

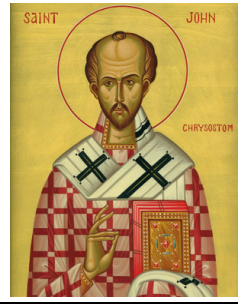
Light of the East

Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom
Western Region Edition

Website: www.lightoftheeast.org

Volume 6, Number 2

Winter, 2012



Happenings!

SSJC-WR workshop Lent in East & West

Saturday, February 25, 10 a.m., Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church, (Adult Center - north side of parking lot) 3459 Manchester Avenue, Cardiff, 92007. Hosted by the Society of St. John Chrysostom - Western Region. Speakers, Fr. Bratzo Krsic, Pastor of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church in San Diego and Msgr. Dennis Mikulanus, Pastor of San Rafael Roman Catholic Church in Rancho Bernardo. For details contact Fr. Cavanaugh Wallace at 760 941 5560.

Huffington Ecumenical Institute: Pan-Orthodoxy in North America: Towards a Local Church

March 16-17 at Loyola Marymount University, Ahmanson Auditorium - University Hall 1000, 1 LMU Drive, Los Angeles 90045. in Los Angeles. Attendance is free but Pre-registration is strictly required. Enjoy food and fellowship and hear Orthodox & Catholic experts explain the history of Orthodoxy in North America, discuss the problem of uniting several jurisdictions into one church, and introduce a clear view of North American Pan-Orthodoxy through liturgical music, social justice and the parish.

To register go to http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/ecumenical/Future_Events/pan-orthodoxy.htm.

Light of the East Conference Forgiveness, a path to reconciliation

This Conference, originally scheduled for March 21 has been postponed until the Fall of 2012.

Deteriorating Situation of Middle Eastern Churches requires unified response

By Archimandrite James Babcock

In a recent front page story in USA Today the deteriorating situation of Christians in the Middle East was brought to the forefront. "Arab Spring ushers in harsh season for Christians; Many fear democracy movement used against religious minorities."

Most prominent in the news is the situation of the Coptic Christians in Egypt where 8 million Christians live with 70 million Muslims. USA Today reports that "Christians demonstrated alongside Muslims last year to oust Hosni Mubarak." During his reign and at the hands of radical Muslims, the Coptic Christians have suffered from years of Church burnings and murders producing many martyrs for their faith. In January of this year a Coptic Church was bombed killing 20 people. Following protest by the Christians 17 additional Copts were run down and killed by military vehicles.

In Syria, where recently an Orthodox priest was shot and killed by security forces as he attempted to rescue a protester who had also been shot, Christians face a quandary. There, Christians were a protected minority by the Assad administration. Now, with a possible civil war on the horizon, they are faced with a potentially hostile regime which may no longer protect them. There may be repercussions for their failure to support the protesters.

In Iraq, as a result of the war begun by America which resulted in sectarian

violence, the Christians, following the bombing of churches and the murder of bishops and priests, fled to Jordan, Syria and America, reducing the population of Christians there by two-thirds. This, an area where Christians have been practicing their faith since the 1st century having been evangelized by the Apostles.

Although some Middle Eastern Countries remain relatively safe for Christians, the exodus of Christians from the Middle East may result in the disappearance of Christianity from the place where it originated. The Christian population of the Holy Land (Israel/Palestine) is only .08 percent. In Lebanon around 30 percent, and in Jordan ten percent.

Although the Christian response from the various Churches around the world, notably Rome, Constantinople, Moscow, has been extremely supportive it would seem essential for all the Christian Churches throughout the world to speak with one voice against the decimation of the Ancient Apostolic Churches in the Middle East.

We must continue to pray for and urge our hierarchy to work diligently toward unity that they might address the world with a strong unified voice, without which the enemies of Christianity will continue to ignore.

Our efforts toward unity on the local level to assist our spiritual leaders is critical to their efforts that we be one as Christ and the Father are One.

