

Eastern Churches NEWS-LETTER

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**THE ANGLICAN & EASTERN CHURCHES
ASSOCIATION**

founded in 1864

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SECRETARY'S NOTES AND GENERAL NEWS

Annual Festival. The 99th Annual Festival was held on Saturday, 2nd November at the Serbian Orthodox Church of S. Sava, Lancaster Road, by kind permission of the Protopriest, Fr. Nikolic. Bishop James of Apameia celebrated the Divine Liturgy, assisted by Greek, Latvian, Russian and Serbian priests.

After the Liturgy a meeting was held in the adjoining church room, when Bishop James spoke on "The Millenary of Monasticism on Mt. Athos," the talk being illustrated by coloured slides.

The Annual General Meeting for the conduct of business followed. The General Secretary formally announced his resignation, but added that he would continue for the present until a successor could take over. He went on to announce plans for the forthcoming Centenary Year. The Hon. Treasurer reported a satisfactory financial position. The meeting then closed.

Centenary Programme. This is a preliminary outline of plans made so far.

Friday, 19th June 1964. An afternoon Reception in the Guard Room at Lambeth Palace when His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury will be the Host.

Saturday, 20th June. Solemn celebration of the Divine Liturgy in the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of S. Sophia, Moscow Road, Bayswater, W.2, when the Archbishop of Canterbury will be the preacher. The service will be followed by an afternoon meeting.

Saturday, 27th June. Celebrations at East Grinstead commemorating John Mason Neale, an original founder of the Association. There will be a Sung Eucharist in the parish church when the preacher will be the Bishop of Chichester. Orthodox Vespers and Tea will follow in the afternoon at S. Margaret's Convent—founded by Dr. Neale.

It is hoped to arrange a course of lectures in the Autumn, and the Centenary Celebrations will end with a special Annual Festival on a Saturday in October with a Solemn Eucharist in the Church of S. Mark, North Audley Street, and an afternoon meeting.

If any members of the Association from abroad is hoping to be in England during the celebrations in June, would they please inform the Assistant Secretary, Brother Cuthbert Fearon, Nashdom Abbey, Burnham, Bucks, by the 30th March, giving the address at which they will be staying in England, in order that an invitation to the Reception on the 19th may be sent to them.

Germany. The Ecumenical Patriarch has named Bishop Polyefetos, formerly Bishop of Tropaïou, Greece, as Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Church in Germany. We extend to Bishop Polyefetos our prayers and good wishes on his appointment.

Armenian Church. In October His Holiness Vasken I, Supreme Catholicos of All Armenians paid a private visit to this country. During His Holiness' visit he elevated Bishop Bessak Toumayan to the office of Archbishop, and Special Delegate in England. To Archbishop Toumayan we extend our prayers and congratulations.

Professor Basil Ioannides. We record our deep sorrow at the death of Professor Ioannides. He was a member of our Association and a good friend to us. May he rest in peace.

THE NORTHERN FESTIVAL OF THE ANGLICAN AND EASTERN CHURCHES ASSOCIATION

The northern festival was held in Manchester Cathedral on Saturday, 28th September, by kind invitation of the Dean and Chapter. The Reverend Canon Price a member of the Chapter celebrated the Sung Eucharist at 11 a.m. and the Reverend Francis House preached.

In the afternoon the Annual Meeting was held when the Reverend Norman Hill addressed the meeting in place of Dr. Ehrhardt who was unable to attend because of illness.

This was the first occasion that an Anglican and Orthodox service was held in the Cathedral. We wish to express our gratitude to the Dean and Chapter for their kind hospitality at the festival which was well supported.

FAITH AND ORDER AT MONTREAL

by The Revd. P. C. Rodger,

Executive Secretary of the Faith and Order Commission

An Archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Church attending an "open" Communion Service of the United Church of Canada, and declaring afterwards that it was here, rather than in the theological deliberations, that he was aware of Christian unity: this happened at Montreal, in the same year in which Pope Paul VI publicly begged forgiveness from "the separated brethren" for any actions of the Roman Church which had offended them in the past. When the ecumenical sky is lit by such portents as these, it seems almost trifling to ask whether the Fourth World Conference

on Faith and Order had been a "success" or a "failure." A wiser judgement would surely be that after fifty years of pioneering work (in which Anglicans on both sides of the Atlantic have played a notable part), Faith and Order is only now on the threshold of its real task of ecumenical study and prayer, since both Orthodox and Roman Christians now seem irrevocably committed to bearing their part within it and the old bogey of a "pan-Protestant movement" is exorcized, let us hope, for ever. In the light of the Montreal meeting it may well be asked whether such World Conferences are still the most useful means of attempting to handle the issues of faith and order which divide us. The conversation is so large and the voices so many, that a period in which smaller meetings and more limited encounters predominate, seems essential. Yet for all that, Montreal had its moments of inspiration and comfort, some of them provided by the extraordinary warmth of friendliness with which Cardinal Léger and the members of the Archdiocese of Montreal received our delegates—it must be said that the sympathy and intelligence with which the French-speaking Roman Catholic Press interpreted the Conference put most of the English-speaking papers to shame. It pays to use theologians as journalists on such occasions!

