

## Happenings!

**SSJC-WR workshop Mothers of the Church: East & West**  
10 a.m., Saturday, January 26 at Holy Cross Melkite-Greek Catholic Church, 451 W. Madison Ave., Placentia CA 92870. Speakers will be Archimandrite James Babcock for the East and for the West: TBA. Bring your own lunch. A brief meeting of SSJC will follow the presentation. All welcome.

**Icons & Images**  
**The 2013 Huffington Ecumenical Symposium**  
February 22-23, 2013  
Loyola Marymount University, Ahmanson Auditorium (University Hall 1000), 1 LMU Drive Los Angeles, CA 90045, Friday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Saturday: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, Attendance is free but registration is strictly required. Registration -- opening January 15, 2013. Registration -- opening January 15, 2013

**Light of the East Conference**  
**Following Jesus: The Power of Forgiveness. Theological, Psychological and Practical Suggestions for Growth. Saturday & Sunday, March 1 & 2 at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church 4949 Alton Pky., Irvine 92604.** Speakers: Robert Enright Ph.D. Archpriest George Morelli Ph.D. Lisa Gassin Ph.D. Advance registration requested. Call 949 773 2366. **See page 3 for complete details.**

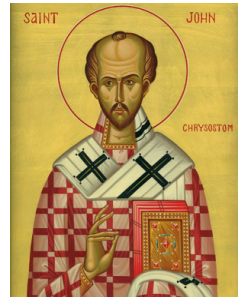
**Note: The Workshop: Islam: A Coptic Perspective" originally scheduled for September 22 was postponed due to the sensitive situation in Egypt.**

# Light of the East

Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom  
Western Region Edition  
Website: [www.lightoftheeast.org](http://www.lightoftheeast.org)

Volume 7, Number 2

Winter, 2013



## Egypt's Coptic Church Chooses New Pope



Pope Tawadros II, the new leader of the Coptic Orthodox Church, looks on during his enthronement ceremony at St. Mark Cathedral in Cairo. *Khaled El-fiqu/European Pressphoto Agency*

All three senior clerics whose names were in the chalice were considered consensus candidates who stayed out of disputes both within the church and with other groups. Tawadros will assume the papacy as Egypt's Christians, estimated to make up 10 percent of the country's 83 million people, fear for their future amid the rise of Islamists to power in the wake of the ouster of longtime authoritarian leader Hosni Mubarak.

The death of Pope Shenouda III at age the of 88 this year heightened the sense of insecurity felt by many who had known him as patriarch for all or most of their lives.

At the televised ceremony held in the Coptic Cathedral in Cairo, acting Pope Pachomios laid the three names in clear aaaaa

## Memory Eternal



## Ignatius IV, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

His Beatitude Ignatius IV (1920-2012), Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, fell asleep in the Lord today on December 5, 2012, at St. George Orthodox Hospital in Beirut Lebanon, after having suffered a stroke earlier in the week.

His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV (Hazim) of Antioch and All the East was born in 1920 in the village of Muharda, near the city of Hama Syria. In 1936, he moved to Beirut, where he became an altar server. Years later, upon taking monastic

*Continued on page 4*

*Continued on page 6*

## **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**

President,

The Very Rev. Fr. George Morelli, PhD.

Vice President, The Rt. Rev. James Babcock

Secretary, Anne Petach

Recording Secretary, Marian Cavadias

Treasurer, Robert Greenwell

Sgt. at Arms/Parliamentarian,

Major Frank Scialdone USMC Ret.

Catholic Liaison: Msgr. Dennis Mikulanis

Chaplains:

Archimandrite James Babcock (Eastern Catholic)

Fr. Cavanaugh Wallace (Roman Catholic)

Fr. Ramon Merlos (Orthodox)

### **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, [hcmelkite@holycrossmelkite.org](mailto:hcmelkite@holycrossmelkite.org)

*Distribution:*

451 W. Madison Ave., Placentia CA 92870

*Membership:*

Robert Greenwell, 2700 Katherine Street, El Cajon, CA 92020 [rjgreenwell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rjgreenwell@sbcglobal.net)