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.

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Light of the East

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A message from the President of SSJC-Western Region

Our prayerful thanks to God for all who uphold Christian moral principals

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



In past President's messages I have not focused on the non-Apostolic Churches and their ecumenical situation, as that might seem irrelevant to our SSJC-WR concerns. However, in my past President's messages I have talked about moral alliances that both Catholics and Orthodox can form. Such alliances have been proposed by Pope Benedict XVI and Orthodox Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev for example. Whether formally established, or just expressed informally, such alliances assume a set of common principles or moral viewpoint, easily possible between Catholics and Orthodox, but not necessarily between "Christian" groups. An example of this came to my attention recently in an Australian news source report on a disturbing statement issued by an Australian ecumenical council of churches: "The community needs to know that there is a range of views held on many topics in the Christian tradition. . . ." The news report indicated that this statement was issued in opposition to the moral viewpoint and position of another mainly Protestant group that calls itself the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL). However, an overview of the stance on the moral issues of the day held by the ACL indicate they are in substantial agreement with the teachings of Christ that have been practiced continually in the holy tradition of the Apostolic Churches. On the other hand, it would appear, we have little in common with the so called "Council of Churches" which aims to: "honor the diversity in our community." Interestingly, the Council cites same sex marriage as an example. In a shameful sell-out to Godless secularism the council proudly announces: "We don't have a position on the issue of same-sex marriage." Well, the Apostolic Churches, the Eastern and Western Catholic Churches, Orthodox Churches and Oriental Orthodox Churches certainly do have a position on the issue of same sex marriage, as well as on such issues as abortion, bioethics and family ethics, etc. The community, even the world, needs to know there is *no* range of views on such issues.

Except for their unfortunate rejection of the sacramental gifts given by Christ to the Apostolic Churches, sealed by the Holy Spirit, and held on to by our Churches to this day, e.g., Holy Chrismation, the Holy Priesthood (and male priesthood at that, as Christ Himself is male) and the Holy Eucharist (the true Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ Himself), some Protestant groups such as the ACL apparently remain faithful to many of the moral teachings of Christ and His Church. At the very least we can support their stand. May our Society of St. John Chrysostom members pray for such courageous and morally clear-visioned communities. For these communities, and also for those whose understanding and teachings on Christian moral principles has become overtaken by secularist thinking, that all may be guided by the Holy Spirit to return to the Sacramental Church founded by Christ.

Strangers no longer: Ukrainian Catholic & Orthodox Remember the Holodomor - a man-made famine

By Archimandrite James Babcock

Quoting Romans 8:28 "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose," Mitered Archpriest Andriy Chirovsky asked the question, "what good could ever come from a man-made famine wherein six to twelve million people (depending on whose statistics you use) died in Ukraine in 1931-32?"

This discussion took place at an event sponsored by the Huffington Ecumenical Institute at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles on November 16, 2011. Holodomor is the term given to the catastrophic famine in Ukraine orchestrated by the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In their attempt to impose a collective farm system on Ukrainians, USSR officials confiscated all of the grain from Ukrainian farms to defuse farmer resistance against Soviet collectivization. Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholics annually remember the victims who died of starvation in the Holodomor.

The program began with an art exhibit and reception featuring the work of Eugenia Dallas at the William H. Hannon Library on campus. This was followed by the screening of the documentary *Genocide Revealed* which depicts the story of the Holodomor. It is based on the most recent archival material, eyewitness accounts and commentaries by prominent historians, writers, and researchers.

Following the screening, a Panakhyda (Memorial Service) was served. The prayers emphasize hope that the God of the living and the dead will establish the souls of the departed in God's kingdom, thus making their memories truly "eternal." This memorial service is celebrated throughout the United States where Orthodox and Catholic Ukrainians gather together.

After the service, His Excellency Bishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A and Fr. Andriy Chirovsky, director of the Sheptytsky Institute, presented their observations and views of what has resulted since the Holodomor.

