

EASTERN CHURCHES

# News Letter

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

No. 47, DECEMBER 1967

PRICE 2/- TO NON-MEMBERS

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

THE ANGLICAN AND EASTERN CHURCHES  
ASSOCIATION

founded in 1864

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The Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I

*Anglican Patron:*

The Archbishop of Canterbury

*Anglican President:*

The Bishop of London

*Orthodox President:*

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EDITORIAL

"Ring out the old, ring in the new . . ."

This oft-quoted line was and is acted out by the bellringers in the village of my childhood on New Year's Eve: the old year was *tolled* out, funeral fashion, and then immediately the New Year was greeted with a full peal.

This New Year I believe that a full and joyous peal should be accorded to old and new alike; for not only is the new year bright with the promise of the preparatory Orthodox-Anglican Joint Theological Discussions, the Lambeth Conference and Uppsala, but also 1967 witnessed the event, unique in history, of a visit to Britain by an Ecumenical Patriarch at the conclusion of His All Holiness's series of visits to Orthodox Patriarchates, Rome, and Geneva.

All who met the venerable Leader of Orthodoxy in London fell under the spell of that warm and imposing personality: one was immediately aware that holiness in his case was no mere title. The Association is deeply grateful to the Archbishop of Canterbury in that so many of its members were privileged to share these historic days.

Our 1967 Festival, too, was a most happy occasion: the Bishop of Willesden's sermon at the Liturgy will be found on another page, as will an account of the day and some notes on Fr. Kallistos Ware's memorable paper. The latter we had intended to publish, and the Editor still hopes to be allowed to do so in the next issue of the *News Letter*.

Finally, I am delighted to be able to inform you that SPCK are to publish a special booklet to commemorate the Ecumenical Patriarch's visit: the provisional title is "The Ecumenical Patriarch in England".

ORTHODOX WORSHIP AND THEOLOGY

Yet another, the fourteenth in the series, *Seminar on Orthodox Worship and Theology* will be held at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey from April 8th to 21st, 1968. The first week will be devoted to academic studies at Bossey; and the second, the Orthodox Holy Week, will be worship centred on the Orthodox Institute of St. Sergius in Paris.

Further details may be obtained from Professor N. A. Nissiotis, the Ecumenical Institute, Chateau de Bossey, 1298 Celigny, near Geneva, Switzerland.

Simultaneous translation to and from English, French and German will be provided.

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE**  
ON BEHALF OF  
**THE PATRIARCH and THE ARCHBISHOP**

At the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, His All Holiness Athenagoras I, Archbishop of Constantinople and Oecumenical Patriarch, paid a visit to England from the 9th to the 14th November, 1967. His All Holiness was accompanied by the Most Reverend Meliton, Metropolitan of Chalcedon, the Most Reverend Chrysostomos, Metropolitan of Neo-Caesarea, the Most Reverend Cyril, Metropolitan of Haldia, the Most Reverend Maximos, Metropolitan of Sardis, the Most Reverend Athenagoras, Metropolitan of Thyatira (Apokrisarios of His All Holiness to the Archbishop of Canterbury), the Most Reverend Meletios, Metropolitan of France, and by the Reverend Proto-Deacon Evangellos, the Reverend Deacon Germanos and the Grand Protonotary Dr. Fotiadis.

On November 9th, on arrival at Lambeth Palace, His All Holiness and his companions were present at a solemn Te Deum in Lambeth Palace Chapel. On November 10th the Oecumenical Patriarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury accompanied by the Most Reverend Athenagoras, Metropolitan of Thyatira, were received in audience at Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. On the same day His All Holiness and his companions were the guests of honour at a reception given by the Nikaeen Club in the Great Hall of Lambeth Palace, at which, as on other occasions, they met representatives of other Churches, many foreign Ambassadors accredited to the Court of St. James, and of many walks of life.

The Oecumenical Patriarch and his companions visited the ancient shrines of Canterbury and Westminster. At Canterbury they were received by the Dean and Chapter and attended Festal Evensong in the Cathedral, when the Patriarch and the Archbishop both addressed the congregation. At Westminster Abbey, after their formal reception by the Dean and Chapter, His All Holiness laid a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. The Oecumenical Patriarch and his companions, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, then attended Festal Evensong, during which they both addressed the congregation and each presented the other with the gift of a chalice as a token of their desire for unity. At the conclusion of Evensong His All Holiness prayed at the Shrine of St. Edward the Confessor. At both these services there were present members of many Christian Churches represented in England. His All Holiness and his companions were also present at a solemn Celebration of the Holy Communion, according to the rite of the Church of England, in Lambeth Palace Chapel on St. Martin's Day. On Sunday, November 12th, the Archbishop of Canterbury was present when His All Holiness con-celebrated the Liturgy of St. John

Chrysostom with his Metropolitans in the Orthodox Cathedral of St. Sophia in London, which is under his own jurisdiction. The Metropolitan Athenagoras and the Oecumenical Patriarch preached during the Liturgy, after which the Archbishop of Canterbury was invited to address the congregation. As they joined in worship in each other's Churches the existence of an important common liturgical basis between Anglicans and Orthodox was noted with satisfaction. There was also ample evidence of the growing interest in Orthodoxy shown by the clergy and people of the Church of England throughout the visit.