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

# Apostolic Church unity: Hope, Prayer and Work

*By the Very Reverend Father George Morelli, PhD.*

Some recent developments in the world of inter-Apostolic Church relations are encouraging. It should be pointed out that the thaw in the frozen tundra of emotional frigidity among the Churches could be traced back to the lifting of the anathemas between Rome and Constantinople in December 1965 by His Holiness Pope Paul VI of Rome and His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople. This event, although symbolic, initiated a series of exchanges between the Eastern and Western Churches culminating recently in a statement of Holy Spirit-filled hope by the current Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew who said: "The uniqueness of the founders of our Churches, of Elder Rome and of New Rome, the Holy Apostles Peter and Andrew, as brothers according to the flesh, constitutes a motivation for both of our Churches to move toward the genuine experience of spiritual brotherhood and the restoration of communion in this same spirit, in truth and in love." Also on the Orthodox side is the announcement that, under the aegis of the Department External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, a theological commission approved a document on 08 November 2012, entitled *The position of the Moscow Patriarchate on the question of primacy in the Universal Church*. It is now submitted to the Russian Orthodox synod for approval.



The recent letter of congratulations from His Holiness Pope Benedict XV to His Holiness Tawadros II on the occasion of his enthronement as Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark reflects the hopeful attitude toward the eventual unity of all the Apostolic Church. Pope Benedict writes: "I pray too that relations between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church will continue to grow closer, not only in a fraternal spirit of collaboration, but also through a deepening of the theological dialogue that will enable us to grow in communion and to bear witness before the world to the saving truth of the Gospel."

Once again we should take these recent actions of the hierarchs of the various Churches to be a call for action for all Christians baptized by their respective Apostolic Churches into the royal priesthood of Christ to pray and work avidly for unity. One concrete way of doing this would be to promote and attend the 2nd Light of the East Conference on 01-02 March 2013, sponsored by the Society of St. Chrysostom-Western Region (SSJC-WR). Tentatively entitled: *Following Jesus: The Power of Forgiveness. Theological, Psychological and Practical Suggestions for Growth*, it is to be held at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, Irvine, CA, March 1 & 2, 2013. Achieving unity is going to have to involve mutual forgiveness among all the Churches for their past untoward actions toward each other. Without forgiveness there cannot be love. Without love there cannot be unity.

*Fr. George Morelli is a priest of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America and a Licensed Clinical Psychologist. Many of his articles can be found at Orthodox Today: [www.orthodoxytoday.org](http://www.orthodoxytoday.org)*

# Light of the East Conference

*March 1 & 2, 2013*

**Following Jesus: The Power of Forgiveness.  
*Theological, Psychological & Practical Suggestions for  
Growth.***

*Sponsored by the Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region.  
Hosted by*

***St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church***  
*4949 Alton Parkway, Irvine, CA 92604*

**Presenters:**

Robert Enright, Ph.D.

Licensed Psychologist and professor of Educational Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Co-founder, International Forgiveness Institute, Inc.

Archpriest George Morelli, Ph.D.

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America. Licensed Psychologist & MFT. Chair, Dept. Chaplain & Pastoral Counseling. Religion Coordinator, Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology & Religion.

Lisa Gassin, Ph.D.

Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, IL. Author and Presenter on Forgiveness. Founding board member of the International Forgiveness Institute,

Tentative Schedule

**Friday, March 1**, 7 p.m. Registration & Prayer; 7:15:, Dr. Lisa Gassin;8:15: Q & A. Reception

**Saturday, March 2**, 9 a.m., Registration & Light breakfast. 9:30:: Dr. Robert Enright; 10:30: Q&A;

11:30 Lunch;12:30, Fr. George Morelli;1:30 p.m., Q&A,. Film.

3 p.m., Panel Discussion - Reconciliation of the Churches. 3:30. - Forgiveness Prayer Service

*\$20 donation (lunch included).*

*To register call St. Paul's:(714) 773 2366*



## Coptic Pope elected

*Continued from page 1*

balls inside a chalice before starting liturgy. There was a moment of silence before the drawing by the blindfolded boy, an act believed to reflect God's will in the choice. "We will pray that God will choose the good shepherd," Pachomios told the packed cathedral as he sealed the chalice with red wax before laying it on the altar during the liturgy.