Bishop Daniel took exception to the title of the event, "strangers no longer," stating that Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholics know each other all too well and that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

He noted that no other nation in the world has been as fragmented and challenged throughout history. Thus making it extremely difficult to maintain an ethnic identity. He recalled the tragic split of the Ukrainian Church of the 16th and 17th centuries. He noted that it was not until 1991 that Orthodox & Catholics finally came together in prayer for the victims of the Holodomor. He pointed out that this famine was never taught in the Soviet Ukraine, until Ukraine gained its independence. "Goodness is silent, while history writes our sins," stated his Grace, noting that under Czarist Russia and the Soviet regime Ukrainian Books and Language were banned and that the official policy was that there was no such thing as a Ukrainian

nation of Ukrainian people.

His Grace explained that in Ukraine there were three famines. The first, in the 1920's, as a result of the Soviet revolution; the second, the Holodomor in 1932/33 as a result of collectivization; and the third following World War II, 1946/48. The most rich agricultural land, the breadbasket of the world, was used to starve the very people who produced the food. Food was used as a weapon and was even confiscated from families' homes and became the property of the state. Borders were sealed in this planned attack, while the rest of Europe was well fed. News of what was happening was suppressed. Meanwhile, the clergy were identified as enemies of the state and sent to concentration camps in Siberia. Thousands of Churches were closed. Orthodox Christians migrated to the western Ukraine, a predominantly Catholic area of Ukraine, then under the jurisdiction of Poland.

Bishop Daniel then went on to explain that the Holodomor gave Ukrainians, Orthodox & Catholics a common cause to make known the Holodomor, bringing them together in prayer for the first time in centuries. Citing Tertulian, "The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of Christianity," he then noted that the establishment of monuments in Edmonton, Canada and in South Bound Brook, New Jersey bring Orthodox and Catholics together once again. He also noted the re-establishment of the Kiev Study Group which is also a result of the Holodomor.

Thus, he stated, "that is now possible to progress ecclesially to create a new dimension and perspective for both churches.

Returning to the question asked by Fr. Andriy whose presentation followed that of Bishop Daniel, "we know that in everything God works for good. . .," he noted that the Holodomor has revived the state of the churches making both heirs of the Christian Church of the Ukraine.

Fr. Andriy then reviewed the history of how and why the Ukrainian Church became divided, citing the Union of Brest, which, it was hoped, that the union would preserve Orthodoxy, improve the education of the clergy, fight the Latinization being imposed by the Polish Roman Catholic Church and keep the pressure of Islam at bay. Some clergy saw this union as a sellout and reestablished a separate hierarchy. This was followed by altercations committed by both sides, resulting in the suppression of the Ukrainian Catholic church in the east Ukraine and the Russification of the Orthodox Church. Under Stalin, the Ukrainian Catholic church was suppressed resulting in a huge emigration to the United States and Canada. The Ukrainian Catholics then faced great challenges in dealing with the Roman Catholic hierarchy who had no understanding of Eastern Catholics.

In 1917, as a result of the Russian Revolution an autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church was reestablished creating more suspicion among the various churches. After the

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Orthodox/Catholic Consultation meets; issues statement on Plight of Churches in the Middle East

The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation held its 81st meeting at St. Paul's College in Washington D.C. October 27-28. The meeting was chaired by Catholic Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans. The Orthodox co-chairman since 1987, Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh, has retired, and a successor has not yet been named.

During this meeting the members heard reports about major events in the lives of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches and issued a brief statement, "On the Plight of Churches in the Middle East."

The members of the Consultation also continued their study of the role of the laity in the two churches and the intermediate or regional levels of ecclesial authority. A paper on the Catholic theology of the parish by Sister of Charity of Leavenworth Susan K. Wood of Marquette University was presented in her absence. Father Patrick Viscuso of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America delivered a paper, "Canonical Reflections on the Orthodox Parish." Father Nicholas Apostola of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas presented a study, "The Role of the Laity in the Church," and Chorbishop John D. Faris, pastor of St. Louis Gonzaga Maronite Church in Utica, New York, presented a paper, "Synodal Governance in the Eastern Catholic Churches."

