

E.C.N.L.

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The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association

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Contents

	Page
Editorial	1
Chairman's Notes	2
Obituaries	4
Constantinople Lecture 1998 – Constantinople, Canterbury and Rome: learning from our present difficulties	12
Constantinople Lecture 1999 – The Syriac Churches in Recent Theological Dialogue	21
Address given at the Annual Festival, July 2000	38
Anglican and Eastern Church Relations Today: Some Obstacles and Some Opportunities	40
Pilgrimage to Finland and Russian Karelia	54

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

Eastern Churches News Letter

EDITORIAL

Constantinople Lecture 1999

On 25th November 1999 Dr Sebastian Brock FBA delivered the 1999 Constantinople Lecture at Lambeth Palace. Our Orthodox President, His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain took the chair, and the Association was welcomed to Lambeth on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Revd Dr Herman Browne, the Archbishop's Assistant Secretary for Ecumenical and Anglican Communion Affairs.

Dr Browne took part in the Service of Evensong in Lambeth Palace Chapel which preceded the lecture, at which our then General Secretary, the Revd Philip Warner, officiated.

Dr Brock, who is Reader in Syriac Studies in the University of Oxford, and Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, spoke on the topic "The Syriac Churches in Recent Theological Dialogue." The text of the lecture appears later in this issue. I found it most interesting, and Dr Brock's love for the Syrian Christian traditions is very evident. The last Lambeth Conference encouraged Anglicans to enter into dialogue with Christians of one of those traditions, the Assyrians, in the localities where there are both Assyrians and Anglicans. Perhaps a dialogue in West London is something which the Association could help to foster.

Father William Gulliford

We welcome The Revd William Gulliford as our new General Secretary. He is Chaplain to the Bishop of London, our Anglican President, and on 26th September 2000 the Bishop licensed him as his Chaplain and as Guild Vicar of St Dunstan-in-the-West, Fleet Street in the presence of a large congregation. Many people were from St Paul's Knightsbridge, where Father William was, until recently, Assistant Curate, and the Association was well represented. It is good to know that the Association will continue to be able to look on St Dunstan's as its base.

The service in St Dunstan's was a beautifully sung Solemn Evensong, followed by the singing of the Dogmatikon and Phos Hilaros ("Gladsome Light") in Romanian by members of the Romanian congregation which worships at St Dunstan's on Sundays, and whose iconostasis is such a feature of the church. The Romanian priest in London, Father Silviu-Petre Pufalete officiated.

The Bishop then preached, outlining plans for the future of St Dunstan's and mentioning the work of the Association. The legal formalities of the licensing then took place, and the service finished with the Bishop's blessing and a rousing final hymn.

This was not the end of things, though, as through the kindness of Messrs C Hoare & Co, a historic private bank in Fleet Street, a reception was held in their grand premises. Altogether a splendid start to Father William's new ministry.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The Bishop of London, our Anglican President

The Bishop was installed as a President of the Fellowship of SS. Alban & Sergius after the Vigil service at the Russian Patriarchal Cathedral of the Assumption and All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, on 15th February 2000, in the presence of a very large congregation.

Father Philip Warner, our former General Secretary

Father Warner has left this country to be Anglican chaplain in Belgrade and Apocrisarios of the Archbishop of Canterbury to Patriarch Pavle of Serbia. He has worked tirelessly for this Association, first as Pilgrimage Secretary and later as General Secretary. His skill in guiding pilgrims through the Balkans, Russia, the Ukraine, Crete and other Orthodox territories was remarkable and we had many adventures together in Armenia and Georgia, Byelokrinitza, L'viv and Kiev and all stations where Christians were to be found east and south and north of Bucharest.

His expertise in dealing with Eastern Christians will stand him in good stead in his relations with the Serbian Orthodox, when Great Britain's standing with the Serbian people is at its lowest ebb; albeit good relations are maintained at many personal levels with the members of the Orthodox Church of Serbia both in the United Kingdom and in Serbia itself. Diplomatic relations have not yet been established between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Serbia and our affairs are in the hands of the Brazilian Embassy, and Serbian affairs are in the hands of the High Commission of Cyprus, another Orthodox country. However, Commonwealth embassies in Belgrade still function and there are many Anglicans attached to them.

I hope, after retirement, to visit Father Warner. In the meantime keep him and the Patriarchate of Serbia in your prayers.

Father William Gulliford

We welcomed at the Annual Festival at St. Augustine's, Kilburn, Father Gulliford, newly appointed chaplain to the Bishop of London, as our new General Secretary. Another happy event was his installation as Priest-in-charge of St. Dunstan-in-the-West on Tuesday 26th September.

Father David Bond

I must place on record our thanks to Father Bond for all the hard work he put in to make the pilgrimage to the Orthodox Church of Finland and the Old Valaamsky monastery on Lake Ladoga such a happy visit and a resounding success ecumenically.

The Armenian Martyrs

Earlier in the year I represented the Association at the Requiem service for the Armenian Martyrs in St. Margaret's Church,

Westminster. The service was sung by the choir from St. Sarkis's Armenian church in Iverna Gardens, Kensington, and was conducted by Archbishop Gizerian assisted by his priest and deacon. The service was well attended and supported by members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The Armenian Ambassador preached the panegyric.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III

The Coptic Patriarch visited London in the early summer and at the invitation of a professor of the Islamic community delivered an address at the School of African and Oriental Studies in the University of London. His Holiness spoke of belief in God in the 21st Century. The lecture theatre was crowded by large numbers of Archbishops, Bishops and clergy and laity of the Coptic Community together with representatives of the Armenian, Syrian, Syro-Indian, Greek and Russian Orthodox communities and the Greek and Russian Catholic Churches of Byzantine Rite.

His All Holiness The Ecumenical Patriarch

His All Holiness Bartholomeos I of Constantinople visited England in the summer to receive a doctorate at the University of Exeter.

Visitors

Mr. Radu Mocata of the Greek College in Rome stayed with me for a week or so at St. Silas's Vicarage. He has now completed his studies there and will be returning to Oradea Mare in Romania.

Father Alexis Stikhin is at present staying a second time this year at my vicarage, and will be returning to the United States in the autumn where he assists Father Elias O'Brien at the Ruthenian Catholic church in Pittsburgh. Father Alexis has worked in Kazakstan as a parish priest and is under the omophorion of Cardinal-Patriarch Lubachevsky of L'viv, Ukraine.

Patriarch Maximos V Hakim

His Beatitude Patriarch Maximos V of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church suffered a stroke some months ago, and your prayers are asked for his recovery to health and for his Church at this time.

