

Eastern Churches NEWS-LETTER

*A quarterly publication of the
Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*

No responsibility can be accepted either by the General Committee
or by the Editor for the views expressed by contributors.

No. 30

JULY, 1963

CONTENTS:

Secretary's Notes

Bulgarian Patriarchate Anniversary

Pope John XXIII

Oecumenical Patriarch's Speech at Mt. Athos

Oecumenical Patriarch's Visit to Greece

The Sacrament of Baptism

The Millenary of the Great Lavra of Mt. Athos

Price 2/-, post free, to non-members

**THE ANGLICAN & EASTERN CHURCHES
ASSOCIATION**
founded in 1864

Orthodox Patron :
The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople
His All Holiness Athenagoras I

Anglican Patron :
His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury

Anglican President :
The Bishop of London

Orthodox President :
Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyatira

Chairman of Committee :
The Revd. AUSTIN OAKLEY

General Secretary :
The Revd. H. R. STRINGER
S. Stephen's Vicarage, 25 Talbot Road, W.2.

Treasurer :
J. S. ULLMER, Esq.
32 Chiltley Way,
Midhurst Road, Liphook, Hants.

Editor of News-Letter :

GENERAL SECRETARY'S NOTES

We apologise for the lateness of this issue.

Centenary. Plans are already in hand for the observance of our Centenary next year. We hope to have the main programme ready soon.

Apology. We offer our sincere apologies to Fr. Lev Gillet for the inadvertent printing of an article in the last issue which was an extract from his book 'Orthodox Spirituality.' It came from another source, and we are very sorry that the proper acknowledgements were not made.

Slides of the Holy Liturgy. Sets of twelve colour transparencies of the Orthodox Liturgy as celebrated in the Greek Cathedral in London have been published jointly by the Association and the Fellowship of S. Alban & S. Sergius (by kind permission of Bishop James of Apameia), with script by Fr. Basil Minchin. A complete set together with notes costs 15/- and can be obtained from the General Secretary, 25 Talbot Road, Bayswater, W.2.

**THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BULGARIAN
PATRIARCHATE**

During May special celebrations were held in Sofia to mark the 10th anniversary of the re-establishment of the Bulgarian Orthodox Patriarchate and the enthronement of His Holiness, Patriarch Kyril of Bulgaria.

On May 10th the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the cathedral "Alexander Nevski" in Sofia, and this was followed by a service of thanksgiving in which the Patriarch, all Bulgarian bishops and a large number of clergy took part. Metropolitan Pimen spoke of the spiritual growth of the Church during the last ten years, and mentioned that since 1961 the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has been a member of the World Council of Churches.

After the service a reception was held in the Holy Synod buildings. Messages of greetings were presented to the Patriarch by representatives of other Orthodox Churches, the theological academy at Sofia, the Bulgarian government, which was represented by Mr. Mihail Kuchukov, chairman of the Committee for Religious Affairs, and others. The Praesidium of the Bulgarian National Assembly has conferred on the Patriarch the Order of the People's Republic of Bulgaria (first class) in token of his work for peace.

A big formal reception was given in honour of the Patriarch by the government's committee for Religious

Affairs on the following day, May 11th. Amongst the visitors present was Miss Lois Mayhoffer of the World Council of Churches.

Sofia

L. CHOLAKOV

POPE JOHN XXIII

Such has been the impact upon Christendom of the life and work of His late Holiness that a sincere expression of grief at his being called away in the midst of so many mighty undertakings, is called for in our Association's publication.

For the four and a half years of his short reign, he occupied an increasingly unique place in the world, far beyond the limits of the millions of his own Church. In the high offices which he held before being elected to the Chair of St. Peter, in the Balkans and Turkey, as Nuncio in Paris, as Cardinal Patriarch of Venice, he showed at all times the same spirit of charity, the same ardent desire for the unity of Christians, and above all a Christian love of "la famiglia humana," that he concentrated all the power and prestige of his pre-eminent position to further.