The Consultation also welcomed a new Orthodox member, Despina D. Prassas, Ph.D., associate professor of theology at Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island.

The next meeting is slated to take place at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, June 5-7.

This is the full text of the joint statement on the plight of churches in the Middle East:

The "Arab Spring" is unleashing forces that are having a devastating effect on the Christian communities of the Middle East. Our Churches in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine report disturbing developments such as destruction of churches and massacres of innocent civilians that cause us grave concern. Many of our church leaders are calling on Christians and all people of good will to stand in solidarity with the members of these ancient indigenous communities. In unity with them and each other, we the members of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation, gathered October 27-29, 2011, add our voice to their call.

We are concerned for our fellow Christians who, in the face of daunting challenges, struggle to maintain a necessary witness to Christ in their homelands. United with them in prayer and solidarity, we ask our fellow Christians living in the West to take time to develop a more realistic appreciation of their predicament. We ask our political leaders to exert more pressure where it can protect these Churches, many of which have survived centuries of hardship but now stand on the verge of disappearing completely.

When one part of the body suffers, all suffer (cf. 1 Cor. 12:26). As Christians in the West, we therefore have the vital responsibility to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters who live in fear for their lives and communities at this moment. As Orthodox and Catholic Christians we share this responsibility and this concern together. – *USCCB and Episcopal Assembly Press Release.*

Ukrainian Catholic Patriarch:

I am very glad that meetings are held between Rome and the Orthodox Moscow Patriarchate

"I am very glad that meetings are held between the Apostolic See and the Moscow Patriarchate," said the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Sviatoslave during a press conference at Unian as he commented on the meeting between Pope Benedict XVI and Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev). The head of the UGCC stressed that such meetings are very useful: "We will do everything we can not to hinder such meetings, but to promote them by all means," stated His Beatitude, about the importance of dialogue. The head of the UGCC mentioning his official meeting with the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan), held on August 23, 2011, in the Kyiv Cave Monastery, stated that, "The meeting was very beneficial for all of us."

According to the Information Department of the UGCC, it is important that Metropolitan Ilarion also expressed readiness to meet with Archbishop of Kyiv and Halych. This was mentioned in his interview about a possible meeting between the Roman Pope and the Patriarch of Moscow published on October 5 in the newspaper *Izvestiia*. "I hope to meet with His Beatitude, Patriarch Sviatoslav in the near future," said Metropolitan Hilarion. The hierarch also expressed hope that with the appointment of the new head of the UGCC, positive changes in the relations between the two churches will be made. – *RISU, Oct. 10.*

***Check out our website:
www.lightoftheeast.org***

SSJC Workshop Report**Feasts of the Nativity and Theophany, East and West**

Presented on Saturday, January 7, 2012 at St. Margaret Roman Catholic Church in Oceanside. Speakers: Father Cávana Wallace, Pastor of St. Margaret Church, and Archimandrite James Babcock, Pastor of Holy Cross Melkite-Greek Catholic Church, Placentia.

By Reader Joseph Greenwood

The presentation was fittingly held, as was pointed out by moderator Archpriest George Morelli, exactly between the celebration of Theophany in the East (Jan. 6), and the Roman Catholic celebration of the Baptism of the Lord (Jan 8th, as being the Sunday following Jan. 6th), and on the selfsame day as the celebration of the Nativity of Christ on the Julian (Old) Calendar (Dec. 25/Jan. 7).

Fr. Cávana noted how the celebration of the birth of Christ was originally celebrated on Jan. 6th as a lesser aspect of Theophany, the manifestation of God. He then gave an overview of the development of the separate feast of Christmas in the West on Dec. 25th, which originated specifically in the usage of the Church of Rome, and was later spread through the Frankish lands under Charlemagne.