Archbishop Joseph Kallas

Father Joseph, until recently Superior of the Paulist Melkite monastery and seminary at Harissa, Beirut, Lebanon, was consecrated as Archbishop for the Melkites in Beirut. We wish him Many Years.

Annual Festival 2000

The Annual Festival of the Association was held at St. Augustine's, Kilburn. Father Anthony Yates preached the sermon at the Solemn Eucharist and Father Gregory Woolfenden of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchal Church and lecturer in Liturgy at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, gave a paper in the afternoon on the present state of Anglican/Orthodox relations.

As noted above, Father William Gulliford was welcomed as the new General Secretary in succession to Father Philip Warner.

Our thanks to Father Yates and his people for their warm welcome and hospitality at St. Augustine's.

Mar Thoma Church

Fr. Salter preached at the Annual Festival of the Mar Thomas Church on 8th October. The Church is based at St. Katherine Cree in the City of London.

Ordination

Among the large number of Deacons ordained in St. Paul's Cathedral at Petertide by our President, the Bishop of London, was Roy Dawkins, who is serving his title at St. Silas's, Pentonville.

Metropolitan Makarios of Kenya – Andreas Tillyrides

I was very pleased to receive a telephone call from London airport from Metropolitan Makarios in transit to Africa, who in his student days stayed in my vicarage, when he was down from Oxford. He was, as a lay theologian, a secretary to His Beatitude the Archbishop-Ethnarchos Makarios III of Cyprus. He was later consecrated to the episcopate following his work as a lecturer at the Greek College in Kenya, to serve in the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa. His Eminence hopes to visit London again in early November.

OBITUARIES

Her Majesty Queen Joanna of Bulgaria

The death occurred on 26th February 2000 of Queen Joanna of Bulgaria at her home in Estoril near Lisbon. She was born in Rome on 13 November 1907 the third daughter and fifth child of His Majesty King Vittorio Emanuele III of Italy and his wife Princess Elena, the daughter of King Nicholas I of Montenegro, and was baptized Giovanna Elisabetta Antonia Romana Maria, her first name being rendered into Bulgarian as 'Joanna'. She married in Assisi on 23rd October 1930 King Boris of the Bulgarians. Controversy surrounded her marriage as the Vatican in the person of the Papal Nuncio, later Pope John XXIII, had expected the children of the marriage to be brought up as Catholics, and although the Bulgarian branch of the House of Wettin had been Catholic King Boris was Orthodox as was his new Queen's mother.

As with most of the Royal Families of Europe at that time tragedy was to hit them. On 27th August 1944 Queen Joanna's sister, Her Royal Highness Princess Mafalda, Landgravine of Hesse, died in the Nazis' concentration camp at Buchenwald. Almost exactly a year earlier on 28th August 1943 her husband, King Boris III, died in Sofia under mysterious circumstances after a visit to Hitler. The King had refused to declare war on the Soviet Union and foul play was suspected. In 1947 on 28th December the Queen's father, having abdicated the throne of Italy in favour of his son, Prince Umberto, died in Alexandria, whence Queen Joanna had fled with the boy King, her son King Simeon II, who never abdicated the throne of Bulgaria.

Despite the terrible tragedies of her life Queen Joanna found much comfort and love within the bosom of her family. She is survived by

her son, His Majesty King Simeon II, and Queen Margarita and his four sons and daughter; and her daughter the Princess Marie-Louise, formerly Princess Leiningen, whose mother-in-law was of the Russian Orthodox Church – Grand Duchess Maria, daughter of Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovitch, who claimed the Russian crown following the death of Tsar Nicholas II.

Happily, Queen Joanna lived to see the re-burial of her husband's body at the St. Ivan Rilski monastery at Rila, a place visited on our Association pilgrimage to Bulgaria. She also saw the return of King Simeon to Bulgaria and the restoration of some of his estates, if not his throne – yet!

Her Majesty's In Memoriam card has the fitting text:–

*"The sadness of death gives me a way to the bright promise
of immortality. Lord, for Your faithful people, life is
changed, not ended ..."*

His Royal Highness Prince Tomislav of Yugoslavia

Prince Tomislav's death removes another very active member of the Orthodox Church. He took a great interest in the work of our Association and attended one of the Constantinople Lectures at the Hellenic College.

He was born the second son of His Majesty King Alexander I of the Serbs, the Croats and Slovenes, later to become Yugoslavia. Due to Croat antagonism to the Orthodox monarchy the Karageorgevitch dynasty shared the various tragedies of the Balkan monarchies. King Alexander was assassinated at Marseilles on 9th October 1934 by a Macedonian terrorist. The king was succeeded by his eldest son, King Peter II, who had to flee the country in 1941, when his uncle, acting as Regent, had to choose between domination by Germany or the Soviet Union. Following his brother King Peter's death in 1970 Prince Tomislav acted as a sort of Regent in exile, or as guardian to the young Crown Prince Alexander until he reached his majority.

Prince Tomislav from his apple farm at Kirdford in Kent worked tirelessly for his fellow exiles from Yugoslavia and was to keep open house at the farm, particularly for young people.

As with King Simeon of Bulgaria he never broke off communion with the Patriarchal Church and remained a devout supporter of it here in London and in Bournville. His advice to non-Orthodox attending the long liturgies of the Serbian Church was "Never sit down, to sit and stand is more tiring. Stay standing!"

In his last years he suffered from cancer and returned to Belgrade where during the N.A.T.O. bombing of Serbia he worked nursing the sick in hospital. He married firstly Her Grand Ducal Highness Margarita, daughter of the Margrave of Baden and a niece of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, by whom he had a son, Prince Nicholas and a daughter Princess Katrina. He later married Miss Linda Bonny.

Miss Constance Babington Smith

Constance had been a member of the Association for many years and in her Anglican days worshipped at Little St. Mary's in Cambridge, a

centre of Anglo-Catholicism. She came into contact with some of the emigre Russian community and eventually joined the Greek Orthodox Church and was to accompany us on one or two of our pilgrimages. As a descendant of Lord Elgin of Greek marbles fame it was rather ironic that Constance should find her spiritual home among the Greek community.

Shy and unassuming it was difficult to imagine that as a young W.A.A.F. officer involved in aerial photography reconnaissance and intelligence work, she had identified the launching site at Peenemunde of the rockets which could have destroyed London. Her observant eye had spotted where the source of this nightly terror lay and it was destroyed by the Royal Air Force.

Her nephew, Jamie Babington Smith has taken up her work in that field.