The guests, accompanied by the Archbishop of Canterbury, were received at St. Mary's Abbey, West Malling, by the Abbess and her community of Anglican Benedictine nuns. His All Holiness made a brief speech to the Community and gave them his blessing. At other times they met representatives, both clerical and lay, of the various specialised aspects of the Church's life and work.

It was arranged that on November 13th, the Feast of St. John Chrysostom, Divine Liturgy should be celebrated in the Chapel of Lambeth Palace by the Most Reverend Athenagoras II, Metropolitan of Thyatira, in the presence of His All Holiness the Oecumenical Patriarch, and His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Oecumenical Patriarch was invited to visit St. Paul's Cathedral and there to be received by the Bishop of London together with the Dean and Chapter, and after staying prayers at the High Altar, to be conducted to the American War Memorial in the Jesus Chapel and to the Chapel of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (as the Order has early historical associations with Corfu). It was also arranged that His All Holiness should visit the Rumanian Orthodox Chapel of St. George in the Anglican Church of St. Dunstan-in-the-West on his way to the Cathedral, and that, before returning to Lambeth Palace, His All Holiness together with Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon, should call on His Excellency the Turkish Ambassador at his residence in Belgrave Square.

In informal discussions His All Holiness and His Grace and their companions were able to discuss the direct relations between the Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Oecumenical Patriarchate and so of all Orthodox Churches. They saw this meeting and the discussions which they hoped would arise from it, as a step forward in Anglican-Orthodox relations, and also as a contribution to the whole cause of Christian unity.

His All Holiness and His Grace urge their people to work and pray for this unity, and in so doing to further the peace and well-being of the world. The Oecumenical Patriarch and the Archbishop of Canterbury, deeply moved by the world problem of refugees, resolve to do all they can to help those in distress, and urge their people to support them in their endeavours.

#### THE ARCHBISHOP'S ADDRESS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Your All Holiness, dear brother in Christ, God is glorified in His saints, O come let us adore Him. With all my heart I greet you as you come from your ancient and illustrious see of Constantinople to join us here in this ancient national shrine of Christianity in England. Peace be with you.

Your coming here today is a reminder of those bonds between the Christianity of the East and the Christianity of the West which are older in time than the unhappy divisions and are now being recovered, slowly indeed but no less certainly. When St. Augustine first brought the faith of Christ to the shores of England the Eastern and the Western traditions had not yet gone their separate ways, and we delight to recall that one of the great Archbishops of Canterbury, Theodore of Tarsus, was a Greek.

Today East and West which have so long moved apart are now moving together. We all are thankful for the participation of the Holy Orthodox Churches within the World Council of Churches. We all are thankful for your own initiatives in the cause of unity, and have followed your journeys to Jerusalem, Greece, Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia, Rome and Geneva and now to London with admiration and thankfulness. Within the reconciling of East and West our Churches of the Anglican Communion have their own service to give and their own part to take, and your visit today brings to us again the friendship of the Holy Orthodox Churches, while our hearts go out to you and your own faithful Christian people.

Christians of this country of every tradition are here in the Abbey today to greet you and to pray together. We learn from your own example and inspiration that all the followers of Jesus Christ are brethren and that there is no limit to the range of His unceasing prayer that all may be one. Joining our prayers to yours, in union with the intercession of our great high priest, we pray today for the unity of all Christians in truth and holiness, for the establishment of peace between the nations and for all who are in poverty, hunger and distress.

We in England have watched with admiration your leadership of your own Christian flock and your ceaseless initiatives in the cause of unity, and we salute you as a brave, loving, forward-looking Oecumenical Patriarch and Father, leader, friend. May God keep you in health and strength and protect all your faithful Christian people. May He show to all the nations the ways of righteousness and brotherhood upon which alone the peace of mankind can be founded. In all our strivings to serve God here in this sad and divided world may our oneness with the saints in heaven strengthen us, and "seeing that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our

faith", to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Spirit, be praise and adoration now and for ever.

#### THE OECUMENICAL PATRIARCH'S ADDRESS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Your Grace, beloved brother in Christ, "Christ is among us, as He was and ever shall be". In understanding this eternal truth which pervades both time and the distances of space, estrangements and divisions, we undertook, in the name of the common Lord who is among us, and with a heart filled with joy and hope, our sacred visit to this noble and beloved country of England in order to meet your venerable Grace, you, the enlightened Archbishop of Canterbury, and, in your person, the venerable Church of England and the world-wide Anglican Communion which we love dearly.

This our visit is the realisation of our sacred mutual desire, both of the Anglican Church and of your Grace, and of our Church of Constantinople and of us personally. We came here in love to express our deep honour to your Grace and to your Church on behalf of our most holy Patriarchal and Oecumenical Throne of Constantinople. And standing already in this ancient and glorified sacred place where, under the eye of the All-seeing God, history and life meet, we extend to you, most honoured and beloved brother, and to the whole Anglican hierarchy, to the Dean and Chapter of this Royal Church, to the venerable clergy and to the faithful *pleroma*, and furthermore, to the Christians of every confession here in these islands, the greeting of our Risen Lord - "Rejoice," "Peace be unto you".