It has been pointed out that although neither a great scholar nor linguist, nor of outstanding intellectual stature, his impact on everyone he met was immediate. Here was a great man courageous and wise, and full of divine charity. So, we must believe, were the first Apostles of the Lord, and we may well compare him with them, since to him was given the same Holy Spirit, who can transform a human being, and reveal Christ in him in power. We join in the great volume of prayer to Almighty God for the rest and peace of his soul, as he now stands in a greater light and on another shore.

A.O.

THE OECUMENICAL PATRIARCH STRESSES MOUNT ATHOS' ROLE IN CHRISTIAN UNITY

At the celebrations to mark the 1,000th anniversary of Mount Athos as a monastic community, the Oecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople said that one of the proofs of greatness in the Greek Church was its support of the monastic life on the holy mountain.

He spoke of the need for an exchange of views, among all Christians and said the world was divided because of a lack of dialogue between peoples. "Of the three billion people on the earth," the Oecumenical Patriarch continued, "two billion are non-Christian and that is why we invite all theologians to work for a solution to the problem of spread-

ing Christianity: how will we make it possible for Christians to live on the face of the earth?"

The Oecumenical Patriarch stressed the importance of Mount Athos for the propagation of unity. Monasticism had rendered great service to this cause which had been upheld by such notable men as Gregory Palamas, Simon, the Bulgarian prince and monk, and Arsenius, the founder of Valamo monastery, Finland, all of whom had come out of Mount Athos.

The spirituality of the monks had prevented the development of schisms, and many efforts towards the union of Rome and Constantinople had been initiated by the monks from Mount Athos.

"In our contemporary situation," the Oecumenical Patriarch continued, "the holiness and discipline of the monasteries must put out all their strength to cultivate charity and humility and to prepare the right climate among all Christians for the ecumenical movement to go forward."

Patriarch Athenagoras asserted that Mount Athos will regain its past glories only by a joint action with the autocephalous churches and the other Orthodox Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Archbishop Nicodim of Moscow, and he named five projects which would lead to the renewal of Mount Athos: 1. Recruitment of devout monks as a matter of urgency; 2. Promotion of the present Athonian monastery to be a pan-Orthodox academy where clergymen could attend special courses from time to time; 3. The establishment of a Christian academy of Byzantine studies; 4. The provision of a meeting place for Bishops and clergymen to conduct retreats and exchange views. The holding of conference and consultations on current issues so that Orthodoxy can better confront the challenges of today.

Patriarch Athenagoras ended by stressing the great blessing that the ecumenical movement has had in our time and said that a great contribution was expected from the Orthodox side in helping to solve accumulated problems both spiritual and moral.

Replying to the Oecumenical Patriarch, King Paul of Greece said that a few decades ago materialistic views questioned the very utility not only of monasticism but of every spiritual uplifting. New scientific conquests had proved that man is not a machine but a psycho-somatic entity as distinct from all other creations of God. Those scientific findings had revived the truth that "man shall not live by bread alone."

The Greek State was willing, the King added to do every-

thing in its power so that Mount Athos might remain a powerful spiritual beacon for millions of souls beyond the boundaries of Greek Orthodoxy.

By kindness of the EPS.

THE OECUMENICAL PATRIARCH'S VISIT TO GREECE

After the celebration of the millenium of Mount Athos His All-Holiness Athenagoras I visited the Church of Greece. On his arrival at Phaleron Delta on board the destroyer Pyropolitis he was greeted by the King, the Prime Minister, Mr. P. Pipinelis and members of the Cabinet, the Archbishop of Athens and all Greece Chrysostomos and members of the Holy Synod. The President of the Chamber of Deputies Constantine Rodopoulos and other officials.