The process of electing a new pope began weeks ago, when a committee from the church narrowed the list of potential candidates from 17 down to five monks and bishops. On Monday, about 2,400 clergymen and church notables drew up a short list of three that also included Bishop Raphael, 54, once an aide to the late Pope Shenouda, and Father Raphael Ava Mina, the oldest among them at 70, a monk in a monastery near Alexandria and a student of the pope who preceded Shenouda.

In addition to having stayed out of disputes with other groups, including Islamists, the bishops were chosen only from those without a diocese to avoid any risk of favoritism.

The papal election comes during a shift in Christian attitudes toward their relation to the state. For years, Christians largely relied on the church to secure protection for their rights, using Shenouda's close relationship with Mubarak.

But Shenouda had longstanding critics within the community who asked why a cleric should act as an intermediary between them and the state. Following the uprising and the pope's death, more Copts have been emboldened to act outside the church to independently demand rights, better representation and freedom of worship.

None of the candidates attended the ceremony, and are instead praying in their respective monasteries. The state's MENA news agency says church leaders will head to Tawadros's retreat in the monastery complex of Wadi Natrun northeast of Cairo to congratulate him.

Pope Tawadros II faces tremendous challenges as the country's transition to democracy is marred by a deep rift between increasingly politically powerful Islamist groups, from which the country's new president hails, and the liberal and secularist groups who were initially behind the revolt that ousted Mubarak last year.

At the center of the political squabbling in Egypt is the role of Islam in the country's new constitution, currently being drafted. The Christians, along with liberal and secularists, oppose demands by Islamists to increase the role of Islamic Shariah law.

Egypt's Coptic Christians have long complained of discrimination by the state and the country's Muslim majority. Clashes with Muslims have occasionally broken out, often sparked by church construction, land disputes or Muslim-Christian love affairs.

SSJC Workshop: Jan. 26, 10 a.m.

### *The Mothers of the Church*

Holy Cross Melkite-Greek Catholic Church

451 W Madison Ave., Placentia 92870 - 714 985 1710

## Memory Eternal

### Ethiopian Patriarch falls asleep in the Lord



Paulos, Abuna and Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

The head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abuna Paulos, has died aged 76, the government has announced.

The foreign ministry said he had been receiving treatment over the past week for an undisclosed illness.

Abuna Paulos led Ethiopia's 40 million Orthodox Christians - half the population - since 1992.

Abuna Paulos was chosen to lead the church in 1992 - a year after the overthrow of the communist government of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Mulugeta Aserate Kassa, an adviser at the Ethiopian embassy in London said, "He brought the church in line to meet the challenges of the 21st Century," Mr Mulugeta said. "He was a pragmatist at heart."

He was jailed under Mengistu in the 1970s and then went into exile in the US.

Critics accused him of being close to current Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who has also been ill recently.

Abuna Paulos was the first person from the Tigray ethnic group - the same as Mr Meles - to head the country's Orthodox Church, Mr Mulugeta said.

"He was loved by many," he added.

Ethiopia's Orthodox Church used to be part of Egypt's Coptic Christian Church, but became independent in 1959.

Ethiopia has some of the world's oldest churches, including rock-hewn churches, which are a World Heritage Site, in Lalibella in northern Ethiopia.

May he rest in a place of light, a place of peace, a place of happiness where there is no pain, no grief, no sighing, but everlasting life. May his memory be eternal.

## **SSJC Library**

The SSJC-WR Member Library holdings (books, and DVDs ) are listed on our website. Members whose dues are paid up may request a book to be mailed to them. They only pay for return postage. To request a book from the list, contact Anne Petach:

[apetach@sbcglobal.net](mailto:apetach@sbcglobal.net) Or leave a message at 818.347-0758 and she will call you back. (Please repeat your phone number clearly on the message). Members without e-mail addresses were sent a copy of the list when they first joined.