Beloved brother in Christ: at this moment we call to mind the sweet remembrance of the happy visit of your Grace and your companions to the Oecumenical Patriarchate in May 1962. But no less happy were the brotherly visits to the sacred centre of Orthodoxy of two of your Grace's distinguished and venerable predecessors in the See of Canterbury, Cosmo Gordon Lang of blessed memory, and Dr. Geoffrey Fisher. These visits were the fruit of the renewed relations during the first decades of this century which promoted even more the sacred bond between you and us. Indeed, since then the themes related to both our Churches have been examined with greater keenness and attention on account of the mutual desire on the part of the Anglican Church and of our Church for an approach, as well as for the enlightenment on points of doctrine and discovery of means of agreement in questions of difference. The relations of the two Churches, fruitfully cultivated, have been advanced further and have been strengthened and safely established because this was our mutual and sincere desire.

The Lambeth Conference of 1930, at which we had the honour to be present as a representative of the Church of Greece, being at that time Metropolitan of Corfu, the mixed Doctrinal Committee of Anglicans and Orthodox of 1931, and furthermore the Conferences in Bucharest in 1935 and in our own Patriarchal Centre in the Phanar in 1956 and in Moscow the same year, created the proper atmosphere for the necessary good presupposition for a hopeful dialogue between Anglican and Orthodox theologians. With this in mind, the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes formed an Inter-Orthodox Theological Committee which was convened for its first meeting during September of last year in Belgrade. These frequent meetings between Anglicans and Orthodox are but a declaration of decision and good will on the part of the two Churches to promote and direct their relations into ecclesiastical unity and communion. As such, they are a contribution to the movement which today characterises the efforts of the Christian Churches and Confessions for the restoration of Christian Unity, which is demanded by the Holy Will of the heavenly founder and governor of the Church, while at the same time expected by the pressing need of the Church of Christ so that in her unity she may evangelise the whole world and preach to all the undivided Christ both crucified and risen.

From this point of view, these meetings are a ministry of edification, a *diakonia* of unity and peace, and those who undertake this ministry are co-workers of the grace of God.

Your Grace, brother beloved: we have described the visit of your Grace in the spring of 1962 as initiating our march to a new spiritual spring in the relations of our two Churches and as a forerunner of the good spiritual summer, rich in *euphoria* and plenitude of spiritual gifts.

It is as one of the fruits of this coming spiritual summer that we consider our presence here today, near your Grace and among the Anglican clergy and people, and, together with our companions, we wholeheartedly wish that this our visit, and our holy intercession with you, may become a new starting point for greater progress, a more positive advance, in the Pan-Anglican and Pan-Orthodox field of our two Churches, creating a decisive direction for our unity in Christ.

We confess that we feel great joy that in this our visitation for the construction of the unity of our two Churches and more especially for the unity of the Christian world, we have as our companion your beloved Grace; and we say this because in your person we recognise a deep theological thinker, a good shepherd, a courageous leader of the Anglican Communion and one of the protagonists for the prevailing of the ecumenical spirit in the Christian world and its unification.

Being filled with these feelings we address you again, and we thank you warmly for this splendid reception and for your words of kindness, and we pray that God may grant you length of life with unshakeable health so that you may preside over the Anglican Church for many years to come and offer your enlightened leadership in the ministry of the Christian world.

Raising our hands in prayer for the most pious Queen of England, Elizabeth II, and for her royal husband, Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, and their heir, Prince Charles, and the whole royal family and their household, we pray to Almighty God that He may send down upon them His rich mercy and blessings.

Furthermore we pray for the Government of the United Kingdom and for its strengthening in administering this blessed and beloved country to continue its great civilising mission in the world.

We open our hearts to all Christians regardless of doctrine, to Christians of every tradition and ideology, inhabitants of these glorious British Isles, as children of the same heavenly Father; and we invoke in love upon you all the blessings and the peace of God, "to whom belongs glory, dominion, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever."

#### ANNUAL FESTIVAL, 1967

The prolonged applause which greeted Fr. Kallistos Timothy Ware's paper on "The Doctrine of the Church in Orthodox-Anglican Relations" was some indication of its excellence, its clarity and its immediate relevance. Three 'images' of the Church were presented by Fr. Kallistos: the first was negative, that of the political/economic/social community, the secular world, but "it shall not be so among you"; and the two positive icons were, first, that of Christians forming "a communion in the Body of Christ" and so becoming "one loaf" and, second, that of the Church being all together "with one accord, in one place" at Pentecost.

On this basis the audience was brought to consider such questions as 'Primacy in the Church' and 'intercommunion'; and 'eucharistic theology' was shown as setting primacy firmly on the presidency at the Eucharist, where those who were united by faith in the one Lord realised fully their unity in the "one Body, one loaf".