The celebration of Christmas began with liturgical observances only, but over the course of centuries acquired the character first as a public holiday, and then as a season with the 12 days of Christmas to Theophany. Advent, Fr. Cávana noted, was a much later development in the West which also explains why it is lacking in the Eastern traditions.

The profusion of diverse ethnic and local customs was explained next, including pageantry plays, the Christmas Tree, Christmas cards made of bread, the ringing of bells during the night of Dec. 24th for the “devil’s funeral”, and the singing of carols, which Fr. Cávana demonstrated by singing part of the Coventry Carols.

Fr. Cávana traced the suppression of public Christmas observances under Protestant England, their later reintroduction on a non-theological basis, including a brief digression of the origin of the modern presentation of Santa Clause, and the shift toward private family observances. He concluded his presentation with a recommendation of “keeping the *Mass* in Christmas.

Fr. James began by noting that the Church did not originally celebrate the birth of Christ in the East, noting that two of the Gospels (John and Mark) begin, not with an account of the Savor’s nativity, but with His baptism by John the Forerunner. Thus, January 6th was the older and universal celebration before the separate feast on Dec. 25th. Fr. James mentioned some of the adumbrations of God as in the plural in the Old Testament and then described the Theophany at the Lord’s baptism as the first clear manifestation of God as Trinity. Thus, the whole emphasis of the feast is on God’s self revelation through Jesus Christ breaking into time and space and making Himself available to man.

In passing, a parallel was made to the individual baptism of each Christian, “as producing the like effect by God’s adoption of the Christian as a beloved son/daughter,” and the reception of the Holy Spirit.

He next noted the importation of the separate Nativity Feast on Dec. 25th from the Church of Rome, and the lack of a corresponding Advent season in the East, save only for a preparatory fast, the Sunday Gospels of the human ancestry of the Messiah and the series of Kontakia by St. Romanos the Melodist, which he also demonstrated by singing.

The Troparion of the Nativity in the Byzantine usage was also sung by Father, as a being an older composition referencing the transfer of pagan sun-worship to Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. Fr. James described the significance of much of the Nativity festal icon, which encapsulates all the events and persons surrounding the birth of Christ in a single unified vision of theology. He concluded by stating that, in the Christian East, the feast of the Nativity is less important than that of Theophany, however Western social influences have somewhat unbalanced the emphasis for Eastern Christians.

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese hosts Maronite Catholic Patriarch

His Eminence, Metropolitan Philip, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, hosted a dinner, on Saturday, Oct. 23, 2011, in honor of His Beatitude, Maronite Catholic Patriarch, Mar Bechara (Al-Raa’i) at the headquarters of the Antiochian Archdiocese in Englewood, New Jersey.

3 new Antiochian Orthodox bishops ordained for America

Three new auxiliary bishops were consecrated for the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America the Church for the Dormition of the Theotokos in the Patriarchal Monastery of Our Lady of Balamand in Balamand, Lebanon on Sunday, December 11, 2011.

Their Graces John (Abdalah), Anthony (Michaels) and Nicholas (Ozone) were consecrated as Auxiliary Bishop for Worcester & New England, Auxiliary Bishop for Toledo and the Midwest, and Auxiliary Bishop for Brooklyn and Assistant to the Metropolitan in Engle wood, New Jersey respectively by His Beatitude, Ignatius IV Orthodox Patriarch of the Great City of God, Antioch, and all the East at the liturgy assisted by twelve hierarchs.

Antiochian bishop elevated to Archbishop

On the occasion of the ordination of the three new Antiochian bishops, His Grace Bishop Joseph, Auxiliary Bishop for Los Angeles and the West was elevated to the rank of Archbishop.

We're internally divided on issue of primacy, states Orthodox Archbishop

Catholic News Agency

Castel Gandolfo, Italy - A leading Russian Orthodox official says the Eastern Orthodox churches have yet to resolve the question of authority among themselves, a condition for future progress on the issue of the papacy.