Archbishop Robert Runcie

The Association has lost a very good friend at the death of Lord Runcie. His great interest in, and love for, the Orthodox and Oriental Churches went back a very long way. Coming from an Anglo-Catholic background (he once let slip that his great ambition had been to be Vicar of the relentlessly extreme church of St. Benedict's, Ardwick, in the suburbs of Manchester!) he felt he had a lot in common with the Churches of the Christian East, and while Bishop of St. Albans he became our Anglican President, being inaugurated at an annual festival at the Serbian Orthodox cathedral of St. Savva in Notting Hill, after Bishop Lavrentije had sung the Holy Liturgy. On his translation to Canterbury he became, with His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch, our Patron. On this occasion he sent me a signed photograph of himself to hang in the corridor, with other Heads of Churches, at St. Dunstan-in-the-West, with the footnote "I trust this looks sufficiently Patriarchal!"

After his retirement he kept up his interest in, and contacts with, the Orthodox and Oriental Churches, and the last time I saw him was at the Royal Academy where he gave a glowing tribute to the late Supreme Catholikos of All Armenians, Lord Lord Vazgen I, at the meeting of the Anglo-Armenian Society.

Characteristically, Robert Runcie's last act, a few days before he died, was to preach the panegyric on the late Dean of St. Albans from a wheelchair. That act was so typical of the man – a great concern for his friends, his staff and his clergy. It was a courageous act, when he himself was dying of cancer, but then he had, as a young guards officer, been awarded the Military Cross for bravely rescuing one of his crew from a burning tank.

He told me shortly after his retirement that what he most enjoyed was having the leisure to read the Eastern Churches' News Letter!

Archbishop Donald Coggan

Lord Coggan, coming from a different tradition than Lord Runcie often seemed, curiously, more at home in Papal circles as I witnessed in the Sistine Chapel when he had his first public meeting with Pope Paul VI. He tended to continue the Anglican Roman rapprochement

set in motion by his two predecessors Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher and Archbishop Michael Ramsey. Yet he did make official visits to the various Eastern Patriarchs and caused something of a diplomatic incident when in front of the Soviet Television and the BBC he refused to budge until he had been taken to see the wife of the imprisoned Baptist Minister, Georgi Vins.

He had very cordial relations with His Holiness Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Patriarchate of Alexandria and I last saw Lord Coggan at a reception for His Holiness at the Alexandra Palace.

It may surprise some people to learn that Lord Coggan, whom one associates with Hebrew scholarship, had taken the trouble to petition the Earl Marshal at the College of Arms to allow armigerous clergymen of the Church of England to distinguish their arms from that of the Roman Catholic clergy and the ministers of the Church of Scotland, by having the cords suspended from the clerical hat, replacing the helm or helmet of heraldry, intertwined with a skein of white. One would have thought this sort of interest would have been more up Archbishop Cosmo Gordon Lang's street!

Abbess Seraphima

It is with sadness that we have to record, so soon after the death of Abbess Elizabeth, the passing of her successor, Abbess Seraphima of the Russian Convent of the Annunciation of the Holy Mother of God at 29, Brondesbury Park, Willesden. She died on the 15th August (New Style) and was buried on the eve of the Transfiguration of Our Lord (Old Style). She had been Abbess for one and a half years. She was a blood sister to Mother Vassilia of the same convent.

She was of Palestinian origin and had been educated at the Bethany School under Igumena Maria (Robinson) a Scots convert to Russian Orthodoxy. She went to the Russian Orthodox Convent of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia at Ain Karim, the traditional birthplace of St. John the Baptist, when Abbess Elizabeth was the superior. With the establishment, in the mid-1940s, of the State of Israel and the turmoil and bloodshed that resulted; the sisters at Ain Karim found they were homeless refugees as the Israeli authorities handed over the property to the Patriarchate of Moscow. The thirty sisters, having abandoned all their possessions, left the convent under gun-fire and made their way through the desert mountains on foot into Amman, the capital of the Kingdom of Jordan. Destitute and with no roof over their heads, their hunger and homelessness over seven years in exile took a very heavy toll and of the thirty nuns who had fled from Ain Karim two died and twenty-one were scattered, leaving only seven of the original community. Eventually they made their way to Europe and were given hospitality at the Lesna convent.

It was the saintly Archbishop John Maximovitch, formerly of Shanghai, who moved the community to London, where they set up their convent at the home of Dr. Gherkin and the Baronesses Taubé, in Brechin Place, South Kensington. Eventually they moved to a bigger property at Brondesbury Park (in the attic of which was found an icon for each member of the community) and here they have concerned themselves with the children of the Russian emigré community for the

last forty-six years. Father George Cheremeteff was their chaplain for some of that time.

In March of this year Abbess Seraphima had an operation on her knee for arthritis, but died about five months later at the age of seventy-six. Father Peter Baulk ministered to her at the last and the Archimandrite Alexis, superior of the Brotherhood of St. Edward, Brookwood, laid her to rest at Gunnersbury Cemetery, not far from the recently built Russian Church.

We offer our prayers and sympathy to the new Abbess and the Sisterhood of St. Xenia.

May the Lord Christ remember his servant Seraphima in His Kingdom.

Dr. Methodie Kusseff

Methodie was a long-standing member of the Association and worked incessantly for his beloved Bulgarian Sunday School and would often pay me a visit to see how money could be raised to keep it in being in the grounds of the Bulgarian Embassy. A week or so after his last visit he went off on holiday to Portugal where, at the age of eighty-four, he died.

He came to this country in 1939 as a visiting theological student when war intervened. He stayed here and became a great admirer of the British way of life. He was an active bridge builder, a Pontifex Maximus, between Bulgaria and the United Kingdom. He and Kit, his wife, gave many parties at their home near the Alexandra Palace for Bulgarians of all possible persuasions and their British friends. Thus he continued the tradition of his family which had for generations been active in the service of the Bulgarian people and the Orthodox Church. Methodie remained in communion with Patriarch Maximos.



Methodie Kusseff

Methodie was named after his great uncle, Bishop Methodie Kusseff, who was very active in the cause for the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke and in the revival of Bulgarian national consciousness in Macedonia against the Greeks and the Turks. It was

Bishop Methodie who was among the first to alert the Western Powers to the facts of the atrocities committed by the Turks against their Bulgarian Christian subjects. When news of this reached Great Britain it galvanized Gladstone and British working men to campaign for Turkey's expulsion from Europe.

On being consecrated as Bishop of Stara Zagora, he sent his nephew Ilya Kusseff to study Agronomy in France, and it was he who restored the de-forested National Park around Stara Zagora.