## Catholics in Holy Land to adopt Julian Calendar for the celebration of Pascha

Within two years, all Eastern rite Catholics and the Latin diocese in the Holy Land will adopt the Julian Calendar (used by the Orthodox) for the date of Easter. This will take place after completion of the decree and approval from the Holy See. Meanwhile, the Bishops of the Catholic Churches of the Holy Land have the option of starting the implementation in 2013. This is the case with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Following a directive from the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land (ACOHL), this decision marks a step forward towards ecumenism. This directive comes in response to pressure on the part of the faithful. In fact, many Christian families in the Holy Land are from and in mixed marriages between Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants. In the past, many family members could not celebrate Easter on the same day since Catholics follow the Gregorian calendar while the Orthodox follow the Julian calendar. The Council of Nicaea established that Easter should fall on the Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox. The Gregorian calendar was designed to correct a miscalculation in the rotation of the earth which was discovered in the 15<sup>th</sup> century; the Julian calendar was in use before the new calendar was implemented.

The majority of the Orthodox churches did not adopt the new (Gregorian) calendar reform initiated by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 due to the schism. Until this day, the Julian calendar is still in use; hence the discrepancy in the calculation of the Easter date.

### Who says these adjustments will bring about unification?

The diocese of the Latin Patriarchate which includes Jordan, Cyprus and a majority of Palestine has already implemented the experience of unifying the date of Easter according to the Julian calendar which has been largely successful.

What is new mainly has to do with the Patriarchate parishes who are in Israel. For Easter 2013, majority of Catholic parishes will join this decision and celebrate Easter on May 5 with exceptions made in Jerusalem and the Bethlehem area because the Status Quo Agreement.

For Easter 2015 and the following years a decree formulated by the ACOHL will be submitted to the Holy See for approval. This decree should state that all the Catholic Churches of the Holy Land will permanently adopt the Julian calendar for the celebration of Easter “with the consequential adjustment of the liturgical calendar for the beginning of Lent and the feast of Pentecost. (...) Largely, this decision will be welcomed, respected and enacted by all Eastern Catholics and Latin Catholics in the country as well as by foreigners residing in our diocese” says the directive.

In 2014, Easter will fall on the same day and shared ecumenically. Catholics and Orthodox will celebrate Easter on the same day on April 20 which is by virtue of both calendars being concurrent on the date. This means that the issue of a change which is by decree will not be adopted until the following year.

## Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople speaks in Rome on 50th Anniversary of Vatican Council II

His Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew delivered the following address during the opening liturgy for the Year of Faith on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, presided over by Pope Benedict XVI in Saint Peter’s Square, on October 11, 2012.

Beloved brother in the Lord, Your Holiness Pope Benedict; Brothers and Sisters;

As Christ prepared for His Gethsemane experience, He prayed a prayer for unity which is recorded in the Gospel of Saint John Chapter 17 verse 11: "...keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are." Through the centuries we have, indeed, been kept in the power and love of Christ, and in the proper moment in history the Holy Spirit moved upon us and we began the long journey towards the visible unity that Christ desires. This has been confirmed in *Unitatis Redintegratio*. §1.

Everywhere large numbers have felt the impulse of this grace, and among our separated brethren also there increases

from day to day the movement, fostered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the restoration of unity among all Christians.

Fifty years ago in this very square, a powerful and pivotal celebration captured the heart and mind of the Roman Catholic Church, transporting it across the centuries into the contemporary world. This transforming milestone, the opening of the Second Vatican Council, was inspired by the fundamental reality that the Son and incarnate Logos of God is "...where two or three are gathered in his name" (Matthew 18:20) and that the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, "...will guide us into the whole truth." (John 16:13).

In the 50 years that have intervened, we recall with vividness and tenderness, but also with elation and enthusiasm, our personal discussions with episcopal members and theological periti during our formative time – then as a young student – at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, as well as our personal attendance at some special sessions of the Council. We witnessed firsthand

*Continued on page 7*



## Archbishop Tikhon elected Metropolitan of All America and Canada

His Eminence, Archbishop Tikhon, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, was elected Primate of the Orthodox Church in America during the 17th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America at Holy Trinity Church one Tuesday, November 13, 2012.