Fr. Kallistos called for each Church to decide *within itself* both what was 'essential' and what 'non-essential': the Orthodox, on the one hand, remembering that theirs was not a monolithic unity entirely without differences of theological opinion, and the Anglicans for their part seriously considering the implications of 'comprehensiveness', especially with regard to 'liberal theology' and 'modernism'.

Earlier, in the forenoon, the Divine Liturgy had been celebrated at the Rumanian altar in St. Dunstan's-in-the-West by Fr. Vintila Popescu; and at the end of that service the Bishop of Willesden had preached. In his sermon the Bishop appealed to the Orthodox to help us "Western, or perhaps I should say non-Orthodox, Christians" to understand that theology was not simply a matter for a few experts but rather the essential way of life of every member of the Church. The Orthodox could assist us to a new awareness of Mystical Theology and of the Communion of the Saints: we should not be so much concerned with what the secular world thought about us, but much more concerned with what the Apostles and Evangelists and the countless number of the saints of God thought about us! The text of the Bishop's sermon will be found on another page.

During the Liturgy the Bishop of Willesden was invited by Fr. Popescu to lead the congregation in saying together the Creed in English, and at the end of the service the Bishop blessed the congregation.

At the Annual General Meeting, the Metropolitan Athenagoras of Thyatira was re-elected unanimously as Orthodox President of the Association and the Bishop of London as Anglican President; and the General Secretary was also re-elected for the next three-year period. It was decided to set up a sub-committee to prepare a revised draft of the Constitution.

The Festival was the best attended for several years; and the Secretary was able to announce that the past year had also brought in more new members than usual. The keynote of the day was that of co-operation and mutual assistance in the Christian life, and at the very deepest level.

#### THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

*(The Sermon preached at the Divine Liturgy at the Rumanian Altar in the Church of St. Dunstan-in-the-West on the occasion of the Annual Festival of the A. and E.C.A. by the Bishop of Willesden.)*

I count it a great honour to be asked to join with you of the Orthodox Churches and to preach at this Festival. For over 100 years your Association has existed to promote mutual understanding and to unite both Anglicans and Orthodox in prayer and work with a view to the promotion of visible unity. I am very glad to be given this opportunity of being associated with these aims and of doing what I can to promote them.

As you will know, the founding of this Association sprang from a continuing relationship between Anglicans and Orthodox which had existed since the Reformation. The words of the famous

letter from Archbishop Abbott of Canterbury to Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Alexandria (1602-1617) and Patriarch of Constantinople (1617-1638) – the first letter from an Anglican Archbishop to an Eastern Patriarch – express the nature of that relationship. "There are many things which testify the sympathy existing between and the sweet agreement enjoyed by members of the Universal Church; but at this time I feel it on this account especially, in that I am enabled to embrace with both arms your brotherhood, whom I have never seen face to face, though divided from me by many a league of land and sea, as if present; for the unity of faith binds each to each and the common bond of love joins us by one and the self-same Spirit, by whom we live with Christ whom we both breathe."

This relationship has expressed itself in many and varied forms. Theological discussions, such as those conducted between the Non-Jurors and the four Eastern Patriarchs and the Holy Synod of Russia in 1716, have taken place on a number of occasions. Correspondence such as that between the Reverend William Palmer and Alexis Khomyakov in the earlier part of the nineteenth century has developed the relationship and added to mutual understanding. So also have personal visits: those of Bishop Creighton to Russia in 1896 and of Archbishop Antonius to England for Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1897 come to mind.

During the Great War and after the Revolution, the relationship found another form of expression in the aid which the Church of England was able to give to help to alleviate the sufferings of Orthodox in Russia, Serbia and Asia Minor.

In recent years the relationship has developed still further, and many of us rejoice to have Orthodox bishops, priests and laymen among our friends, and to be able to offer them hospitality in our churches. But the relationship has increasingly become part of a greater one which has grown between Orthodox and other non-Roman Churches, especially through the World Council of Churches. I believe that this development is providential and that increasingly in the years to come the Orthodox Churches will be called to witness to the true Catholic and Apostolic faith in the face of the ferment and secularisation which characterise the Western Church today.

In the West the Church has become greatly influenced by secular thinking of a kind which is fundamentally un-Christian in the assumptions from which it stems. I want to give you some examples of this.

First, we have, for a variety of reasons, acquiesced in a separation of dogmatic theology from the spiritual life. This separation manifests itself at the present time in the kind of arguments which are put forward to justify a pragmatic approach to unity. Leave the debate on theological niceties to the experts, we are told, while

the ordinary Christian gets on with the practical business of living. This attitude not only ignores the fact that what we believe about God and His ways with men profoundly affects our way of living. It also soon leads to a failure to remember that the purpose of the Church is union with God to His glory. I believe that this attitude stems from a lack of belief in the reality of supernatural theological truths.

Secondly, we lack reverence and humility both towards God and to the Church. The rejection of or impatience with tradition, which is an integral part of the life of the Church, often springs from a self-centredness which seeks to judge truth by our capacity to apprehend it. It also reflects an obsession with the Church here on earth at the present time, which ignores the eternal nature of the Church transcending space and time.