Methodie Kusseff was Ilya's son and at the age of thirteen won a scholarship to the Church boarding school at Plodviv.

Soon after his father died and the school chaplain, Archimandrite Nikodim, became his mentor and patron and recognized Methodie's great love for the Holy Liturgy. At the age of seventeen, when his widowed mother lacked the means to educate him further in either Medicine or Law, Methodie felt drawn to the Church. Exarch Stefan (the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was at that stage out of communion with Constantinople and was an Exarchate – later to become a Patriarchate) sent Methodie to study theology at the Russian Orthodox Academy of St. Serge in Paris in 1938. This experience drew him to the ecumenical movement and he was invited by the Russian ecumenist, Dr. Nicholas Zernov, of the Fellowship of SS. Alban and Sergius, to attend as a delegate a conference in England. The clouds of war were now gathering darkly over Europe and Methodie found refuge with the Anglican Fathers of the Society of the Sacred Mission at Kelham. In this sanctuary, which became his home, the liturgical life of the Divine Office and the daily Eucharist made a lasting impression on him. From here he earned his living working in the Land Army (Bulgaria was forced under the Axis sphere of influence) and taught himself English.

In 1942, thanks to the good offices of Dr. William Greer, General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement, Methodie gained a scholarship to St. Chad's College, Durham, where he studied theology with Professor Michael Ramsey, later to become Archbishop of Canterbury. The two immediately "clicked" as Professor Ramsey had a deep love for the Orthodox Church and as Archbishop of Canterbury, he invited Patriarch Maximos to visit Lambeth in the mid-1970s.

In 1946 Methodie married Kathleen Harrison ("Kit") a fellow Durham student. The sponsor at the wedding, or best man, was Sir Charles Bentinck, a great friend of Exarch Stefan and formerly the British Ambassador to Bulgaria.

1947 found Methodie working at the School of Slavonic Studies in the University of London and eight years later he earned his Ph.D for his thesis on the life of St. Clement of Ochrida, a Bulgarian saint. He later became tutor to the Foreign Office which enabled him to share his love of his native language and culture with two generations of British diplomats bound for Sofia. Later he turned his attention to teaching more ordinary citizens in evening classes for twenty years.

From 1955 to 1981 Methodie gave twenty-five years of devoted service as a teacher of Religious Education in secondary schools in

Islington, where he made the act of worship in morning assembly the heart of the school community, making it an ecumenical event by inviting local clergy into the school and integrating his pupils, many of whom were immigrant children, into the local community by encouraging them to do local voluntary work, which helped the community, but also raised their self esteem and morale, which in turn improved their academic work and examination results.

In 1968 Methodie's former chaplain became a Metropolitan and invited him to re-visit Bulgaria some thirty years after his departure. For twenty years Methodie made an annual pilgrimage to the Bulgarian monasteries and churches. He acted as go-between in the dialogue established between the Church of England and the Bulgarian Church, resulting in the 1975 visit of Patriarch Maximos to Archbishop Michael Ramsey. Methodie accompanied the delegation and reported this visit for the Bulgarian Times.

In 1980, approaching retirement, Methodie persuaded the Bulgarian Mother Church, with the support of the Greek and Russian Archbishop and Metropolitan in London to unite the small but divided Bulgarian expatriate community. Father Tosko Kasakin was the first priest to arrive and Methodie asked me if I would accommodate him at my vicarage at St. Silas's, Pentonville. He stayed with me until his wife and two daughters arrived.

The Cold War had split the Bulgarian community into those who supported the Communist regime of Zhivkov and those who were opposed to it. Methodie refused to take sides while, as a committed Orthodox Christian, he rejected atheistic communism, but, like King Simeon, he did not turn his back on the Patriarchate for he saw that whatever the vicissitudes through which his beloved Church had passed she still embodied the Bulgarian nation's soul.

Despite initial suspicions, with the fall of Communism in 1989 animosities began to melt and the Bulgarian economic disaster of 1994 galvanised all sides of the Bulgarian Community to work together to provide charitable aid.

Social events at Methodie Kusseff's home to celebrate Bulgarian festivals were the high point of the community's year when Bulgarophiles, diplomats, businessmen, teachers, clergy, tourists and ordinary people could meet together, speak Bulgarian, sample Bulgarian food, music and folk dancing at which Methodie and Kit were very welcoming hosts.

In 1992 Methodie decided he would launch an appeal for the Bulgarian Sunday School and a place to house the new church. I suggested that the appeal should be ecumenical and provided a list of names of other Christians whom I thought would be sympathetic. Methodie was overjoyed at the response of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster who became, to his surprise, the principal patrons and donors. The Anglican and Eastern Churches' Association also made a contribution. The project grew under Methodie's infectious enthusiasm and a library, reading room and the longed-for Sunday School were added. Just before he went on his last holiday Methodie came to see me to work out further

fund raising schemes. He died a few weeks later, but it would be a very fitting tribute to him if the work he inaugurated could continue and grow according to his vision.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Patriarchate with whom he had remained in communion through thick and thin rewarded Methodie's religious faith, his hard work and his loyalty by awarding him the medal of SS. Cyril and Methodios.

The last happy and lasting memory of Methodie and, indeed, his own greatest blessing was last Easter, when the tiny chapel of St. John of Rila was packed with over five hundred Bulgarians, young and old, filling the mews outside; and he was able to mingle with them, unknown, but sharing to the full their Easter Joy.

May Methodie's memory be eternal!

Anna Hulbert

Anna came with us on our pilgrimage to Constantinople and Cappadocia. Full of life and fun she died relatively young at the age of fifty-five. She devoted much of her life to conserving what remained after the spoliation of King Edward VI and Oliver Cromwell of the mediaeval wall paintings in our English churches.

In Tong church, Shropshire, in which I was baptised and confirmed, Anna carried out her great work in the Golden Chapel as it was called, the chantry of Sir Arthur Vernon a young priest. "Come to Tong" she would encourage her friends "Tong is full of treats!". The church is known as the Westminster Abbey of Shropshire and Anna was never happier than working in the exquisite Golden Chapel, whilst staying with her Green cousins at Aqualate Hall on the Shropshire/Staffordshire border, near where she was born at Westwood, Staffordshire, just before the war ended. England's mediaeval churches were her great delight and at Tong wall paintings had been uncovered in Victorian times when the Duran family pew, in which the butler from Tong Castle served heavy refreshments during the sermon, had been, as it were, de-panelled.