663 hierarchs, clergy and lay delegates and observers representing OCA parishes across the US, Canada, and Mexico participated in the Council. 590 were eligible to vote.... No single candidate received the required two-thirds margin on the first ballot. On the second ballot, His Eminence, Archbishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania and His Grace, Bishop Michael of New York and New Jersey, received 317 and 355 votes respectively. The members of the Holy Synod then retired into the altar where they elected Archbishop Tikhon."

## Memory Eternal Patriarch Ignatius IV

*Continued from page 1*  
vows, he became a hierodeacon. In 1945 he graduated from the American University of Beirut, and from 1949 to 1953 studied at the Saint Sergius Theological Institute in Paris. On his return to Lebanon, the young theologian with a master's degree was ordained hieromonk. In 1942, he became one of the founders of the influential Orthodox Youth Movement in Lebanon and Syria, which has done much to renew youthful participation in Church life. In 1953, His Beatitude became one of the organizers of Syndesmos the worldwide Brotherhood of Orthodox Youth. In 1961 he was ordained Bishop of Palmyra and Patriarchal Vicar, and in the following year, he was sent to the monastery of Balamand as superior and as dean of the Theological Seminary, which in 1988 was transformed into an Orthodox University, the first in the Middle East. He has published a series of theological books and numerous articles. His Beatitude was an honorary doctor of Sorbonne and Saint-Petersburg (1981) and Minsk (2003) Theological Academies. In 1970, the future Patriarch was appointed Metropolitan of Latakia (Laodicea). On 2 July 1979, he was elected Primate of the Church of Antioch and enthroned on 8 July of the same year.

May he rest in a place of light, a place of peace, a place of happiness, where there is no pain, no grief, no sighing, but everlasting life. May his memory be eternal.

## Ecumenical Patriarchate issues communiqué regarding resurgence of violence in various parts of the world

The Ecumenical Patriarchate expresses profound concern about the resurgence of violence currently spreading throughout the world. From America to Africa and throughout Europe and Asia, continents are confronted with the phenomenon of intolerance that not only undermines world stability and peace, but also constitutes a denial of human dignity. Racial murders, genocide, ethnic cleansing, anti-Semitism, destruction of places of worship etc, constitute barbaric acts that must be denounced publicly, particularly when they are masked with the veil of religion in an effort to justify them.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate is particularly concerned about the situations in the Middle East, as well as in Nigeria and Sudan. Clashes between Christians and Muslims in these parts of the world must be overcome by promoting love for one's neighbor as the peaceful expression of the bond uniting every human being. Furthermore, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is deeply concerned about the future of the people of Syria, as well as for the future of Christianity in that country. Therefore, we are calling on all parties involved in this conflict to lay down their weapons, especially given the urgency of the humanitarian situation.

The solution to such conflicts requires dialogue above all else. Dialogue constitutes more than merely a better understanding or toleration of our differences, indeed, dialogue is the essence of reconciliation and transformation. Therefore, religious leaders should be working together, through dialogue, to affirm God's peace in the world. We, as religious leaders, have a moral obligation to resist war and promote peace as a vital and fundamental necessity for all humanity. Religion cannot and should never be a basis for war and conflict, nor should it be used as an instrument of fundamentalism and fanaticism for purely political motives and ends. With great resolve, we have repeatedly emphasized that any crime in the name of religion is a crime against religion. In this respect, dialogue is the only hope for attaining peace.

Finally, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Ecumenical Patriarchate express their solidarity with and compassion to all communities affected by violence, addressing a fervent appeal to all autocephalous Orthodox Churches, all Christian Churches and religious communities, as well as to international organizations and states, as well as every person of good will, to contribute to the triumph of peace over war and hatred.

*At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, August 14, 2012. The Chief Secretariat of the Holy and Sacred Synod. – Website of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.*

SSJC Workshop: Jan. 26, 10 a.m.

### *The Mothers of the Church*

Holy Cross Melkite-Greek Catholic Church

451 W Madison Ave., Placentia 92870 - 714 985 1710

## Ecumenical Patriarch speaks

*Continued from page 5*

how the bishops experienced a renewed awareness of the validity – and a reinforced sense of the continuity – of the tradition and faith "once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1.3). It was a period of promise and hope for your Church both internally and externally.