Thirdly, we are deeply infected with the current secular heresy that equality must mean identity. Man seeks to deny that diversity of calling and function which is built into the structure and pattern of creation (except when it is obviously necessary for economic reasons). Such an attitude is contrary to the Biblical principle of election. It leads to a rejection of the structured nature of the Church and to unholy negotiations about status. It also leads to a failure to remember our dependence on Christ, for it is the primary function of the ministry to witness to the fact that He is perpetually creating and nourishing His Church and through the ministry acts to this end.

I think that it may well be the particular vocation of the Orthodox in the next decade or so to expose the unchristian nature of the assumptions which lie behind much of our thought and action in the West, particularly with regard to ecclesiastical reforms and the relationships between the Church and the world.

With regard to the first point – the separation of dogma from devotion – the Orthodox Church has always witnessed uncompromisingly to the essential unity of the two. In his book, *"The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church,"* Vladimir Lossky wrote: "We must live the dogma expressing a revealed truth which appears to us an unfathomable mystery in such a fashion that instead of assimilating the mystery to our mode of understanding we should, on the contrary, look for a profound change, an inner transformation of spirit, enabling us to experience it mystically"; and again, "outside the truth kept by the whole Church, personal experience would be deprived of all certainty, of all objectivity. It would be a mingling of truth and falsehood, of reality and of illusion – 'mysticism' in the bad sense of the word".

It is for this reason that the Orthodox Church has always insisted on the priority of dogma, and presented divine truth as that by which we are to be apprehended so that we may experience it mystically.

In contrast with our absorption with what is secondary, the Orthodox Church has always proclaimed the ultimate end of man to be union with God. It is to this end that God has called the Church into being and every action of the Church, whether it be in the realm of theological thought or ecclesiastical reform, must be judged by this ultimate purpose.

Secondly, with regard to our obsession with the temporal, the Orthodox Church has witnessed and witnesses still in an inspiring way to the fact that the Church of God transcends space and time. Of this we have been reminded this morning as we have joined in the Divine Liturgy and been made aware that we worship through our Blessed Lord, who gathers us into His eternal offering of love, together with Our Lady, with Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Preachers, Evangelists, Martyrs, Confessors and all the spirits of the just made perfect. Brother J-Y. Emery of the Taize Community, in his recent book *"The Communion of Saints"*, bears witness to the way in which the Orthodox Church has brought him to a rediscovery of that dimension of eternity which should mark our Christian life and worship. He says: "there is no doubt about it: on the matter of the Communion of Saints and its expression in the life and prayers of the Church, these conversations with Orthodoxy force us to re-examine words and things which we have, perhaps, too easily and sweepingly classed as 'Roman errors'." He goes on to speak of the way in which meditation upon these truths has led him to see how, in contrast to our bleak separation of 'heaven' and 'earth', eternity is not something but someone: the life of the Trinity. And he adds: "this shows us that the mystery of the Communion of Saints belongs to God's eternity while yet being worked out in our time – a time which has become a waiting on God, a time which Christ has recapitulated and which eternity is even now penetrating and transfiguring".

Thirdly, the Orthodox Church witnesses to that diversity in unity which Scripture makes clear to us is characteristic of the Kingdom of God. We, in the Church of England, seem to be moving towards an ever-increasing centralisation, and in a way which would appear to be designed to remove pastoral care from the hands of those called and ordained by God to exercise it for the building up of the Body and place it in the hands of committees. The distinctive functions of the various elements in the Church are blurred as if it were a democracy and "giving the rightful place to the laity" seems to be regarded as synonymous with giving them the functions of bishops, priests and deacons as well. The Orthodox Church, which is essentially a family of self-governing Churches bound by the unity of faith and sacraments, insists on the hierarchical nature of the Church. But the hierarchy is seen as an integral part of the whole Church and not as one part set over another. Bishops and people are joined in an organic unity, each with their proper

functions, and neither are thought of apart from the other. A proper distinction is made between the bishop as teacher of the faith and the whole people of God, bishops, clergy and laity together as the guardians of the faith. The nature of authority in the Church and its exercise, as understood by Orthodox, and the part played by laymen with special gifts (*e.g.* the lay theologian and the staretz) remind us in the West of the real meaning of the true nature of the Church. In this respect, the Orthodox Church has much to teach us how to avoid a centralisation based on authority as 'potestas' on the one hand and a subjective congregationalism on the other.

We rejoice in our fellowship with members of the Orthodox Churches. We pray that by the grace of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it may deepen and grow. We pray that it may not be jeopardised on our part by action which, whether from a mistaken charity or from pragmatic considerations, ignores the fact that unity in the faith must be the basis of communion in the sacraments. Honesty and integrity must mark our relationships in every respect, not least in our theological conversations. We in the Church of England must pray for humility and a willingness to learn from the Orthodox Church, so that we be not conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of our mind so that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

#### **"ALL CREATION IS FULL OF LIGHT"**

**"For ever to be dressed in white . . ."**

God's creature, man, deluded and "fallen to brigands", should in any case return "as previously" and be restored to the Father's heritage. This is the aim of the whole Mystery of the Incarnate Economy from the Lord's Birth until His glorious Ascension or even His Second Coming.

