakers will be the Very Reverend Hugh Barbour, O.Pream. Prior of St. Michael Norbertine Abbey and Fr. Justin Rose, Administrator of St. Philip Melkite Mission. Please bring your own lunch. A meeting of the Society of St. John Chrysostom will follow. A freewill offering will be taken.

Celebrating the Year of St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles

Friday/Saturday, May 8/9 at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, 4949 Alton Parkway, Irvine 92604. Presented by Fr. Thomas Hopko, Dean Emeritus of St. Vladimir Orthodox Seminary. Advance registration \$20 required. For additional details go to www.StPaulsIrvine.org or call 949 733 2366.

New Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill I enthroned in Moscow



Russia Profile.org

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill I

Newly elected Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill I was enthroned at a ceremony in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Moscow on February 1, 2009, succeeding Patriarch Alexy II, who died in December 2008. Thousands of people, including the President of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev, attended the ceremony of enthronement.

Kirill arrived at the cathedral following a fifteen minute chiming of cathedral bells. He was welcomed at the entrance by two senior priests and a layman who took charge of the Russian traditional bread and salt. Four of Russia's most famous choirs sang the liturgy during which senior bishops chanted "Axios!" (the Greek word for "worthy") a total of three times. After that, deacons replaced Kirill's archbishop's vestments with the patriarchal sakkos (tunic), the omophorion (a broad scarf) and the patriarchal mitre. Then, Kirill became formally enthroned as Patriarch, the first to be elected since the collapse of the former Soviet Union.

As well as hosting his own television broadcast, Kirill served as acting head of his Church following the death of Alexy II. Kirill's appointment as leader has been welcomed by the Prime Minister of Russia, Vladimir Putin, who was also present at the enthronement. A delegation from

the Vatican led by Cardinal Walter Kasper represented his Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI. Kirill has met the Pope on several occasions.

In his first sermon as Patriarch, Kirill stressed the importance of church unity, which has been threatened by calls in Ukraine to break with Moscow and dissent within Russia about the church's links with other churches.

President Medvedev said that the Patriarch's role is especially important in Russia. "Russia is a complicated State, inhabited by many different peoples, followers of different faiths, and in this sense also the mission of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia is extremely notable." *Russia Profile.org & Sophia Kirskovsky for ENI contributed to this report.*

San Diego Auxiliary, Salvatore Cordileone, named Bishop of Oakland

His Excellency, Salvatore Cordileone, Auxiliary of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego, has been appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland. Bishop Salvatore was a speaker at a plenary session at Orientale Lumen West in 2006.

The Society of Saint John Chrysostom

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

THE GOALS OF THE SOCIETY ARE TO:

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

WESTERN REGION

President,
The Very Rev. Fr. George Morelli, PhD.
Vice President, The Rt. Rev. James Babcock
Secretary, Anne Petach
Treasurer, Robert Greenwell
Sgt. at Arms/Parliamentarian,
Major Frank Scialdone USMC Ret.
Librarian, Betty Kearns

Light of the East

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

Editorial contact:

Editor: Rt. Rev. Archimandrite
James Babcock

Distribution: Betty Kearns
451 W. Madison Ave., Placentia CA 92870
bettykearns@roadrunner.com

Membership:

Robert Greenwell

A message from the President of SSJC-Western Region

Relativism: The enemy of all apostolic churches

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

A recent report released by *The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life* indicated that Americans are more ready than ever to change or drop their religious traditions and that many are unaware or unconcerned with doctrinal distinctions. Particularly disturbing in this report is that Catholics and Orthodox, the Churches founded by Christ Himself, tracing in unbroken succession from the Apostolic tradition, are among the groups with a low percentage of respondents who hold that they are the one true faith leading to eternal life.

However, did not Jesus Himself say: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me?" (Jn 14:14) Did not St. Paul tell the first Christians: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it?" (1 Cor 12:27) Did not St. Paul tell the Hebrews (10: 23-25): "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some...?" Did not Christ Himself warn us of the dire consequences of wasting Godly gifts when He said: "Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required?" (Lk 12:48) This is especially true for the apostolic churches who have the greatest gift of all, the Eucharist, the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord God and Savior Himself passed down to us from Christ to the apostles in an unbroken succession to our bishops. Christ did this when He ordained His apostles by saying: "Do this in remembrance of me." (Lk 22: 19). These are not relativistic statements; they are the cornerstone of the Body of Christ - the Church.