The Oecumenical Patriarch after reviewing the guard of honour drove with the King in solemn procession to Athens. At the city's entrance he was welcomed by the Mayor and Municipal Council of Athens.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

by the Rt. Revd. Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos

The Christian Church lives through the faith in the Mystery of our Lord's Incarnation and through the regenerating power which flows forth from the Cross and the Resurrection of our Lord. Man, weak as he is since the fall of Adam, cannot on his own attain the perfection of the state of "Sonship" in the "image and likeness" of God, as was intended when he was created by God, as the crown and ruler over all of God's creation. This is witnessed to not only by Christian teachings but also by the innate, profound and unceasing thirst and longing in man, and particularly in great men who for ever looked elsewhere, above this world, for the much-sought and desired liberation from the trials and tribulations which their souls suffered. However, although man fell and was weakened, and the "image and likeness" was clouded over, he did not cease to be a God-like creature and the object of the loving care of God. God who certainly foresaw this fall also knew the way by which He could re-instate man and help him accomplish that for which he was created. This He fulfilled in the Person and Mission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Redemptive Love of God was set into action "when the fullness of time had come," as was foreseen by the Infinite Wisdom of God. "In due time," when the struggle for man's fate had reached its climatic point and the eyes of

man were directed upward in desperate expectation, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4: 4-5) What man was unable to accomplish and attain through virtue and sacrifice, Christ accomplished by "offering up himself" and "obtaining eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 7: 27, 9: 12, 10: 10). Through this Redemptive Action, Divine Love intervened in history and created a new situation in the world. This Redemptive work of Christ is continued in the life of the Church. The life of the Church is but the perpetual extension of that Mystery of Salvation in Christ in the lives of the faithful. Yet the Church calls "Mysteries" or "Sacraments" certain Liturgical Rites which through visible signs convey the invisible Grace of God which regenerates and sanctifies men.

The first of these religious rites is the Sacrament of Baptism. Baptism is the Sacrament in which the candidate, baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity, is cleansed from all sin and is spiritually regenerated by the Act of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism, as a means of supernatural "Katharsis" and regeneration, was in use before Christ by many religions. In the Old Testament writings we have indications of such "Katharsis" as in Is. 1: 16-18, Psalms 50: 7. In the days of our Lord, baptism was given to the proselytes. St. John the Baptist, on commandment from God, baptised even the Jews (John 1: 33, Lk. 3: 2, Mk. 11: 30). All this, however, was considered a preparatory measure for the Christian Baptism.

Christian Baptism has its roots in our Lord's Baptism in the Jordan River. The Church's Baptism, however, has its actual beginning with the day of Pentecost which followed the Cross and Resurrection. For as St. John Chrysostom tells us, "Out of His pierced side came forth the source of our forgiveness; water for our regeneration and the washing away of our sins and corruption; blood as drink that renders life eternal" (Migne 59: 463, 167, John 7: 39).

Following the Resurrection, Christ commanded the Apostles to receive the faithful into the Church through Baptism. This we see clearly in Matt. 28: 19 and in the practice of the Church. Through the Kerygma the Apostles would arouse and cultivate the faith in Christ and then they would immediately urge the believers to receive Baptism. "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38, cf. 8: 12-38, 10: 45-48, 16: 15-32, 22, 26).

Thus, in accordance with Christ's commandment, the Apostles and the Church after them continues to exercise Baptism as the necessary means of becoming a Christian. Baptism opens the door to the kingdom of God for everyone who believes in Christ. "For without Baptism no one can be saved, as the Lord tells us, 'except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God'" (Dossitheos Omologia—Chap. 6, cf. John 3: 5, Mark 16: 16). Baptism, as the first Sacrament bestowed upon the faithful, is the door through which he first enters into the life of the Church. Without Baptism, the believer cannot partake of any of the other Sacraments of the Church and therefore he cannot be considered a member of the Church. It is for this reason that the Church from the very beginning adopted the practice of infant baptism. Only martyrdom can replace Baptism, being a "baptism of blood" in which even our Lord was baptised. "Martyrs are baptised in their own blood" (Cyril of Jerusalem).