For this purpose our Lord "comes to the Jordan river and is there baptised". And through this action of his He will create one more presupposition for the realisation of man's destiny, his union with God. There is no need for the Pure One to be baptised, "the One more pure than any purity": however, He accepts baptism to purify the sinner, in order to "wash away Adam's fault" according to the sacred singer. This truth is proclaimed by St. Gregory the Theologian: "Christ was purification itself, and there was no need for Him to be purified; but for thy sake He is being purified, as for thy sake He who is the Purest of spirits has taken flesh."

The Jewish baptism purified only the exterior filth: John's baptism was, of course, something more, "the baptism of repentance", but it did not accord forgiveness and light to those "sitting in the darkness". Only the Incarnate God, the Sun of Justice,

"through water and the Spirit" liberated and lightened, renewed and restored, the darkened soul.

Through our Lord's baptism, as the Church Fathers teach, man's nature which fell during that dramatic sunset in Paradise was solemnly adopted by God. The proclamation of the heavenly Father, that "this is my beloved Son . . .", did not refer only to the eternal Son but also to the adopted human nature assumed by the person of our God-man Lord. Once again the heavens were opened which "had been closed by Adam both for himself and for those after him."

The Church Fathers also saw in the Old Testament many figures of our Lord's baptism. One of them was the Israelites' passage of the Red Sea. As in that ancient time so now the Lord by His baptism drowns the spiritual Pharaoh (*i.e.* sin) in the waters of the river, liberates the New Israel of grace from the bitter servitude of sin, and introduces them to the Promised Land, the heavenly Jerusalem, to be illuminated by the never-fading light of the blessed Trinity, into whose Name is baptism. "Today from the ancient sorrow we have been liberated, and like a new Israel we have been saved" (Benediction of the Holy Water).

In the service of the Blessing of the Holy Water stress is given to the fact that inanimate nature, which suffers and is oppressed because it followed the fall and corruption of man, shares in celebrating the joy of man's renewal: "rejoice and be glad, O desert, and flower as a lily . . . the mountains and hills sing with joy, and the trees of the field put forth branches." "The waters of Jordan becomes waves of healing power", "the earth and sea divide between themselves the joy of the universe." It is also "the animals' happiness"; and in general "the whole creation is filled with light."

Our Lord's baptism inaugurated His followers' baptism too. Through the sacrament of Baptism we Christians are released from original sin and from any other sin we may have committed up to that moment; and through the sacrament of Unction we receive the grace of the Holy Spirit which works for our renovation, preparing within us the Kingdom of God, establishing us as members of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. "And the Holy Spirit comes down and dwells in you: the Father is heard from above, saying, this was not my son but now becomes my son. . . . In the case of Jesus the verb is "is", because He always was the Son of God; but in your case the right verb is "becomes," because you were not son by nature but you became son by grace and adoption" (St. Cyril of Jerusalem).

Our baptism is, according to the Church Fathers, death and resurrection. St. Chrysostom and St. Theophylact, as well as other Fathers, call Baptism the Cross, since through it the "old man of sin" is being crucified together with Christ. This is testified by



St. Paul himself when he speaks about baptism (Romans vi 6). Baptism is also, according to the same Apostle, the image of Christ's death and resurrection (Romans vi 3-5). Thus the baptismal font becomes the tomb where is buried the body's sin, but also the womb from which comes forth the new man. Those who were foreigners and travellers become, after baptism, God's familiars and by grace His sons. And the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in our hearts, crying "Abba, Our Father".

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This condition of "new life" it must be the desire of every soul to remain in for ever. "Be at all times dressed in white," St. Cyril recommends us. If every day the Christian conforms his will to the divine grace which he has received and is eager to apply its every inspiration, and at the same time renounces every sinful will, he appropriates God's grace to himself and grows towards perfection. This will be realised in the Church through the Sacraments: through Penance, which is a renewal of Baptism, and through participation at the Lord's Table the soul will be on its way to heaven to meet the Bridegroom as He comes in glory.

ARCHIMANDRITE ELIAS MASTROYANOPOULOS  
(Reproduced by permission from his article in the "Zoe" periodical.)

## NEWS AND CAUSERIE

### ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

En route to, and in preparation for, his historic journey to the West, His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I left his see city of Constantinople in mid-October for Belgrade.

After his visit to the Serbian Church, the Patriarch went on to Rumania and Bulgaria; but his projected visit to Moscow was cancelled at the request of the Russian Patriarchate, since the "time was not opportune". In Bucharest and in Sofia, as in Belgrade, the venerable Primate was given a warm and tumultuous welcome in which the State's officials took their prominent (and rightful) part.

On his arrival in Rome, where he was greeted at the airport by several Cardinals (including Cardinals Tisserant and Bea) on behalf of the Pope, the Ecumenical Patriarch attended a special service in St. Peter's Basilica where he was seated on a throne beside the Roman Pontiff.