For the Orthodox Church, we have observed a time of exchange and expectation. For example, the convocation of the first Pan-Orthodox Conferences in Rhodes led to the Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conferences in preparation for the Great Council of the Orthodox Churches. These exchanges will demonstrate the unified witness of the Orthodox Church in the modern world. Moreover, it coincided with the "dialogue of love" and heralded the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Church, which was established by our venerable predecessors Pope John Paul II and Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios.

Over the last five decades, the achievements of this assembly have been diverse as evidenced through the series of important and influential constitutions, declarations, and decrees. We have contemplated the renewal of the spirit and "return to the sources" through liturgical study, biblical research, and patristic scholarship. We have appreciated the struggle toward gradual liberation from the limitation of rigid scholasticism to the openness of ecumenical encounter, which has led to the mutual rescinding of the excommunications of the year 1054, the exchange of greetings, returning of relics, entering into important dialogues, and visiting each other in our respective Sees.

Our journey has not always been easy or without pain and challenge, for as we know "narrow is the gate and difficult is the way" (Matthew 7.14). The essential theology and principal themes of the Second Vatican Council – the mystery of the Church, the sacredness of the liturgy, and the authority of the bishop – are difficult to apply in earnest practice, and constitute a life-long and church-wide labor to assimilate. The door, then, must remain open for deeper reception, pastoral engagement, and ecclesial interpretation of the Second Vatican Council.

As we move forward together, we offer thanks and glory to the living God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – that the same assembly of bishops has recognized the importance of reflection and sincere dialogue between our "sister churches." We join in the "...hope that the barrier dividing the Eastern Church and the Western Church will be removed, and that – at last – there may be but the one dwelling, firmly established on Christ Jesus, the cornerstone, who will make both one" (Unitatis Redintegratio § 18).

With Christ as our cornerstone and the tradition we share, we shall be able – or, rather, we shall be enabled by the gift and grace of God – to reach a better appreciation and fuller expression of the Body of Christ. With our continued efforts in accordance with the spirit of the tradition of the early Church, and in the light of the Church of the Councils of the first millennium,

*Continued on page 8*

## Gathering of Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic Consultation held in New York

### *Leaders Discuss Immigration and Plight of Middle East Christians*

WHITE PLAINS, NY, OCT. 24, 2012 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)).- A group of 20 participants representing the Roman Catholics and five Oriental Orthodox churches gathered in New York for the two day Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation last week. Leaders from both churches agreed that they would benefit from a better exchange of information regarding the programs available for new immigrant arrivals in the United States. The meeting was held at the Divine Compassion Spirituality Center in White Plains, NY.

As part of its mission to foster Christian unity, the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) meets annually with members of the Oriental Orthodox churches. Along with ministering to immigrant communities, the dialogue also discussed the plight of Christians in the Middle East.

Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, New York, and Metropolitan Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim of the Eastern Archdiocese of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch (Oriental Orthodox) co-chaired the dialogue. This was the Metropolitan's first meeting since his appointment as new co-chairman of the dialogue. He succeeds Very Reverend Chorbishop John Meno, also of the Syriac Orthodox Church, who had served as Oriental Orthodox co-chairman since 1985 and recently retired from the active ministry. The members expressed their gratitude to Father Meno for his many years of faithful service to this dialogue.

Presenters at the dialogue were Maronite Catholic Bishop Gregory Mansour of Brooklyn, Allison Posner, director of advocacy for the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), Julianne Barsoum Jabaly of the Syriac Orthodox Church, and Michael Guglielmo, executive director of the Armenian Eastern Diocese.

On Monday evening the members traveled to St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in New Rochelle, New York. Together they celebrated Armenian Vespers in the seminary chapel and attended a dinner hosted by Father Daniel Findikyan, the rector. Later in the evening the members had a wide-ranging discussion of major events in the lives of their churches both in the United States and overseas.

On Tuesday morning the dialogue examined the situation of Christians in the Middle East. Bishop Mansour presented the recent Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI, *Ecclesia in Medio Oriente*. He discussed the structure and functioning of the Synod of Bishops, and what the document had to say about the Christian presence in that part of the world. The members are deeply worried about the future of Christian communities in the region.