Nearly five hundred persons, drawn from 138 different churches, attended the Conference, and a wide span of subjects for discussion had been deliberately arranged: Church, Scripture and Tradition, ministry, Sacraments, local unity—everything from creation and redemption to the diaconate and the ministry of women. From this spectrum it is desirable here only to dwell on the meeting of Eastern and Western Churches, at once more close and profound, more truly "a family affair" than in any previous conference of the World Council of Churches. The largest Orthodox delegation was from Russia, but the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Greece, Roumania, and American Orthodoxy in its various jurisdictions, were all well represented. The main meeting at Montreal had been prefaced by a small consultation between fifteen Orthodox and fifteen other theologians held in the Anglican Theological College, and it was this quieter session, devoted largely to the theme of the Church's continuity (how, e.g. do Protestants view the Councils of the Early Church, and how do Orthodox view the Reformation as an event in Church history?), which gave the greatest promise for future conversations. But throughout the whole proceedings at Montreal it was noteworthy that the Orthodox seemed to have discarded their old habit of issuing "minority statements" which to some extent bypassed the discussions

among their brethren. In each of the five Sections, not excluding that concerned with practical issues of local unity, their delegates made a positive and often energetic contribution. Their most evident hesitations were on the subject of the ecclesiological meaning to be attached to the World Council of Churches itself—and in view of the dogmatic position of Orthodoxy these hesitations may well have been right and proper. Yet once again, as so often with the Eastern Churches during the past forty years, it must be said that ecumenical practice has greatly—even at times, dangerously—outrun dogmatic formulation.

Montreal also gave a reminder that the “East-West dialogue” no longer takes place simply within the framework of the Mediterranean and European world to which our traditions have accustomed us. North America really is a different world, not just to be despised for its derivative culture and theology! And so, each in its own distinctive way, is Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Australasia. Each continent was represented, sometimes powerfully, at Montreal, and the representatives often brought into the proceedings a note of urgency and impatience. It would be great foolishness on our part simply to attribute such impatience on the part of Younger Churches to immaturity and theological inadequacy; far deeper lies the question of how we distinguish together the true Tradition that we have passed on to them—the gospel of Jesus Christ—from the “traditions of men” with which we have often unwittingly overlaid it. We have long since learned to mock or deplore Western dress, Gothic architecture, and Victorian hymns standing where they ought not. But have we yet taken seriously, for example, the Indian Christian’s cry that unity—across our imported divisions—is itself a necessary part of the Church’s confession before the world? The vocal young Nigerian who kept breaking in on the timeless deliberations of his elders did us a real service, if he reminded both Eastern and Western Churches that God’s work must sometimes be measured in decades, even in months, rather than in centuries.

Readers of this *News Letter* will no doubt be glad to know in the Centenary Year, first, that the next meeting of the Faith and Order Commission is to be held in August, 1964, in Cyprus, by invitation of Archbishop Makarios; and secondly, that one of the studies which was recommended by the Section on *Scripture, Tradition and Traditions* was “an ecumenical study of the Councils of the Early Church and their implications for today at the highest possible level of scholarship”; and thirdly, that there is planned to take

place in Cyprus an unofficial meeting of representatives of Chalcedonian Orthodox and Ancient Oriental Churches, who have given a warm welcome to the suggestion of Faith and Order that they should, after so many centuries, look once again at the theological divisions alleged to keep them apart. The Cyprus agenda will be a long one, as we endeavour to work out the right direction and the most appropriate methods for the next period of Faith and Order study—and meanwhile, to make matters better or worse, history is daily being made in Rome which must affect the whole of the *oikoumene*! How greatly does the Faith and Order movement need the prayers of the faithful, as it seeks to serve, not the interests of a few specialists or even of the World Council of Churches as an institution, but the whole state of Christ’s Church!

Geneva,
October, 1963.