At the end of his two days sojourn in the Vatican, the Pope and the Patriarch issued a joint communiqué: in it they stressed the need for the renewal of the Church and of individual Christians as an essential prerequisite for the restoration of unity, and they said that

the dialogue of love should lead on to mutual respect for each other's traditions and to "unselfish co-operation" on spiritual, pastoral and social matters. Also, they promised "pastoral support" for all joint efforts by theologians in the fields of patristics, ecclesiastical history, liturgy and Biblical exegesis.

A brief rest in Zurich followed the visit to Rome; and then, on November 5th, His All Holiness arrived in Geneva to visit the headquarters of the World Council of Churches: at the airport he was welcomed by the General Secretary (the Revd Dr. E. Carson Blake) who was his host and constant companion throughout his stay there. Dr. Blake welcomed the Patriarch as a "householder who has come on a personal tour of inspection of the organisation whose plans and construction he has supervised at a distance for many years." The W.C.C. wished the Orthodox to play a more active role in the Council: all 14 autocephalous Churches had been members since 1961, but so far this had not been reflected in the composition of the various committees. "But a change in the constitution and rules will not accomplish the full purpose," said Dr. Blake, "unless the Orthodox Churches fill their places with able representatives and find the means (with us) to assure their regular presence at all important policy-making meetings."

In the Patriarch's reply he said: "No Christian Church has the right to remain in isolation, to proclaim that she has no need to be in contact with other Christian brothers, and that those who live outside her frontiers are deprived of bonds that link them with Christ. On the contrary, the more a Church has the consciousness that she alone possesses the truth and remains faithful to the word of Christ, the Tradition and the mission of the one ancient and undivided Church, so much the more must she, and has she, the responsibility to enter into dialogue and collaboration with all the other Christian denominations."

Speaking of the present state of the ecumenical movement, the Patriarch said: "Today we find ourselves facing the temptation to content ourselves with what has already been achieved and to allow the movement to stagnate. Or we find ourselves faced with the possibility of the movement's being inspired to new dynamic action. . . . In collaborating within the W.C.C. we do not aim at overlooking our theological differences, nor at achieving superficial understanding or disregarding the points that divide us; but we do aim at a spirit of reciprocal and sincere understanding, in the authentic spirit of Christ. . . . A new era in relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church has opened up into one of sincere collaboration with His Holiness Pope Paul VI; and the Patriarchate also cultivates bi-lateral relations with W.C.C. member Churches such as the Anglican, Old Catholic and Lutheran."

From Geneva the Ecumenical Patriarch flew on to London, where he was greeted at the airport by the Archbishop of Canterbury,

whose guest he was at Lambeth Palace for four days. This memorable event is described on another page; and it is good news that, in preparation for the convening of a joint doctrinal commission of Anglican and Orthodox theologians in 1969, the Anglican members of that commission will start work next year, under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Oxford.

#### ALEXANDRIA

*Dr. Th. D. Moschonas, the former Patriarchal Librarian, writes:* Since writing last, the vacancy still continues in the Greek Orthodox see of Alexandria and All Africa, declared on 18th November, 1966, when Constantine of Leontopolis was nominated by the Holy Synod as *locum tenens*. Since then the election of the new Patriarch has been postponed *ad infinitum* (8th February, 1967): the Bishops went each to his own diocese, and the Locum Tenens remained alone to conduct the Easter services. Then the Six Days War broke out in June, and everything was suspended owing to the heat in Egypt.

Other events took place: first, the old Patriarch Christophoros, who had resigned in August 1966, passed away. His body was brought from Athens and buried in the old St. George's Monastery, Old Cairo. Three months later the Dean of the Holy Synod, Nicholas of Aksoum, died in Cairo on 18th October, 1967: he had come to take part in a session of the Holy Synod.

At the time of writing no one knows what will happen next. "The remnant" of the Holy Synod is now composed of six members: Constantine of Leontopolis, Synesios of Nubia, Parthenios of Carthage, Cyprian of Central Africa, Nicholas of Eirenoupolis, and Eustathios of Accra. A new *shiboleth* is now arising – the Statutes for the Election of a Patriarch say that there must be *seven* Bishops. At the election of Christophoros in 1939 a seventh Bishop was called from Constantinople: now it will not be necessary to call a seventh bishop, as there are, since 1940, two Suffragan Bishops (*not* members of the Synod) Hilarion of Babylon and Barnabas of Mareotis. The former is sick with Parkinson's disease: the latter is well, and Vicar in Alexandria. Let us hope that very soon the members of the Holy Synod will sing in unison "We are seven," by electing Babylone or Mareotis as one of them – for the election of a new Patriarch only. TH.D.M.

#### RUSSIA

At the end of October Archbishop Vladimir (Kotliarov), the new Exarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Central Europe, arrived in East Berlin to take up his new duties. Previously he had served as the Russian representative at the W.C.C.'s headquarters in Geneva, and as representative of the Moscow Patriarchate at the Second Vatican Council. (E.P.S.)

In November three members of the Moscow Patriarchate's Foreign Relations Department, led by Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad and Ladoga, spent three weeks in the U.S.A. as the guests of the Church of the Brethren. They took the opportunity to confer with leaders of the National Council of Churches, W.C.C. officials, and a Jewish delegation.