## Ecumenical Patriarch

*Continued from page 6*

we will experience the visible unity that lies just beyond us today.

The Church always excels in its uniquely prophetic and pastoral dimension, embraces its characteristic meekness and spirituality, and serves with humble sensitivity the "least of these My brethren" (Matthew 25:40).

Beloved brother, our presence here signifies and seals our commitment to witness together to the Gospel message of salvation and healing for the least of our brethren: the poor, the oppressed, the forgotten in God's world. Let us begin with prayers for peace and healing for our Christian brothers and sisters living in the Middle East. In the current turmoil of violence, separation, and brokenness that is escalating between peoples and nations, may the love and desire for harmony we profess here, and the understanding we seek through dialogue and mutual respect, serve as a model for our world. Indeed, may all humanity reach out to 'the other' and work together to overcome the suffering of people everywhere, particularly in the face of famine, natural disasters, disease, and war that ultimately touches all our lives.

In light of all that has yet to be accomplished by the Church on earth, and with great appreciation for all the progress we have shared, we are, therefore, honored to be invited to attend – and humbled to be called to address – this solemn and festive commemoration of the Second Vatican Council. It is fitting that this occasion also marks for your Church the formal inauguration of the "Year of Faith," as it is faith that provides a visible sign of the journey we have traveled together along the path of reconciliation and visible unity.

In closing, Your Holiness, Beloved Brother, we wholeheartedly congratulate you – together with the blessed multitude assembled here today – and we fraternally embrace you on the joyous occasion of this anniversary celebration. May God bless you all. – Vatican website

## Eastern Christian Publications

### New magazine: *Theosis: Spiritual Reflections from the Christian East*

Based on the success of our "Fortnight for Freedom" bulletin insert, in conjunction with the upcoming Year of Faith, and Pope Benedict's call for a "new evangelization," Eastern Christian Publications has developed a new popular level monthly magazine called *Theosis: Spiritual Reflections from the Christian East*. It will be distributed as a print and eZine version starting with the first issue for September 2012.

Each issue of *Theosis* will be over 100 pages of several short essays for spiritual reflection on topics such as Prayer, Eucharist, Sacraments, Scripture, Holy Icons, Sacramental Living, Spirituality, and a Feast of the Month. Contributors will be authors and theologians from a wide variety of Orthodox and Catholic Churches including Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) and Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ. A photo essay of an Eastern church somewhere in the world will also be featured. It will also include the Calendar of Saints for the month with daily prayers, and a short biography of each saint according to the Byzantine calendar.

Printed in full color with plenty of icons and photographs, *Theosis* will be printed in a pocket size edition so you can carry it with you everywhere, and read just a few pages each day. The eZine edition will be distributed by email both as an interactive PDF and as an ePub format.

The annual print subscription is only \$60.00 per year, or \$5.00 per month including postage. The eZine subscription is only \$29.95 per year, or about \$2.50 per month. Single issues and bulk quantity discounts are also available. More information and sample pages can be viewed at [www.ecpubs.com/theosis.html](http://www.ecpubs.com/theosis.html), and you can subscribe online and buy individual issues at the same webpage.

Just let me know whether you would like to receive the print or eZine version, or both.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Jack Figel, Publisher

## Church of the East delegation visits, meets with Vatican officials

In keeping with the mandate of the decrees of the 14th Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East convened under the presidency of His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos, a delegation of the Holy Synod met recently with dicasteries of the Roman Catholic Church in Vatican City.

The delegation was received by His Eminence Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. In addition the delegation was the guest of the His Eminence Kurt Cardinal Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The matter discussed was future prospects of the Assyrian/Roman Catholic dialogue, which officially began in 1984. The present obstacles to the dialogue before both sides were discussed at great length, and possible solutions put forth that would pave the way for more official discussions and a fraternal official dialogue between both Churches.

***The Society of St. John Chrysostom  
Western Region  
WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS***

+

***Full membership: \$50;  
Associate: \$40; Parish  
Membership \$100.***

+

***For full information call  
714 985 1710 and ask for Fr. James,  
or e-mail secretary, Anne Petach at:  
secretary@lightoftheeast.org***