Anna's work was not confined to these Islands, she took a keen interest in the painted monasteries and others in Romania and advanced the cause of those monasteries which had been built on three dozen locations where the encroachment of the Turk had been halted. Leigh Fermor-like she traversed the lands from monastery to monastery on horseback, a truly Anglican lady, the granddaughter of a bishop of the Church of England, as happy scraping away at Edward Crouchback's tomb in Westminster Abbey as re-gilding a saint's halo in Suceava – an artistic ecumenist!

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of Death, O Lord, Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers.

A.T.J. Salter

**CONSTANTINOPLE LECTURE 1998
CONSTANTINOPLE, CANTERBURY AND ROME:
LEARNING FROM OUR PRESENT DIFFICULTIES
THE RT REVD CHRISTOPHER HILL,
BISHOP OF STAFFORD**

I dedicate this lecture to the Co-Patron of the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association, His All Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, whose exercise of *episcopate* must be amongst the most difficult to exercise in all the *oikumené*.

I

In a City of London Church in 1982 the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie spoke of the difficulties in the relationships between Anglicans and Orthodox as they stood at the time. He was a seasoned observer. Not only as Archbishop, but before Lambeth as Co-Chairman of the Anglican Orthodox Conversations. He said (this was sixteen years ago but his words still have contemporary resonance):

"It would be idle to deny that these conversations have run into heavy weather ... The Orthodox seem to have discovered that the inroads of modern secularism have been greater into the Anglican Communion than in either the more conservative and politically significant Roman Catholic Church or the more strongly theological Lutheran Church. The speculations of Anglican theologians and the ordination of women to the priesthood as well as the great varieties in our liturgical life, have seemed to the Orthodox not so much to express spiritual vitality as religious St. Vitus' dance."

Robert Runcie also recorded

"For Anglicans there is a sense that the Orthodox Church is a Church that attempts to live in a world of absolute theological clarity wholly divorced from the realities of intellectual and moral ambiguity in the 20th century. Again, in days when the record of confrontation between Church and state was impressive in the Confessing Church in Germany during the war, and in the Roman Catholic Church in Poland today [this was 1982], there is a question mark over an Orthodox Church which, however heroic some individuals may be, tends to accept the commissar with the same meekness with which it used to accept the minions of the Sultan."ⁱ

Anglican Orthodox relations had warm beginnings going back to the Caroline Divines' study of the Eastern Fathers, including early contact with the Phanar; then there was the work of William Palmer and, later, J M Neale's sympathetic Anglican study *A History of the Holy Eastern Church*ⁱⁱ, followed by a number of initiatives in the later 19th century and early 20th century all well chronicled by Georges Florovskyⁱⁱⁱ. Then the good beginnings of the Anglican Orthodox dialogue in the 20's, 30's, 50's and 60's. But by the 70's and 80's Anglican and Orthodox hit, as Archbishop Runcie put it, 'heavy weather'. We are not out of the storm yet.

Relations between Old and New Rome have of course a much longer history going back to Constantine himself. It has been a history of interrupted communion. Even after the Second Vatican Council, with its unambiguous affirmation of the ecclesiality, ministerial orders and sacraments of the Orthodox Church it nevertheless still took some time to kick-start Orthodox Roman Catholic Conversations at an official level. Only after a Pope (Paul VI) kissed the feet^{iv} of the Representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch would sufficient Orthodox Churches really believe that Rome meant business. And now this initiative has stalled too. After excellent agreed statements on basic ecclesiology a more political agenda has intruded in Russia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe where the continued pressing of the claims of the Uniate Churches by Rome and the restoration of Latin episcopal hierarchies has undermined earlier Roman Catholic endeavour to establish genuine dialogue. Equally there has been some xenophobia and ecumenical resistance amongst the Orthodox, in Russia and Greece in particular. For the moment the dialogue with Rome at an official level is temporarily inoperative.

It is therefore high time that Constantinople, Canterbury and Rome took stock. And perhaps we can learn from our mutual difficulties past and present.

First some Anglican lessons. Perhaps Anglicans need to be more honest about our own history and culture. So often in the 19th and early 20th centuries those engaged in Anglican conversation with Orthodox have spoken as if the Anglican Church was simply a Western Rite Orthodoxy; as if the days of Theodore of Tarsus becoming Archbishop of Canterbury were but as yesterday. As if the English Reformation was only the repudiation of Papal jurisdiction without remainder. As if the Enlightenment had never seeped into English theology. As if the Oxford Movement was the re-establishment of an Orthodox theology and liturgy in the Church of England. And, as if the Queen (maybe Queen Victoria rather than Queen Elizabeth) was the equivalent to the Byzantine Emperor. (I only slightly parody the apologetic). One lesson to be learnt is that we must be careful to tell it true to our ecumenical partners – or they will react in shock (and withdrawal) when they discover the truth. Fortunately the ultra-liberal speculative theology of the 60's has itself all but disappeared. There are Anglican liberals still around but the excesses associated with the 'death of God' debate or the 'Myth of God Incarnate' are almost totally disowned and certainly discredited.^{vi}

Instead of Anglicans (or those Anglicans engaged with Orthodox) pretending Anglican liberalism did not exist it would have been better to engage with the Orthodox on the significance of the Enlightenment for Christian theology – and consequent liberal, critical reaction to it. Perhaps this is still a task urgently awaiting to be done. The consequences of the Enlightenment – that is the modern secularism in which God is no longer the total explanation of all that is, in which God is banished at best to a part of our emotions labelled the spiritual – these secular consequences of the Enlightenment are still the corrosive air we breathe in East as well as West, at least in the northern hemisphere.

Matthew Arnold saw secularisation coming and famously compared it to the receding tide on Dover beach:

"The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled,
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar."

One lesson to be learned is that as Anglicans and Orthodox (if we listen honestly and carefully) hear the same receding tide all over the northern hemisphere (perhaps all over the world in terms of intellectual climate) ought we not to be facing it together, with other Christians?