The purpose of our Society is to teach and witness the history, worship, spirituality, discipline and theology of Eastern Christianity, and to work and pray for the fullness of unity desired by Jesus Christ. The members of the SSJC-WR, similar to the first Christians, are responding to the grace of the Holy Spirit, and by their free will are self-elected. No one is a member unless they want to be a member. As committed members of the Society, we should emulate the early Christians described in the Acts of the Apostles (2: 42): "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Let us, as committed members of the SSJC-WR, not despair at the relativism of nominal Christians. Instead, let us witness and zealously work to bring about the fullness of Christ's teachings and be conformed to the *mind of the Church*. Authentic Christians, as St. Paul suggests (c.f. Rm 8:23-24), are the real guardians of Christian faith and morals. What we need today is growth in depth and commitment to the fullness of Christ and His Church. SSJC-WR members can lead the way so all who look at us can say, "See how they love one another" (Jn 13:34). St. Maximus the Confessor (Philokalia II), tells us: "Dispassion engenders love, hope in God engenders dispassion; and patience and dispassion engender hope in God"

SSJC-WR Workshop**Sin, Confession, Reconciliation
in the East and in the West**

By Anne C. Petach

Eager to learn about sin, confession and reconciliation in both the Christian East and West, more than two dozen participants gathered at St. Rafael Roman Catholic Church in Rancho Bernardo on Saturday, March 19 for a Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region workshop.

MISSING THE MARK

Though the Catholic (Msgr. Dennis Mikulanis) and Orthodox (Fr. George Morelli) speakers approached the topic of *Sin, Confession and Reconciliation* differently, by the end of the question and answer session the depth of basic agreement was clear. Both had called sin “missing the mark” (hamartia), a break in the relationship with God. Both had stressed the ways each person’s sin affects the whole body of Christ. Both had affirmed the urgent need for repentance and for turning toward a future more directed towards God as a condition for absolution. Both had noted the requirement to forgive others and to ask forgiveness in order to be reconciled with God and the community.

Fr. George stressed the Eastern view of sin as illness that needs healing and the place of tears for repentance in mourning for sins. But he liked the analogy Msgr. Dennis had used of the cleansing from sin through Confession, a “second baptism,” as begin before like the cleansing of a grungy kitchen sink sponge by soaking it in bleach. Msgr. Dennis noted that in the past 40 or so years, the Western church has come closer to the healing model followed by the Eastern church and has moved away from the more juridical former approach, which he called the “Saturday carwash” mentality.

VENIAL/MORTAL SIN?

Venial/mortal sin seemed to be a major difference. In the East, Fr. George noted, all sin is considered serious, even what might seem minor, and he cited St. Symeon the Theologian’s image of the effect of a small leak in a wine jar which will cause it to leak as surely as larger hole will. Msgr. Dennis used the image of a protractor—small increments (venial sins) lead, angle by angle to the ninety degree upright line, beyond which the fall to the downward side may be both precipitous and “mortal.”

Msgr. Dennis reminded that until the 5th century there had only been public confession and long periods of repentance prescribed for the major sins of murder, apostasy and adultery. Individual confession came into the Western Church from Irish monks. But Fr. George reminded him that Irish monks had learned it from missionary Egyptian monks - in the time of the undivided Church.

A full length version of Fr. George’s talk will be published soon at www.OrthodoxyToday.org.

***Want to see a unified church? Get involved!
Join the Society of St. John Chrysostom***

***Symposium on Chalcedonian
Christology helps clarify
ancient misunderstandings***

True God and True Man: Chalcedonian Christology in a Post-Modern World, was the topic of the annual symposium of the Ecumenical Institute at Loyola Marymount, Los Angeles, March 19, 2009.

Before introducing speakers Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church, and Bishop Maxim of the Diocese of Western America of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Moderator Rt. Rev. Alexei Smith briefly sketched the historical context of the decades of controversy which culminated in the calling of the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Imperial political pressures, ecclesiastical rivalries, and misunderstandings of terminology were among the cross-currents influencing the 600 or so assembled bishops, the greatest number to attend any Council until then, as they debated and finally formulated a definition of the unity of Christ which, it was hoped, would resolve the controversies. Unfortunately, it did not, as the definition was not accepted by several major churches, now collectively known as the Oriental Orthodox among which are the Armenian, Coptic and Syriac Churches.