THE ANGLICAN CONGRESS 1963

By the Reverend Dewi Morgan

Never before, it can quite safely be said, had there been such an Anglican Congress and never before had there existed the sort of circumstances in which this one took place. When the last—and, for most practical purposes, it was also the first—Anglican Congress was held at Minneapolis in 1954, the World Council of Churches was officially only six years old and the great *kairos* of the reign of Pope XXIII had not occurred. Furthermore, the move towards the articulation of the Anglican Communion which was made at the 1958 Lambeth Conference was still wrapped in the future. And the ecumenical, liturgical and biblical movements of our day had barely become known outside the circles of scholars and prophets.

Toronto, 1963, then, came at an unprecedented moment.

Yet that in itself was no guarantee that the occasion would begin to justify the time, expense and trouble which it would obviously demand. Indeed, there were many who, up to within months or even weeks of the Congress kept on insisting that the whole thing was misbegotten or mistimed or that no one except the Canadian hosts was really interested. For a multitude of reasons it seemed that Toronto 1963 could be at best a convivial family party with little significance for the next-door neighbours (apart from a certain amount of noise) and none whatsoever for those in another street.

There are plenty of people indeed who will sincerely and cogently argue that such a Congress should never be planned

in our ecumenical day. What right, they say, have Anglicans to rig up their cave of Adullam? And if they do, can't they realise that they will be talking only to themselves? Neither their fellow-Christians nor the world outside will be concerned. Such spiritual and verbal introversion can only hinder the ecumenical enterprise.

The fact should be faced. Toronto 1963 did turn out to be a time when Anglicans stared very hard into the heart of their own Communion. Yet it was not the narcissism of mutual admiration, but was rather reminiscent of our Lord's injunction to remove the beam from one's own eye before tackling the mote in another's. At Toronto the whole climate of thought seemed to crystallise in the realisation that if the Anglican Communion really is to live unto others and bring its gifts into the fullness of the coming Great Church, then Anglicans have to be careful stewards of their own talent. Only an Anglicanism which is aiming at perfection within itself is worthy to seek the fellowship of other Churches. The man who is about to be married is wholly ready to lose himself to the bride, but he does not usually regard his own peculiar gifts and abilities as worthless in the process. He tries to enhance them for the bride.

At Toronto, Anglicans did stare hard into their own Communion. Yet they did so as extroverts. And it was perhaps that capacity to look both inwards and outwards at the same time which gave the Congress its creative tension.

The Janus ability to look in two directions, of course, was not limited to relationships between Anglicans and other Christians. Anglicans also have all their inter-Anglican relationships to hold in mind—perhaps it is because of this diversity of relationships within itself that Anglicanism has its particular ecumenical flair.

For so long it has been the case that Anglicanism's main sub-divisions have been between "high" and "low." The more optimistic suggest that such sectarianisms have been transcended in our day. However that may be, Toronto showed little if any evidence that people were thinking or acting along partisan lines. At Toronto the word "Anglicanism" seemed to be accepted as a synthesis which mutilated neither "high" nor "low," but sublimated both without causing either to lose its dynamic.

It was as well that there should be no party divisions at Toronto because it was an occasion when the Anglican Communion rightly had its attention concentrated on a much more vital complex of relationships within itself. This is the whole area which lies around groupings based on national frontiers, "sending" and "receiving" Churches, affluence

and indigence, adequate equipment and hand-to-mouth scraping. Let it be said, none of these groupings have consciously been contrived, none of them have been born of theological or ecclesiastical dabbings. They are the fruit of a history wider than that of the Church. And they are essentially the factors of our given situation. Yet, indisputable facts as they are, Toronto—and this perhaps was its greatest joy—refused to accept them as either right or unalterable. Rather it showed a determination to advance beyond and through them.

Hence was born that vital document *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*. It was the peak moment of the ten days when the Archbishop of York, speaking with the fervour of a prophet, read it to the whole assembly. The response was a wave of magnificent enthusiasm which was only just prevented from canalising itself in a snap vote.

That document must remain a vital Anglican source-book until its last word is implemented. Its call for a new, a fuller, a more committed partnership between *all* the partners in the Anglican family must be heard and obeyed. It is a bold call and only bold people will be able to respond. But, let the fact be faced, none can fully answer this call until all fully answer this call. This is a case where none shall be complete until all are complete. This is a case, in other words, which exemplifies the deepest of all theological beliefs about the nature of man, that because God is Father then all men are brothers and brothers are not brothers until they have a common purse to which all contribute and from which all benefit. Such a purse, of course, contains more than the coins of any realm. It must contain all our gifts and all our very selves.