The answer of some Orthodox theologians, faced with Western secular thought, is a simple re-affirmation of traditional Greek categories and language and the suggestion that this is the only proper theological language. This, I respectfully suggest, is about as useful as some Anglicans trying to pretend that the Enlightenment never happened. Paradoxically, the most creative period for Greek theology was precisely when cultural boundaries were shifting; when Semitic and Biblical categories of thought needed to be translated (and in the process developed) as the Church moved from a Hebrew/Aramaic context to the Graeco-Hellenistic world of late antiquity. It is the spirit of the Greek Fathers which is needed to engage creatively the philosophical and cultural shifts of the last two centuries in the West. It has been said that Maximus the Confessor was the last independent thinker of the Byzantine Church. That takes us back to the 7th century. We need teachers and confessors of the faith such as Maximus today; for he continued the scriptural tradition, the tradition of Origen and the 4th century Cappadocians (Gregory Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa and Basil of Caesarea); and he used the pre-Christian traditions of Aristotle and the Neo-Platonists, together with the humanistic education of Constantinople to forge a fresh synthesis of doctrine and spirituality appropriate for the culture of that time and place. Since that time much Orthodox theology has been simply a faithful but unengaging repetition of the tradition – there has not been a lot of creative encounter with the culture and philosophy of the age. No-one is to blame for this. There could not have been such an engagement when the Great Church was in captivity; and captivities of other sorts have followed century by century for the Orthodox. But there have been answers and clear signs of a new Orthodox creative engagement between revelation and human culture: the flowering of Russian theology at the close of the 19th century is a good example: Vladimir Soloviev's name comes especially to mind. In his *Story of the Anti-Christ* he speaks of the spirituality of the Orthodox Churches, the authority of Rome, and the intellectual honesty of Protestantism. I also think of Khomiakov and Bulgakov. Something of this engagement is to be found in the works of Georges Florovsky^{vii}; and it is perhaps within the newer Orthodox communities of the Orthodox Diaspora that this challenge is best recognised in Orthodoxy.

When we turn to Orthodox-Roman Catholic relationships the history of estrangement is both longer and more complex. Anglicans need to

recognise that we are part of this wider separation of East and West which has had such fateful consequences not only for the Christian Church but also for the continent of Europe. The division of Europe was never really the Iron curtain. There has always been – at least for a millennium – a far more enduring fault-line dividing our continent from the north to the south into east and west. From Finland to what used to be Yugoslavia – the dividing line has been communion with Rome or Constantinople. Anglicans, for the purpose of this discussion are part of the Western Church. Any visitor to Athos, the Holy Mountain, will know that Anglicans are suspected of being a species of Roman Catholic – whatever we say. Archbishop Robert Runcie tells the story of an Athonite monk once stating categorically that a Christian Scientist was merely a deviant Roman Catholic! I can understand what the Athonite meant – amazing as it sounds to Western Christians.

What then can an Anglican say about the Great Schism in which Anglicans also participate – what can I say other than Kyrie Eleison? Perhaps two things.

The first is the schism expressed, the cultural, linguistic and philosophical division of the Roman empire into Latin West and Greek East. This is not a simplistic division. Much of Italy spoke, thought and prayed in Greek for many centuries – there are still (I believe) Greek speaking villages in Calabria. Nevertheless, the two parts of the empire went their separate cultural, theological and liturgical ways. What might be said properly in Latin, *filioque* for example, could not be said with Orthodox intent in Greek.

When Cardinal Hubert arrogantly proclaimed his Bull of Excommunication on 16 July 1054 in Hagia Sophia (it was already invalid as a Bull because pope Leo IX was dead) he attempted to excommunicate Patriarch Michael Cerularius for 'publicly trampling the liturgy of the Latins beneath his feet'. There had already been an unhappy correspondence between Pope and Patriarch. Controversial pamphleteering had followed on clerical marriage and leavened or unleavened eucharistic bread. Of the Bull itself Sir Stephen Runciman said:

"Few important documents have been so full of demonstrable errors".^{viii}

After accusing the Patriarch's supporters of simony, Patriarch Michael was accused of re-baptism (not the case); priestly marriage; baptising women in labour; of disregarding the Mosaic Law; of refusing communion to those with shaved heads; and finally of omitting the *filioque* – as well as disobedience. The stated issues were divergent theological and liturgical practices which neither side found it easy, apparently, to tolerate in the other. But was this sufficient cause to break communion? And were these divergent practices and theologies really the reason for the Great Schism?

This brings me to my second reflection on the division between East and West. Is it not the case that the real division was always over authority? Was not a long-standing dispute about the relative authority

of Rome and Constantinople given external expression in a dispute about liturgical and theological diversity?

At the Council of Chalcedon (451) Constantinople was recognised as the second see of Christendom – Canon 28 reads “Constantinople ought to be magnified in ecclesiastical matters even as the elder Rome of the Emperors, as being next to it”. The four Papal legates had already gone home, leaving a protest, not against Constantinople as being second in rank as such but on the political basis of the first Rome’s primacy as expressed in Chalcedon Canon 28. Here, I suggest, are already to be seen the seeds of later contention.

There were a number of occasions of friction between Old and New Rome between 451 and 1054. In this lecture I will only take one example to stand for all the others – the so-called Photian Schism of about 862.^{ix} Pope Nicholas I deposed Patriarch Photius on the alleged grounds of his uncanonical election, attempting to restore his predecessor Ignatius. But behind this lay a profound dispute concerning the allegiance of the new Bulgarian Church – was it to look to Rome or Constantinople? Significantly when Ignatius was re-installed by Emperor Basil – who incidentally had supported Photius – and communion with Rome was re-established, this communion was short-lived because Ignatius soon consecrated bishops for the Bulgarians and was promptly threatened with excommunication by Rome for so doing. In other words there were authority issues underneath the surface throughout the ‘Photian schism’ dispute. Significantly, Photius’ response to Rome was an attack on the *filioque* which has remained standard in Orthodox theology ever since. Behind the liturgical and even theological dispute between Rome and Constantinople I suggest there still lurks some submerged questions of power and authority which have been unresolved since at least the fifth century. Is it therefore so surprising that the problem of Uniatism remains such a difficulty for Orthodox/Roman Catholic relations; or that the restoration of a Latin hierarchy in Russia was greeted with such hostility by Russian Orthodoxy and the whole Orthodox world.

II

The first part of this lecture has been largely historical analysis. I now want to be more constructive. I have already suggested the dire need for Christians of Eastern and Western traditions to face the prevailing post-enlightenment and now post-modern secularism with a new engagement between Revelation and culture – in something of the constructive spirit of the Greek Fathers, especially the Cappadocians and their successors. But what of the division between Eastern and Western Christians which I am suggesting is really about power or jurisdiction rather than theology or liturgy. What can we learn here in our present difficulties?