THE EFFECTS OF BAPTISM :

The obligatory nature of Baptism can be fully understood in the light of our Lord's commandment and in the light of the effects it has on the baptised.

Baptism, as the Sacrament of Initiation, affords the baptised Justification. In Baptism, through the threefold submersion in and emersion from the water; through the epiclesis of the Triune Godhead and through the action of the Holy Spirit, the baptised is regenerated and becomes a new creature in Christ. As the authors of the New Testament and the Fathers of the Church confirm, the faithful lives this Justification as a religious experience at the moment of his Baptism. The faithful lives the full effect of Justification in all its negative and positive aspects. In its negative aspect, Baptism is seen as a remission of sins and the liberation of the soul from the blemish brought on by sin. Baptism is seen as the Salvation of the soul from the bindings of sin, corruption, darkness and error in which fallen man has lived, as a death for sin, as the removal of the flesh.

Beyond these negative aspects we find the experience of the positive effects of Baptism. In fact, we may say that the experience of the positive aspects of Baptism is the principle witness for the negative aspects. These positive aspects are characterised as Justification, Sanctification, Enlightenment, Adoption into Sonship and the Regeneration of a new man capable of withstanding the force of sin and of living in the newness of life. The remission of sins is verified through the Sanctification which comes from Divine Grace. The release of the baptised from darkness and error are experienced in

the enlightenment of his soul. The death to sin is fully felt in the realisation of the Adoption and the life of Grace of which the baptised partakes. It is for this reason that descriptions of these effects are compounded: "Ye are washed . . . ye are sanctified . . . ye are justified" (I Cor. 6: 11). Baptism is called "the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3: 5, I Cor. 2: 15). It is for this reason that in the Service of the Baptism the baptised hears the words, "Thou are baptised . . . illuminated . . . sanctified . . . washed."

All these expressions are but an attempt to describe the regeneration which the believer mystically experiences at the moment of Baptism. This mysterious happening can be conceived only as a mystical experience and never as a rational description. This miraculous event is worked by the Holy Spirit who is the officiating person of the Sacrament and the entire religious life of the Church.

Through St. Paul's words we are able to reach a better and clearer understanding of this spiritual regeneration as the experience of incorporation into the Body of Christ, i.e., the Church, "for by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body." Through the Sacrament of Baptism the believer is incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ; he enters into the Church. Having been incorporated into the Church, the faithful now lives the new life; the newness of life in Christ. Baptism gives the believer the status of living in Christ; belonging to Christ; being a new creature. For "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (II Cor. 5: 17). All of this bears witness to the fact that the believer, through his faith and the act of Baptism, abandons the old world in which he lived before and establishes himself in a new state of life. He enters into the state of Grace in which Christ governs through the Holy Spirit.

According to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (6: 2-6), the faithful lived the Baptism as a mystical death in Christ; as a likeness to the death of Christ. This concept stems from the teaching of Salvation in Christ in which the faithful lives at the moment of Baptism. Christ is our Saviour through His death upon the Cross. The Baptism is performed in the name of Christ who was crucified for us. Baptism in any other name empties the Cross of Christ of its power (I Cor. 1: 12-27). The faithful are baptised in Christ, and to be more exact "in the death of Christ" through which He saved us. This reveals that every Baptised, at the time of his Baptism, lives something parallel and analogous to the life of Christ: the faithful identifies his life with the life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He lives the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ and thus partakes mystically

of the entire Salutory Mission of Christ. Baptism is a likeness of the death of our Lord. The faithful becomes "planted together with the death of Christ." He is "Crucified with Christ" through faith and repentance because without this mystical death man is unable to win against the power of sin. The believer is "buried with Christ" through his immersion into the water and rising from it is resurrected as a new man, able "to walk in the newness of life." This mystical and metaphysical union of the faithful with Christ and God constitute the essence of Salvation and the Principle and ultimate purpose in the life of the faithful.