Speaking from the non-Chalcedonian perspective of the Armenian Church, Bishop Derderian first noted that political pressures, including the arrest of some participants and a final verdict being given by an emperor who ignored the outcome of debate, were serious interferences in the Council of Chalcedon. In terms of doctrine, he explained that, following St. Paul (Gal. 1, 8:9) and the Apostolic Fathers, Armenians hold to the statements of St. Cyril of Alexandria that the Incarnation is undivided, and they consider the two-nature statement of Chalcedon to be a dualistic innovation introduced from Antioch that is not consonant with previous Church Tradition. Thus, they hold firmly to the definition of the Council of Nicea (325) as the ground of unity “accepted in all places and in all times,” and consider discussion of the ineffable, incomprehensible, unique union of God and Man in Christ as leading only to confusion.

Bishop Maxim described the Chalcedonian formulation, as, though not exhaustive of the mystery of the Incarnation, a balanced synthesis of Western, Alexandrian, and Antiochian thought, consistent with St. Cyril’s views, and within the Tradition of the Church. He speculated that lack of familiarity with the nuances of the Greek terms used may have played a part in its rejection by the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The doctrine of the two human and divine natures being united “unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, and inseparably,” became the basis for later Byzantine theology, with John Damascene, Maximus the Confessor, Gregory Palamas, and, he said, was expressed in iconography and facilitated enculturation of the faith. To the post modern world, mired in radically isolated individualism, it offers a vision of a union that is able to receive

Continued on page 7

Oriente Lumen Conference

**OL XIII
Washington, DC
June 15-18**

Theme: "Monastic Spirituality for Everyday Life"

The Oriente Lumen XIII Conference will be held at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in northeast Washington next to the campus of The Catholic University of America. The theme of the conference will be "Monastic Spirituality for Everyday Life".

Speakers:

Metropolitan Jonah
Primate of the Orthodox Church in America
New York, NY

Bishop Hlib Lonchyna
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church
Kyiv, Ukraine

Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia
Greek Orthodox Church
Oxford, England
(by pre-recorded video)

Archimandrite Robert Taft, S.J.
Pontifical Oriental Institute
Rome, Italy
(by pre-recorded video)

Mother Lois Farag
Coptic Orthodox Church
Assistant Professor of Church
History, Luther Seminary,
St. Paul MN

Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchik
OSBM, Byzantine Catholic
Church of America, Retreat
House Director, Uniontown NJ

Mr. Elias Daminakis
Greek Orthodox Church
Iconographer & Lecturer
Tampa Bay, FL

(Additional speakers TBA as they confirm)

Each speaker will give a plenary session followed by a panel discussion and questions from the audience. All of the papers presented will be published and provided to the attendees in a Proceedings book after the conference

Each participant will also receive a Liturgical book of all services during the conference to assist in their participation. Opening and closing remarks will also be made by various Church leaders in attendance.

Registration must be made in advance, at least three weeks before the conference begins.

Conference Fees are payable in advance and include all meals, materials, space usage, travel expenses for speakers, receptions and other related costs. Limited accommodations at the Washington Retreat Center, adjacent of the conference site, are available through the conference office. All rooms are airconditioned and include basic linens. Transportation is not included

Single Daily Rate \$95.00 (includes lunch and dinner)

OL XIII—Agenda Washington, June 15-18, 2009

The agenda will generally follow this schedule:

Monday, June 15

- Registration (2-6 pm)
- Dinner
- Moleben to the Holy Spirit
- Opening Session
- Social Reception

Tuesday, June 16

- Breakfast
- Divine Liturgy
- Plenary I
- Lunch
- Personal Time
- Meeting of the SSJC
- Plenary II
- Vespers
- Dinner
- Plenary III
- Social Reception

Wednesday, June 17

- Breakfast
- Divine Liturgy
- Plenary IV
- Lunch
- Personal Time
- Plenary V
- Vespers
- Dinner
- Plenary VI
- Social Reception

Thursday, June 18

- Breakfast
- Akathist to the Theotokos
- Plenary VII / Close
- Lunch
- Departure

During one evening of the conference, participants will be transported to a local Eastern Christian Church for a meal and prayer service in that church's tradition.