I would urge Anglicans, Orthodox and Roman Catholics to look once again (with other Christians) at our ecclesiology; in particular at the ecclesiology of communion (*koinonia*) which is both our common patristic inheritance and also our ecumenical ‘re-discovery’ through the dialogues and conversations: Anglican/Roman Catholic; Anglican/Orthodox; Orthodox/Roman Catholic. Behind this re-emerging ecclesiology of communion lies the profound mystery of the

koinonia of the Holy Trinity itself; the basis of both a Christian understanding of the person and the Church. I cannot go into detail here but I suggest that the Church and personhood understood in terms of ‘communion’ (*koinonia*) has profound implications for practical life in the Church. Above all the question arises: what will promote intra-personal communion; what would denigrate personal communion?

If we go back to the Council of Chalcedon, Canon 28; may I be so bold as to say that I think the Council and the Legates were both right and wrong: right in according Constantinople precedence as second Rome; wrong in basing it on the imperial principle. (I note also that I have some support in this view from Metropolitan John of Pergamon.) If primacy – or episcopacy of which primacy is a particular episcopal function in certain sees – if primacy is based on *imperium* then there will always be rivalry between empires or divisions within empires; for example the Constantinian division between East and West. There will always be competing claims and there will always be disputed territories and Churches. If, however, episcopal primacy is based on the principal of communion, in which the local, eucharistic church (the diocese) is in itself a true embodiment of the Church of Jesus Christ, in communion with other local churches throughout the world through its bishop, then we have the possibility of a new – and ancient – vision for the universal church.

Here, I believe, Anglicans and Orthodox are in a unique position to help the Roman Catholic Church. There is still an undoubted tension within the Roman Catholic Church between those who see the universal as the primary mode of the Church, of which the local is but a part; and those who see the local as the fundamental manifestation in communion with the universal Church through other local churches.

Allow me to quote a paragraph I have written in the recently published Festschrift for the Bishop of Chichester:^x

“There is here an unresolved tension in Roman Catholic ecclesiology which will surface every time an ecumenical text touching on bishops, the local church, and the papacy is discussed. In Roman Catholic theology the tendency has traditionally (that is at least since the papal rejection of the Conciliar Movement and the Counter Reformation) given priority to the bishop’s membership of the universal college of bishops, headed by the Bishop of Rome, over his attachment to his particular or local church. Since Vatican II theologians of the standing of Cardinal Yves Congar OP have argued conversely on biblical and patristic grounds. The question surfaces practically and traumatically in disputes over the appointment of ‘Roman’ bishops in Germany and Switzerland and in the disputed theological status of Episcopal Conferences *vis-à-vis* the central Vatican dicasteries. The distinguished pupil of Yves Congar, and a member of ARCIC, Fr J.M.R. Tillard OP has forcefully argued for the priority of the local church in communion with the other churches through its bishop and the ministry of the Bishop of Rome.

The last official salvo in this local versus universal debate was a letter from the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *The Church as Communion* (1992), signed by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. While giving great importance to the local church (and its bishop) it nevertheless basically reaffirms a centrist view of the Church – moving away from, for example, ARCIC's position in *The Church as Communion* published only the previous year. Crucially the clear teaching of Vatican II in *Lumen Gentium* which spoke of the church (universal) existing in and out of the churches (local). The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in laudably wishing to avoid ecclesial federalism (communion thus becoming coalition) seems to reverse the Vatican II way of thinking by speaking of the churches (local) existing in and out of the church (universal)."

To posit the universal as the fundamental unit of the Church of Christ is a reversion to the Church as imperium. That always has direct practical consequences. A distinguished Roman Catholic ecumenist and former Archbishop of San Francisco has recently drawn attention to the problem of practical authority. Archbishop James Quinn stressed that the relation between the bishops and the Pope (or the relation between the local church and the universal Church) was not only a matter of personal collegiality but what he has called structural collegiality. The Roman Curia was seen to be exercising "oversight and authority over the college of bishops". He continued:

"Many orthodox and other Christians are hesitant about full communion with the Holy See not so much because they see some doctrinal issues as unsolvable ... but precisely because of the way issues are dealt with by the Curia."^{vi}

Archbishop Quinn calls for a critical examination of 'centralisation' and the reaffirmation of the principle of subsidiarity. The last but one Lambeth Conference also spoke of the need to examine the character of primacy in practice. The hint is clear.

One of the Orthodox anxieties about the Uniate Churches is not only their existence in principle alongside the Orthodox Churches of the relevant countries but also their practical submission to a Dicastery of the Roman Curia. It is perhaps not too fanciful even to see the continuance of that name as telling its own story, for the curia was the house of the Roman Senate: the instrument of Imperial Government.

Anglicans and Orthodox need to be sensitive and careful in encouraging this discussion with our Roman Catholic brothers. We too have indulged in *imperium*. The whole structure of the national Church of England, with the Queen as supreme Governor, and Parliamentary type Synod seems to make the national unit of the Church the fundamental ecclesial unit, rather than the Diocese. And current laudable trends to induce a greater internal Church of England coherence must not be pursued at the further expense of the diocese as the fundamental unit of the Church. Equally, UDI parishes, over women priests; human sexuality issues; or just plain finance also pull us towards forms of congregationalism.

It is also true that the national structures of a number of Orthodox Churches have at least in the past echoed the Byzantine Imperial model of Church/state relations and no more reflect an ecclesiology of the communion of local churches than some aspects of the Church of England or the Church of Rome. We need to beware of the beam in our own ecclesiological eyes before pointing out to Rome the beams or moles in its eye!

Nevertheless, Canterbury and Constantinople should in theory be in a strong position ecclesiologically to portray to Rome two families of episcopal churches where the local diocesan church is the primary referent and through whose bishops a universal communion is intended and at least partially maintained.

I have not mentioned the practical liturgical or even theological diversity which over the centuries (if this analysis is right) have been the pretext and expression but not perhaps the real cause of division. All I can say now is that a theology of communion is an infinitely better starting point to begin to work out the problem of ecclesial diversity than a model of *imperium*. The *koinonia* of the Church is an icon of the *koinonia* of the Blessed Trinity. The *koinonia* of the Trinity is a *koinonia* in diversity and unity. This is surely a sound basis for a proper plurality of spirituality, liturgy, theology, disciplines and patterns of discipleship: and maybe even models of conduct and ethics, within the unity of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, the fellowship of the Spirit.

Here is a huge agenda. But it is a realistic agenda. It starts with our present difficulties as Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Orthodox. And we see that our present difficulties cannot be understood without reference to the past – sometimes the distant past.