During informal conversations with American churchmen, Metropolitan Nikodim was asked about reports of a decline in the number of congregations and seminaries of the Russian Orthodox Church. When the Church joined the W.C.C. in 1961 it was reported to have 22,000 churches and eight seminaries. Now, according to Fr. Paul Schneirla of the Syrian Orthodox Church in U.S.A., this number has declined to 10,000 congregations and three seminaries.

Metropolitan Nikodim said that there were now three seminaries: in Moscow, Leningrad and Odessa. This was due partly to consolidation, making enrolments heavier at the three. Formerly many persons desiring a university education went to a seminary, he said, but now only those who intend to become priests are admitted. On the decline in congregations, he said that the figure in 1961 was incorrect: it should have been closer to 20,000.

Although he did not comment on the current figure, he was said to have told Fr. Schneirla that there had been a large amount of anti-religious propaganda, spearheaded by the atheistic society for the Propagation of Scientific and Cultural Knowledge. (E.P.S.)

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The first complete edition of the Bible in Russian for popular use is to be published this month: it will be the first such since 1917.

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This month also, Bishop Jan Willebrands, secretary of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, has arrived in Moscow leading a delegation of Roman Catholic theologians. Invited by Patriarch Alexei, their visit is part of the regular contacts being developed between Rome and individual Orthodox Churches. The group will hold conversations with professors at the Theological Academy, Leningrad. (E.P.S.)

#### BULGARIA

The famous Rila Monastery is once again to be occupied by monks. In 1961 the State expelled the monks and the monastery was transformed into a museum. Now the Bulgarian Government has unexpectedly given approval for the monastery to be re-occupied; and by the end of October twenty-five monks were expected to return to Rila. (E.P.S.)

GREECE

The draft of a new constitution for the Church of Greece, drawn up by Archbishop Hieronymos of Athens, has been submitted by him to the Holy Synod: it proposes considerable reforms over the next decade.

The Synod of the Hierarchy would continue to be the supreme administrative body, but it would have priests and laity in a consultative capacity: it would meet twice a year. Hitherto the Synod has elected all bishops: in future it would elect only the Archbishop of Athens as Primate of the Church. Diocesan bishops would be elected by the clergy and people in diocesan elections, in which neighbouring bishops would participate. At the same time the number of dioceses would be reduced from 79 to 40.

The Governing Holy Synod, the executive of the Synod of the Hierarchy, would be assisted in its work by eight secretaries; and there would be secretariats for Pan-Orthodox contacts, marriage questions, monasteries and foundations, charity and social work, the liturgy, and church art.

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The Church of Greece has broken off all relations with the self-styled "Macedonian Orthodox Church", which it has declared to be uncanonical.

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At the Fourth Assembly of the W.C.C. at Uppsala next July, the principal address on the theme of the Assembly ("Behold, I make all things new") will be delivered by Professor Agouridis of Thessaloniki, who holds the Chair of New Testament Studies in that University.

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With the aim of having a copy of the New Testament in every home, 100,000 copies are to be published by the Holy Synod and circulated by the Apostoliki Diakonia: the faithful are urged to donate copies to schools, hospitals and other institutions.

ALBANIA

A special correspondent of the *Church Times* (13th October, 1967) has reported that all churches and mosques in Albania have been closed: some he saw had been wrecked or destroyed, others had been converted into Communist Party headquarters.

Official guides alleged that this was the wish of the people, following the Cultural Revolution imported from China's Red Guards. The correspondent was unable to get into touch with any clergy.

AMERICA

Ten Lutheran and eight Orthodox churchmen who took part in the first ecumenical encounter between the two communions in America agreed that the terms Scripture and Tradition "do not denote elements in the Christian faith that stand apart from and in contrast to each other, but rather are inseparably related." They felt that this basic understanding "gives promise of a still wider area of agreement" when the subject is developed in future talks. The discussions also turned up a number of "parallel situations and problems faced by these groups in the course of their history in the U.S."

The sessions were called by the U.S.A. Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the Standing Committee of Orthodox Bishops of the Americas, and a second session is scheduled for March, 1969. (E.P.S.)

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Archbishop Iakovos of North and South America conducted a Trisagion for the late Cardinal Spellman in front of the High Altar of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, where the body lay in state: the Primate was accompanied by eight Orthodox priests.

It was, said the Archbishop, the first time that an Orthodox service had been conducted for a Roman Catholic prelate since the two branches of Christianity issued mutual excommunications of each other nine centuries ago: these were mutually rescinded by the Ecumenical Patriarch and Pope Paul VI two years ago.

## AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION

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

- (a) The principal object for which the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association is established is the advancement of the Christian religion, in particular by means of teaching the members of the Anglican Church and those of the Eastern Orthodox Church the doctrine, worship and way of life of the other.
- (b) The Association exists also to unite members of the two Communion in prayer and work in achieving the principal object, 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 visual aids – can be arranged by writing to the General Secretary.

## SUBSCRIPTION

The normal annual subscription is 10/-, 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.