Toronto could not only enunciate such a call. It could also hope for some fulfilment, not least because all the leaders were there and they had already had the chance of reaching a common mind in the two or three weeks which preceded the Congress. The result was that not only were emotions stirred but also practical measures were examined.

The peak moment of the mutuality document was one which could not have been reached by any means other than a world-wide, interracial Congress. Lambeth Conferences could not have achieved this. Nor could all the books and letters and memos and inter-departmental communications to which this world is heir. It demanded the confrontation of persons—and amid them, the presence of the Person, through the Holy Spirit.

Rightly or wrongly, none of this issued in Resolutions. To pass resolutions, so the platform urged, would be un-Anglican and in any case the members of the Congress had no representational status. Perhaps the platform was right. But if so it does call for a need that when the cream of the Anglican Communion is expensively gathered together for the next Congress, some hard thinking should be done about the exact function of delegates and the proper fate of the findings of their discussion groups and the possibility of delegates having more time available to speak and other kindred considerations.

Yet, to say that, is merely to urge that Toronto was not perfect and no-one is claiming that it was. It was, and will remain, a magnificent experience of buoyancy and hope, of realism and hard application. But let it be marked, a Toronto which is forgotten would be a Toronto better never held. Even had it been perfect in its ten days that perfection would fester unless it were translated into a long persevering haul.

THOUGHTS OF AN ORTHODOX THEOLOGIAN ON "THE MISSIONARY STRUCTURE OF THE CONGREGATION"

I. THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. *Essence and nature of the local church.*

The local church constitutes the positive and fully concrete expression of the foundation on earth and the living reality of the Church of Christ. While the Church of Christ has no limits of place or time and has as its chief characteristic the sense of catholicity, the local church is limited not only as regards its historical existence, but even more by the narrow boundaries of the ecclesiastical life and activity of its members. Besides this, the essence and nature of the local church are closely interwoven, both existentially and historically, with the very essence and nature of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church itself, the mystical body of Christ. Therefore, the local church in its essence and nature is not simply a question of organisation and structure. The essence and nature of the local church are more than this. They are both divine and sacred: divine because every church constitutes the continuation on earth of the redemptive grace of Christ, as also the extension of the sanctifying powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit; and sacred because every church

has as its mission the *sanctification of its members, and through them the sanctification of the world.*

2. *Composition and character of the local church.*

That which constitutes in a sacramental manner the essence of the church is the public confession of the common faith of two or more Christians in the name of Jesus Christ as Son of God and Saviour of the world. For our Lord is also sanctifying the world in this fellowship of faith, that is to say through the church, according to His own word, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name I am in the midst of them." (Mt. 18:18-19). The composition of the local church therefore is the communion of the faithful. This communion can take place only within the fellowship of the church, with the *founder of the Church* and with his redemptive grace. This grace avails for the sanctification of all mankind and is administered by the responsible and canonically ordained ministers of the church. Its character moreover is purely sacramental, precisely because of the living communion with Christ which is achieved in it. For this reason it is impossible that the purely administrative organisation and development of the church should ever influence or alter its sacramental character. So it is that the faith of the members of the church is reckoned not only as faith in Jesus Christ, as God and Saviour of the world, but also as faith in this very same church, which alone offers salvation, according to the word of the Lord, "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 18:19). Thus it must be stressed that it is only through the church that God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Redemption in Christ, the Gospel, the Sacraments and so on find their meaning for the faithful. This truth is one and the same as the ancient doctrine "extra ecclesiam nulla salus." In this sense, the divine and sacramental character of the church includes spiritual and worldly elements, inasmuch as there are contained in it not only the saintly and outstanding spiritual individuals but also believers who are still living under the burden of sin. These are at times helped by the resources of the church to make progress morally and spiritually; at other times they fall away through the works of the flesh and the influence upon them of the devil, and then turn back yet again through the church to the works of sanctification. The church is therefore apart from its divine and sacramental character, also a human enterprise concerned with the affairs of this world, and therefore its organisation needs to be developed and improved in the light of the

changing requirements of its conditions and circumstances.