**Register on-line at:
www.olconference.com**

Registration Form
Oriente Lumen XIII
 Washington, DC
 June 15-18
**“Monastic Spirituality for
 Everyday Life”**



Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Conference Fee — \$195 per person (includes lunch & dinner) \$ _____

Accommodations for _____ nights
 (\$75/night, per person—includes breakfast) \$ _____

TOTAL FEE ENCLOSED (USD) \$ _____

I will arrive on _____

I will depart on _____

Credit Card # _____

Credit Card Expiration Date _____

Please Mail or Fax this complete registration form with payment to:

Oriente Lumen Conference
PO Box 192
Fairfax, VA 22038-0192
(Make Checks payable to: Oriente Lumen Conference)
 - or -
Fax from to 703 691 0513
 or
Register on line at: www.olconference.com

Letters**Appreciation & Criticism**

I was very honored and pleased to make your acquaintance at the meeting held in Oceanside CA, on Jan 3rd. I, like you, believe most sincerely and pray for the furtherance of a genuine dialog on Church unity between Orthodox and Catholics, and for that reason I applied for SSJC membership shortly after the January event.

Prior to this year, I have followed the proceedings of the Western Region with great interest and also attended *Oriente Lumen*, in 2007. Based on my opinions and observations, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to you for your abundant commitment, great courage, and untiring and countless hours of work dedicated to one of the most imperative injunctions of our Lord Jesus Christ - the unity of faith - which you have so effectively preached and pronounced both privately and in symposium. I am convinced that the dialog on which you elucidate so expertly and which appears to be gaining steady momentum throughout the world cannot be dismissed nor taken lightly. If I may say so, I see in both of you God's grace-given gifts of love and mercy which have been so boldly illuminated in your singular and mutual, concelebratory acts of prayer and worship given so generously without hesitation to the assemblies of the Society and in your own communities with respect to the divine services of the Church.

The manner, however, in which the Society's Western Region, has allowed its participants and contributors to appropriately portray the substance of the dialog to which I refer, has been, at times, in my opinion, less than responsible. While I do not propose to act as censor or arbiter over the Society's publications, I will insist so long as I am admitted to membership that a more concerted effort be made to eliminate injurious and defamatory language from the same.

Today, I wish to draw your attention specifically to an article in the recently distributed, Winter 2009, newsletter endorsing the reading of a book entitled, Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia. There are two very dramatic and egregious problems associated with the mention of this volume in the newsletter, such as:

1. The article is merely a reprint of the book's review done by Princeton University Press, and found on the Web. Princeton, per its typical forte for controversy and anything that supports an atheistic and immaterial point of view, has included in the review several unfounded and arbitrary accusations directed at His Holiness Patriarch Alexei II, of blessed memory, stating, for example, that His Holiness was "a former KGB officer", and that he "astutely linked the church with the army." To simply reproduce this kind of diatribe at the expense, in particular, of the uneducated of the Society should be considered well beneath the dignity of the aims of the organization, and even if you considered announcing a disclaimer on the reviewer's or the writer's material this still would not be in keeping with the Society's paramount objectives. Once more, the afore-cited charges against the Patriarch are nothing short of libel, and constitute unprovoked, deliberate prevarications having no

foundation in truth, and which have been authoritatively refuted time and time again.

2. I have not read the book, since it is well known that the authors, the Garrard's, who occupy a very minor position in the scholastic world on research and formidable expose of any topic, have no background in Russian society, culture, politics or religion. As a political scientist and as a Russian Orthodox, I consider their treatise entirely and unequivocally irrelevant.

3. Last, since the collapse of the Soviet empire, His Holiness graciously submitted to very close and verifiable scrutiny of his activity as a Russian citizen, priest and prelate. Moreover, it is a documented and incontrovertible fact that he was never a member of the KGB nor did he ever consent to or participate in the ruin, physical suffering or death of a person for political, religious or any other reason. And in addition, he expressed on fitting occasions his profound repentance and whole-souled remorse, as an act of total humility, for anything that might be construed or may have resembled collaboration with the sinister functions of his government. It is known, of course, that most all religious persons residing in the Communist world of the previous century were in contact, more or less, with secret police entities within their countries, much like the situation that still persists today in China, North Korea, Cuba, etc., and that particularly in the former Soviet Union, prelates elevated to the Orthodox episcopacy were first approved by the Central Committee, of the CPSU.

With respect to the above, I ask you to please consider inclusion, in your next newsletter, or in a separate communication to its subscribers, of a full disclaimer of the subject review for the reasons I have cited, and that you propose in a distinguishable action by your executive board that a more closely guarded position be adopted for the future that will disallow the admission, publishing and promotion of spurious material in any forum under your auspices.

In closing, I wish to emphasize the fact that regardless of my membership in the Russian Orthodox Church, I have no bias or narrowly focused basis for presenting my objections to the material in question, and that if the book put forth purely objective or controversial themes or data beyond criticism I would not have taken the time to write.

I thank you for giving urgent and careful attention to my concerns, and I ask for your prayers.