"I would say that there are certain divergences, and there are different positions, of the Orthodox churches on the question of the primacy," said Metropolitan Archbishop Hilarion Alfeyev of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, in a Vatican Radio interview following his Sept. 29 meeting with Pope Benedict XVI at Castel Gandolfo.

"As we discuss the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, within the framework of the next commission, we do not only discuss the primacy of Rome; but we have to touch the issue of the primacy in general," noted the Orthodox metropolitan, apparently referring to future proceedings of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

"And here, of course, we have different traditions – not only between the Catholics and the Orthodox, because we never had such a centralized system as the Catholics have – but we also have some difference among the Orthodox, as to what should be the role of the 'first hierarch' in the Orthodox Church." The Patriarch of Constantinople occupies that role, but his prerogatives are not fully defined.

Metropolitan Hilarion was scheduled to participate in the last session of the Catholic-Orthodox commission, held in 2007 to discuss the question of papal primacy. But an internal dispute between Constantinople and Moscow, over an Orthodox group in Estonia, prompted the Russian representative to walk out. The two churches also dispute the status of the Orthodox Church in America.

On Thursday, the metropolitan made an apparent reference to these types of difficulties between the Patriarchs of Moscow and Constantinople, saying that "if a particular Orthodox church will want to impose its own vision of this primacy on other churches, then of course we will encounter difficulties. And this is what is happening at the moment."

Meanwhile, the world's local self-governing Orthodox churches are also attempting to organize a historic Pan-Orthodox Council, comparable to the Church councils held in the Byzantine empire during the first millennium. The new gathering has been in preparation for 50 years, as the Orthodox world seeks to determine how the Patriarch of Constantinople should exercise his authority.

"We believe that his role should be the primacy of honor, and also he is afforded some coordinating role: for example, he can convene the Pan-Orthodox Council," said Archbishop Hilarion. "Of course, previously – in the history of the

ecumenical councils – it was not the Patriarch of Constantinople, neither was it the Pope of Rome, but it was the (Byzantine) Emperor, who convened the councils."

"So we have this model (of primacy), which is emerging in the Orthodox tradition. But generally, for centuries we had a very decentralized administration. Each autocephalous church is fully independent from other churches in its self-governance. And therefore we do not have a very clear picture as to what should be the role of the primate in the Orthodox tradition." "Without having this clear and unified vision, we cannot easily discuss the issue of how we see the role of the 'Primus Inter Pares' ('first among equals,' an Orthodox concept of the papacy) in the universal Church," Metropolitan Hilarion admitted.

The phrase "first among equals" signifies the typical Orthodox view of the Pope as having a primacy of honor but not jurisdiction. In his 2010 book "Light of the World," Pope Benedict said the "first among equals" view of the Pope was "not exactly the formula that we believe as Catholics," due to the Pope's "specific functions and tasks."

Until Orthodoxy clarifies its own systems of authority, Archbishop Hilarion said, hopes for progress on the question of the papacy between Catholics and Orthodox are "probably not too high."

"But still, there is hope, because if there is willingness to accommodate different positions and to produce a paper – or several papers, maybe – which would clearly state the differences, which would outline the way forward, then we can progress."

The Moscow Patriarchate's ecumenical representative also expressed hesitation about a possible meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch of Moscow, which has never occurred in the centuries since Moscow's elevation to patriarchal status in 1589. There are hopes that such a meeting could take place in 2013, on the 1,700th anniversary of Christianity's legalization by the Emperor Constantine. But Archbishop Hilarion said Catholics and Russian Orthodox believers should not jump to conclusions about when a meeting may occur between the Pope and the Patriarch of Moscow.

"We believe that such a meeting will take place at some time in the future. We are not yet ready to discuss the date, or the place, or the protocol of such a meeting – because what matters for us, primarily, is the content of this meeting."