This experience of Justification as union with Christ is not merely a psychological change but is a reality which the baptised lives at the moment of his Baptism and which follows the believer's act of confession of faith. Regeneration is a veritable event; it is a resubstantiation—a *metastochiosis*—of the baptised who is a new man; a new creature in Christ "as those that are alive from the dead" (Rom. 6: 13). "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5: 17.) This is through the recreative power of God "who quickeneth the dead" in Christ and the Holy Spirit. This power depends upon the free volition of faith of the individual and of the Church in which this power works.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST :

The Baptism is performed in the name of the Holy Trinity (Mk. 28: 19). Salvation is worked by the Triune Godhead. The Orthodox Church, by special economy, accepts converts from other Churches providing they have been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity. However, in the books of the New Testament we find that the name of our Lord is stressed principally in connection with Baptism. This is done because of the major role played by Christ in the Salvation of man. For our Salvation is from God the Father through Christ who was crucified for our sins and was resurrected for our Justification (I Cor. 15: 3, Rom. 4: 25). Through Christ we know the Father and through Christ do we also receive the Holy Spirit. This constitutes the new content of our Faith. This is what must be believed and confessed prior to Baptism.

Through the *epiclesis* of the name of Christ the baptised confesses that he accepts the teachings pertaining to Christ and His Mission (the Evangelion—Mk. 1: 1) and consequently he accepts Christ as the only Saviour and Lord of his life and thereby places himself under the rule of Christ (Rom. 10: 9-13, Phil. 2: 11).

Thus the baptised places himself under Christ and is "Christ's" and is "in Christ" . . . This being "Christ's and in Christ" constitutes the new creature; the state of Grace in which the believer is placed (cf. Col. 1: 13-14; Gal. 3: 25, 5: 24, I Cor. 3: 23, 15: 23, II Cor. 10: 5, Rom. 16: 7).

THE MILLENIARY OF THE GREAT LAVRA OF MOUNT ATHOS

In the summer of this year the whole Orthodox Church is celebrating along with the Brethren of the Monastery of S. Athanasius the Athonite, known as the Great Lavra, the thousandth year of its monastic foundation.

There seems no reason to doubt that before the founding of this chief of the twenty great Monasteries of Mount Athos the life of hermits and solitaries on the peninsula had already existed for some considerable time. S. Athanasius, originally from Trebizond but brought up in Constantinople, became a monk of the famous monastery of Kyminas in Bithynia, and then came to Athos seeking seclusion and the solitary life. Here he found throughout the peninsula numbers of solitaries and ascetics, who for greater freedom had neither organised communities nor monastic buildings in common. After living as one of them for some years, he was persuaded by his friend and patron the Emperor Nikephoros Phokas, as a thank-offering for the freeing of Crete from the Saracens, to build a monastery for eighty monks, and to receive an Imperial charter and endowment. Thus came into existence the Great Lavra, existing for some time, before similar great monasteries were built and endowed, among a loose confederation of monks living various types of the old solitary life. The speed with which organised communities sprang up on the Holy Mountain is made clear by the fact that twice in the earlier half of the eleventh century an Imperial charter was drawn up to regulate the position on the one hand of those monasteries that were organised, and on the other of those that remained as independent solitaries. The second of these, granted by the Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos in 1046, is known as the Great Charter. It established a central government at Karyes, which still exists, and the status of the great monasteries such as Vatopedi and Iveron which had already been built, with the Great Lavra as the first in precedence. The representation of the unorganised solitaries was vested in a single representative. The germ of the present rule of the Holy Mountain by the Twenty Ruling Monasteries was thus planted, and continues to this day. The original differences of way of life between the organised

Communities and the solitaries is reflected to a certain extent today in those monasteries that live a strictly cenobitic life and those that are still idiorrhythmic, that is to say, following the rhythm of the individual monk. Of the twenty, eleven are now cenobitic and nine idiorrhythmic. There exist as well a number of monastic "cells" or subsidiary monasteries and monastic dwellings and still there are inaccessible stone huts and caves where the true solitary lives, hidden from any intercourse with men.