Respectfully yours,
Sergei Howard

Member, Society of St John Chrysostom (SSJC) - Western Region, Member, Parish Council, St George Great Martyr Russian Orthodox Mission, West Jordan, Utah

Our SSJC-WR Librarian responds... (see page 7)

Editor's note: Upon receiving and reviewing the comments of Sergei Howard, the Executive Board will take up Mr. Howard request at its next meeting.

"...that they may be one, even as We are one"... John 17:22b
Christianity must speak to the world with one voice if it is to be taken seriously. Help make this happen. Join the Society of St. John Chrysostom

Book editor Betty Kearns responds re: Resurgent Faith

Dear Mr. Howard,

Thank you for your letter concerning the book, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia* by John & Carol Garrard, appearing in the SSJC-WR newsletter, Light of the East, Winter 2009 Edition. This book was chosen as a tribute to Patriarch Aleksy's life & work.

The synopsis found at the Princeton University website, also printed on the front flap of the book cover, is a good summary considering the limited space allotted to the library section of the newsletter. I'm sorry if you've found it offensive and misleading.

Since you have not read *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*, I will respond to your points by referencing the author's intentions found in the book's preface, an overall examination of the ways in which an institution once rejected by the vast majority of its citizenry has come to shape post-Soviet Russia, a "warts and all" portrait of both man and institution.

Although Patriarch Aleksy's alleged KGB experience remains controversial, the authors argue that, "knowledge of inner workings helped defeat the 1991 coup...outwit extreme radicals...make crucial alliances...noting that the collapse of the Soviet Union was neither accompanied nor followed by large scale violence such as the pogroms that blighted Russian life under the last two tsars, and for that, *Russians can credit Patriarch Aleksy more than any other person.*"

"That His Holiness astutely linked the church with the army" refers to the chapter on *A Faith-Based Army* and Patriarch Aleksy's work in restoration of the institute of military chaplains uniting faith and patriotism under the Russian banner.

"Each chapter takes up the daunting challenges of how Patriarch Aleksy & his supporters overcome a blizzard of moral, intellectual, emotional & financial problems, some the legacy of the Soviet past and others the detritus of the tsars. Characters and events recur, viewed from different angles. For example, the account of Nicholas & Alexandra's insistence upon the canonization of the hermit Seraphim of Sarov in 1903 is first treated in Chapter 2 as the authors analyze the skillful use the new patriarch made of the motif of new life for the church and rebirth for Russia in 1991, when he recovered Seraphim's bones from the KGB's closet of stolen relics. The Seraphim saga re-surfaces in Chapter 4, now intertwined with the debate over canonizing the murdered imperial family, anti-Semitism, and the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Thus, the narrative does not unfold in strict chronological time, rather it shows how, under Aleksy II, ancient symbols from Orthodoxy's thousand-year history have become vibrantly alive in a contemporary kaleidoscope of policies, threats, and countermoves."

Even a most critical review of *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia* acknowledges "the author's 'minutiae of Orthodoxy's (and Russia's) history and ritual...admirably free of error" (Leon Aron).

meandering, but to Catholic and Orthodox Christians eager to learn the history & tradition of one another's culture, especially those ecumenically minded individuals working toward church unity, this is a particularly rewarding read. In Chapter 5, *Irreconcilable Differences: Orthodoxy & the West*, reconciliation may appear impossible to some, "but not so for men with God, for all things are possible with God (Mk 10:27)".

In the words of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy of blessed memory, "We must realize that a good and clear future for ourselves depends upon to what extent we ourselves can become good and clear." -*Patriarch Aleksy II at the "All Russian Scientific & Theological Conference on St Seraphim & the Destiny of Russia," October 4, 2004*

Chalcedonian Christology Symposium

Continued from page 3

the other" with respect, without changing, or absorbing it, and of a union of the created and the uncreated which opens to the possibility of the overcoming of death in the person of Christ, and, cosmically, of the Kingdom of God being the "land of the living." He also noted that the role of the Holy Spirit in such unity had not been discussed at Chalcedon.

Note: The Oriental Churches are: Syriac Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, Eritrean Orthodox, Malankara Orthodox, Syrian Church (India) and Armenian Apostolic. They are in communion with each other, and are independent hierarchically, i.e., have no equivalent of the Bishop of Rome or Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.