"As soon as we agree on the content, on the points on which we still disagree or have divergent opinions, then I believe we can have this meeting. But it requires a very careful preparation, and we should not be hurrying up, and we should not be pressed to have this meeting at a particular point of time."

Despite his cautious attitude toward this meeting and other ecumenical matters, Metropolitan Hilarion spoke warmly of

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Holodomor

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Soviets gained control of the Ukraine, and the autocephalous church replaced by the Russian Church.

Following the Second Vatican Council a reorientation of the two churches began where the term "sister churches" was introduced, creating a real, but imperfect communion, creating a growing awareness of the commonalities of the two churches.

Fr. Andriy noted that today the commemoration of the Holodomor has created a new awareness which stirs a quest for unity. He also noted that because of the shunning of other Orthodox Churches, the autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Churches again rediscovered a commonality with the Ukrainian Catholics uniting to work together to make sure that never again would the use of starvation be used as a weapon. He also noted that both churches see Constantinople as the mother church.

"So, how does a person of faith respond to the Holodomor?" Fr. Andriy asked. How do the Ukrainian Christians respond to the famine now taking place in parts of Africa? For Ukrainians the Holodomor has served to unite them to say, never again, to the use of the terror of famine and has facilitated the healing of the Ukrainian Churches.

Issue of primacy...

Continued from page 6

Pope Benedict XVI himself. During his recent trip to Germany, the Pope met with representatives of the Orthodox churches in the country, and spoke of a "common engagement" among Christians to ensure that "the human person is given the respect which is his due."

"His Holiness is a man of faith and whenever I meet with him I'm encouraged by his spirit, his courage and his dedication to the life of the Church worldwide," Metropolitan Hilarion said after his meeting with the Pope on Thursday.

"Of course I'm very impressed by his knowledge of the Orthodox tradition and the attention he pays to the dialogue between the Catholics and the Orthodox ... I believe that this attitude of the Primate of the Roman Catholic Church will greatly help us in our way towards better mutual understanding."

New Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Archbishop for Pittsburgh named

Pope Benedict XVI has named Bishop William Skurla as the new Metropolitan Archbishop for the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. His Grace will be enthroned April 18, 2012 at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Munhall, PA. Prior to his 2007 appointment as bishop of the Eparchy of Passaic, New Jersey he had spent five years as bishop of the Eparchy of Van Nuys.

Memory Eternal

Kindly, remember in your prayers retired Bishop and Proto-Syncellus Andrew Pataki of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic New Jersey who died recently in an automobile accident. May his memory be eternal.

Eastern Christian Publications

Free trial offer for Byzantine Daily Office

A message from Jack Figel

Based on the positive feedback we have received to our initial market research, Eastern Christian Publications is going to offer a FREE trial of an electronic Byzantine Daily Office! It will be distributed by email each evening for the following day and contain the texts for morning and evening prayer, and the First, Third, Sixth and Ninth Hours, along with the changeable parts as per the Byzantine Ruthenian Typicon (which we publish too) and the Gregorian date for Pascha. When the calendar dictates, we will also offer a version for the Julian date for Pascha.

You can use it on your desktop, laptop, or any other portable device where you get email. It will be complete and contain all the prayers you need to pray on the bus, subway, at lunch, at a soccer game, dance class, or anywhere/anytime!

If we find enough interest in the FREE trial, we will continue and ask for a modest subscription fee through our website -- only 25 cents/day or \$7.50/month.

To receive these FREE 50+ page PDFs with all the Hours for each day, simply send us an email and indicate which calendar you follow. We will send the PDF to you at the email address you use. Send the email request to: infor@ecpubs.com.

I ask you to USE the file, and give us your feedback of how it could be improved, or if you like it, will subscribe to it, and recommend it to friends.

This offer will continue until further notice based on how many sign up and based on the feedback we get. Thanks for participating! Come and join our electronic prayer group for 2012!

Jack Figel
Publisher

The Society of St. John Chrysostom Western Region

WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

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