3. *Real nature and power of the local church.*

Since the church has no relation or connection with any kind of worldly or social organisation, it is impossible to compare it with any of them. The reason is that, whereas organisations of all kinds arise out of the common needs and pursuits of man, the church arises out of the *love of God, the redemptive grace of Christ*, the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit and the common confession of faith of Christian people, to whom also there is offered through the church the power that is needed for their spiritual renewal and perfection. No other worldly organisation can give this to man. Therefore the essence of the church lies in the reality of the communion achieved in it between the faithful and the Persons of the Holy Trinity. But this communion becomes one and the same thing as the church, because it is only through it that the church is held together and lives and acts in the world. Although this communion exists sacramentally, from the time of the foundation of the church by those who have been commissioned to preach the Holy Gospel and those who have been ordained to minister the redemptive grace of Christ, it is also given concrete expression in the gatherings of its members for worship and Christian fellowship. They come together at certain times and in particular places, according to the traditional order of the church, as members of one and the same body of Christ. Thus the community of faith of the members of the church and the consequent communion with the grace, which has been stored up as a treasure in the church, of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ, and also of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, constitute the indispensable basis and the inviolable power of the church. No other organisation of men however perfect and wonderful could ever be a substitute (cf. Gal. 1:6-9).

4. *The life and activity of the local church.*

The lives of the members of the church are identified completely with their mission, insofar as they have advanced in spirituality within the life of the Church. For the faithful to live in the church means that through it they live in Christ (Gal. 2:19-20). They imitate Him in all things, in such a way that they really become the "light of the world" and "the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13-16). Those of the faithful who are being spiritually perfected in the church, through their life in it in Christ, are also fulfilling their divine mission in the world, constituting the "little leaven" which "leavens the whole lump" (Mt. 13: 33, Lk. 13: 21, I Cor. 5: 6 and

Gal. 5: 9). Consequently the spiritual purity and the sanctification of the members of the church constitute the essence of their following of Christ and of their activity in the world. It is necessary therefore that every effort to improve the missionary structure of the church should be based first and foremost on the moral and spiritual sanctification of its members. Every organisation and reorganisation of the local church must aim at that spiritual leavening which is created by true communion with Christ. This demands above all exceptional spirituality and sanctity of life among those who hold office in the church and who bear responsibility in the sight of God and of men. For when the leaders of the church are spiritually minded, their awareness of communion with Christ is passed on and cultivated among the faithful. This awareness entails the development of a pure Christian conscience and a sense of spiritual responsibility in each individual. This means that the life which the faithful live individually in communion with Christ is profitable to them personally, and that their radiating faith and the work which they do in the world are profitable for the whole Church of Christ and for all mankind.

As has already been said above, spirituality and holiness of life in the spiritual leaders of the church are vitally important if the ordinary members of the church are to follow Christ in their life and work. They have special gifts of divine grace, and constitute the nucleus from which power radiates, that is to say that hidden power of the little leaven which leavens the whole lump. For this reason, the first priority for the evangelistic work of the church is the recruitment, training and ordination of persons of high spiritual quality for the administration of their sacred tasks and the affairs of the parish. The communion of the faithful in the church with Christ and with His grace, through the spirituality and concern for the church of its ministers, becomes also a communion between all the members of the parish with each other. The real and complete communion which is achieved in this way among the members of the church is of immense value and indispensable for the progress of the congregation in following Christ in their life and work. For this communion it is particularly valuable to distinguish between three classes in the church. There are those who represent the so-called piety of the laity, those who engage in theological study, and those whose task is the cure of souls. Very little communion and intercourse take place today between these three classes in the parish; as a result the indispensable contact between clergy, theologians and laity is lacking. This communion is required if the church is to fulfil its mission

and if each member, as a member of the body of Christ, is to carry out the function suited to his particular spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:6-13, I Cor. 12:4-31).

Every evangelistic and missionary activity of the church must primarily be governed by the spiritual obedience to Christ of its ministers and of its members, and only secondarily must it be governed by the new social conditions and demands of life. In this way attempts to reorganise the church will not result in contamination of it or of the Gospel by the world (cf. I Cor. 9:17-23). For this reason also the local church cannot be considered simply as an instrument of the Church, but as its chief objective. The Church of Christ would be inconceivable without the local church through which it exercises its powers and imposes its spirituality.

Professor Markos A. Sitotis,

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This article is reprinted from *Concept* with permission of the Editor.

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 Orthodox 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 doctrine and respective principles and methods in each case as their work for advancement of the Christian religion.

(b) The Association exists also to unite members of the two Churches in prayer and work in achieving the principle objects with a view to promotion of unity between them.

Some Methods of Furthering the Work

1. By joining the Association and getting others to join.
 2. By arranging local meetings in the neighbourhood, when a lecture may be given on the Eastern Churches and the objects of the Association explained.
 3. By asking the Parochial Authorities to promise a regular collection every year either in the service or afterwards at the doors.
 4. By visiting in local centres for the study of Eastern Christianity, and for intercession for Reunion.
- Lectures—with or without lantern illustrations—can be arranged by writing to the General Secretary.

Subscription

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Aims of the Association

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- (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.

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