I want to be a member of SSJC-WR

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

Jurisdiction _____

Full Member \$50 (Voting privileges) for members of canonical apostolic jurisdictions

Associate member \$40 (No voting privileges)

Student or Monastic \$ _____ (Donation)

Mail to: SSJC c/o Bob Greenwell, 2700 Katherine St., El Cajon, CA, 92020.

E-mail rjgreenwell@sbcglobal.com

Serra Club hears report on Catholic/Orthodox relations

Msgr. Dennis Mikulanic, Vicar for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Diego, and Latin Representative on the Executive Committee of the SSJC/WR, spoke to the Serra Club of North San Diego County on March 10, 2009, on the current state of Catholic/Orthodox relations and the work of the SSJC/WR.

The Serra Club is an organization of Catholic Lay people whose purpose is the prayerful and active support of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. The members of the Serra Club had learned of the SSJC from reading the newsletter which had been distributed to several parishes and left on the literature table of the church. This is a good sign of the positive sentiments growing in the parishes and among the laity for a greater understanding of Catholic/Orthodox relations.

Speakers from the SSJC-WR are available to address any organization interested in learning more about the Eastern Churches and its relationship to the Western Church.

Holy Resurrection monks to remain in California

By Paula Doyle, *The Tidings*

For the first time in the U.S., Western and Eastern Catholic monks will dwell side-by-side in two separate communities in one monastery starting this spring. Beginning May 1, St. Andrew's Benedictine Abbey in the high desert community of Valyermo will host five Byzantine Catholic monks for the next three years. The Benedictines have extended this invitation to the Byzantines as they research their options for a home in the Southern California region, including a possible permanent settlement on land adjacent to the St. Andrew's Abbey.

Holy Resurrection Monastery is under the omophor of Bishop John Michael, of the Romanian Catholic Eparchy of Canton, Ohio, and is headed by Egyptian-born, Australian-reared, ethnically-Greek Abbot Nicholas Zachariadis. Father Damien Toilolo, abbot of St. Andrew's Abbey says that this way the church will breathe better with both lungs, Eastern & Western..

Path to Orthodox/Catholic unity described as "A long road" by Cardinal Kaspar following meeting with Greek Orthodox

VATICAN CITY, FEB. 26, 2009 (Zenit.org).- The cardinal in charge of Vatican efforts to seek Christian unity expressed satisfaction at a meeting with a Greek Orthodox leader, even though he recognized that the path to full unity with the Orthodox Church is still long.

Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, expressed this to Vatican Radio after his visit this week to Ieronymos II, leader of the Greek Orthodox Church. The cardinal and archbishop had not met personally.

The Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church elected Metropolitan Ieronymos of Thebes and Livadia a year ago to succeed Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and All Greece, who died in January of 2008.

"I wanted to meet him and wanted to continue with the dialogue currently in progress," the cardinal said. "He is a truly humble and modest man. Our meeting has certainly been a beautiful one, and also those with his collaborators."

The cardinal said his conversations with the Greek Orthodox archbishop centered on practical issues, "since theological dialogue is carried out together with all the Orthodox Churches."

He explained: "In all the European countries, the same challenges show up, such as immigration -- which is very strong -- or the economic crisis. In this realm, there can be collaboration. They are very interested in learning from our experience and this is very important."

Cardinal Kasper particularly noted the situation of minority Latin-rite Catholics and Greek Catholics, whose number is growing due to immigration. "Now they are being taken into

account. Up to now, this had not been the case on the part of the Orthodox Church. I have asked them not to ignore [the Catholics] and they have promised me this."

RESISTANCE

Regarding ecumenical dialogue under way, the Vatican official noted that there is still a lot of "resistance" with the Greek Orthodox.

"The Church of Greece has a long and rich tradition, but they still have bad memories of the past, in particular in that which pertains to the Crusades," he explained.

Cardinal Kasper contended that Pope John Paul II's gesture in asking forgiveness for the abuses committed during the Crusades was "very important." But, he continued, despite that, "there is still a strong resistance toward an ecumenical growing closer and because of that our steps must be prudent."

"With the new archbishop and with his collaborators, we want to continue taking these steps," he said, adding that in this regard he was content with his visit. "I did not have very high expectations: It would not be possible to resolve every problem in just one day, but it was important to establish personal contact."

Ieronymos II's predecessor, Christodoulos, was the archbishop that received John Paul II during the Pontiff's historical visit to Greece in 2000.

Benedict XVI described Christodoulos in his message of condolence at the archbishop's death as the artisan of a "new era of cordial cooperation" between the two Churches.

The archbishop was supported in this effort by other Greek Orthodox prelates, including Ieronymos himself.