The Holy Mountain, which is now within the outer jurisdiction of the Oecumenical Patriarchate, has had its share of the stormy life of the Byzantine Empire and after. Its most glorious period would appear to have been about a century after the foundation of the Great Lavra. It had its part in the miseries of the Latin Conquest in 1204, and suffered much systematic pillage at the hands of the Latins, but recovered a degree of independence by the action of Pope Innocent III, who restored its government by the Latin Emperor only. On the return of the Greek Emperor in 1260, it shared in that victory, and even after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Holy Mountain was treated with great consideration by the Sultans, and although the perquisite of the Chief Gardener of the Sultan, was given freedom to manage its own affairs and live without interference. When Greece gained her independence of the Turkish Empire, the Holy Mountain became Hellenic territory, and still remains so.

The original vision of the place of Mount Athos in the life of the Church was lofty and splendid. There, in that far-off and unspoiled peninsular, every Church was to have its representative monastery, where the dedicated life of prayer should be continually offered. In early times there was even an Italian Monastery of the Amalfians, now no longer existing. In particular, the autonomous Churches of Orthodoxy were represented. The Holy Orthodox Church is primarily based for her spirituality on the witness of the monastic life and its keeping aflame the ardour of the continually renewed spiritual offering of the monk's life to God. There are obvious elements in the confused political world of today that make it difficult to come near to attaining this original vision. The countries behind the Iron Curtain, for example, can only be represented with great danger and ambiguity, while the modern secular trend is drying up recruits which is endangering the continuance for more than one great monastic house on the Holy Mountain.

The Peninsula is a very beautiful place, with all the magic of the Greek countryside, valley and mountain and sea, and a luxuriance, even in summer, that mainland Greece seldom offers. But more than that, here is the last vestige in the

world of a great and magnificent civilisation, that of the Byzantine Empire of the Christian East. Nowhere else now is it possible to savour its richness. The daily life of the monk is permeated with it, the splendid churches of the Holy Mountain with their ikons, frescoes, and reliquaries give a true glimpse of Constantinople and many lesser centres of life of the Eastern Empire. Perhaps because of this, the Monastic Republic needs to be protected against the merely curious visitor and the tourist seeking the unusual and the bizarre. It is not altogether easy to day to obtain permission to make a visit—let us hope it will be made even more difficult in the future. The life of the monk, the routine of his monastery, should not be open to being broken into by that world which he has abandoned.

Let us pray for a great revival of the monastic life, which will quicken again these venerable houses and fill them with dedicated monks. The Millenary of the Great Lavra is the token of the centuries of uninterrupted monastic life, and a splendid offering to God.

Austin Oakley.

Aims of the Association

The Association exists to unite members of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches for the following objects :-

- (a) The principle object for which the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association is established is for the advancement of the Christian religion in particular by means of teaching the members of the Anglican Churches and those of the Eastern Orthodox Churches the doctrines and respective principles and methods of each other in their work for advancement of the Christian religion.
- (b) The Association exists also to unite members of the two Communion in prayer and work in achieving the principle objects with a view to promotion of visible unity between them.

Some Methods of Helping the Work

1. By joining the Association and getting others to join.
2. By arranging for a meeting in the neighbourhood, when a lecture may be given on the Eastern Churches and Reunion, and the objects of the Association explained.
3. By asking the Parochial Authorities to promise a Sunday collection every year either in the service or afterwards at the doors.
4. By uniting in local centres for the study of Eastern Christendom, and for Intercession for Reunion.

Lectures—with or without lantern illustrations—can be arranged by writing to the General Secretary.

Subscription

The normal annual subscription is 10/- (Life-membership £5), but none will be excluded solely on account of inability to pay this amount, while it is hoped that those who can afford to pay more will do so.

All members receive the Eastern Churches News-Letter which is published quarterly.