How do we make a practical start? I suggest first by being very honest with ourselves – as I have proposed in this Constantinople lecture. Let us see and present ourselves as we really are; without romantic Oxford Movement spectacles; without wishful thinking; without pan-Hellenistic ambitions. Then let us try to face our secularised/post modern world together, with the treasures and resources of our past undivided tradition, in the critical, apologetic, constructive spirit of the Church Fathers. Finally, let us re-discover our ecclesiology of *koinonia* and the local church. For this the work of the Roman Catholic-Orthodox dialogue, interrupted as it is, is a major resource.^{xii} But as an Anglican I must also add a commendation of the as yet unpublished *Interim Agreed Statements of the International Commission of the Anglican – Orthodox Theological Dialogue*.

Here we have draft statements on *The Trinity and the Church*; *Christ, the Spirit and the Church*; *Christ, Humanity and the Church*. Though circulated to the Lambeth Fathers (and a few Lambeth Mothers of course!) they are not yet for general circulation or publication. But their titles will give you some indication of their fundamental theological direction and orientation. For Anglicans and Orthodox they will I believe provide a sure foundation for constructively confronting the stormy weather Archbishop Robert Runcie spoke about and give us a profound biblical and patristic understanding of

the Trinity, Christ, the Spirit, humanity and the Church: a Trinitarian Theology, anthropology and ecclesiology of *koinonia*.

May this Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: this Love of God and this *Koinonia* of the Holy Spirit be always with you.

ⁱ *Windows onto God*, Robert Runcie, SPCK, London, 1983 p.27.

ⁱⁱ J.M. Neale was, of course, the founder of the (Anglican and) Eastern Church(es) Association. (1863).

ⁱⁱⁱ *Christianity and Culture*, Vol. 2, Georges Florovsky, Nordland, Massachusetts, 1974, pp. 161–231.

^{iv} For the official Anglican Orthodox Dialogue between 1920–1976 see *Anglican Orthodox Dialogue – The Moscow Agreed Statement*, SPCK, London, 1977, pp. 4–36 and pp. 82–91. This was followed by *The Dublin Agreed Statement*, SPCK, London, 1984 which includes an updating from 1976–1984 as well as further theological agreements.

^v This was on 7 December 1975, the tenth anniversary of the mutual lifting of the anathemas between Rome and Constantinople and the occasion of the announcement of official dialogue between the two Churches. Cf., *They are in Earnest*, Edward Yarnold SJ, St Paul Publications, Slough, 1980.

^{vi} Cf. e.g. *The Renewal of Anglicanism*, Alister McGrath, SPCK, London, 1993, especially pp. 3–11.

^{vii} Soloviev (1853–1900) was not interested in technical ecumenical questions. He is nevertheless seminal. See bibliography in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517 – 1948*, ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, SPCK, London, 1954, p.766.

^{viii} *The Eastern Schism*, Steven Runciman, Oxford, 1955. For a more recent lively account cf. *Byzantium The Apogee*, John Julius Norwich, BCA, London, 1991 pp. 304–324.

^{ix} An older but still useful work *Union of Christendom*, ed. Kenneth Mackenzie, The Religious Bookclub, London, 1938, contains a summary of all the East/West disputes by A. H. Thompson.

^x *English Canon Law* eds. Norman Doe, Mark Hill, Robert Ombres, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1998.

^{xi} The lecture was given at the Centenary of Campion Hall Oxford, 1997. It was unpublished at the time of the Constantinople Lecture. Since then Archbishop Quinn has published *The Reform of the Papacy: the costly call to Christian unity*, Herder, New York, 1999, which expands points made in the earlier lecture quoted.

^{xii} For a detailed description of the official Orthodox-Roman Catholic conversations cf. 'Clearing a path through a minefield' *Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue 1983–90 (1 and 2)*, Colin Davey in *One in Christ* (vols. 1 and 2, 1990). This account notes the work due to be done on *koinonia* and conciliarity and authority in the Church, including local synods, councils and conferences. It also including the first explosion over 'uniatism'.

CONSTANTINOPLE LECTURE 1999 THE SYRIAC CHURCHES IN RECENT THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE DR SEBASTIAN BROCK

As the Church of Christ enters the third millennium of her existence on earth, the divisions between the various Christian Churches are a continuing matter of scandal, in that they are seen (above all by the outside world) as making a mockery of Christ's own prayer, addressed to the Father, as given in St John's Gospel (17:21):

May they all be one; as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, so also may they be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

The divisions of today can be said to belong to three different levels, doctrinal, hierarchical, and individual. All three levels are of course closely interrelated, but each requires a different approach in any attempt to heal the pernicious effects of the division involved. Of the three levels, however, that of doctrine is fundamental, since divisions on the other two levels can be seen to be (at least in a large part) the knock-on effects of doctrinal division.

In any attempt to heal the divisions between the different Churches of today, it is essential to go back to examine the roots of their doctrinal differences to see how to these have come about. This evening I want to go back behind the well-known divisions between the Greek East and Latin West, and look at a much earlier case of doctrinal division which is with us still today, namely the case of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. I shall concentrate my attention on the various Churches of Syriac liturgical tradition for two reasons: the first is a purely practical one, namely that it is only about these that I happen to have some familiarity and personal knowledge; the second reason is of greater significance, for it is only in the Syriac Churches that we have three quite different Christological traditions represented. These three different traditions are represented today by (1) the Assyrian Church of the East, (2) the Maronite Church (whose position is shared by all the other Churches which accept the Council of Chalcedon – which of course includes the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches, Chaldean and Syrian Catholic, represented in India by the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Churches), and (3) the Syrian Orthodox Church (whose position is shared by the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopic).

For all these Churches, right doctrine, or teaching, is the essential starting point: as St Ephrem, the great Father of all the Syriac Churches, pointed out, it is "the keys of doctrine which unlock all the Scriptures" (Hymns on Paradise, 6:1). An orthodox theological starting point is essential if a correct understanding of both Scripture and Tradition is to be attained; if the starting point is wrong, then everything else will be in danger of being seen with a distorted and skewed vision.

For St Ephrem, and for all the Fathers of the Church, right doctrine concerned how one spoke about God, and in particular, about the three persons of the Trinity. Since this concerns profound mysteries that are beyond full human comprehension, let alone description in words, it

is not surprising that, in the early centuries of the Christian Church, a great variety of different ways of expressing these mysteries is to be found. Three particular areas attracted a great deal of controversy: the status of the Son in relationship to the Father, the relationship between the divinity and the humanity of the incarnate Son, and the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the other two persons of the Trinity. It is the second of these issues that we are concerned with here, for it was sharp differences of opinion on this aspect of Christology that led, in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries, to the three-way split that still continues today between the Syriac Churches. What went wrong? And what can be, and has already been, done about healing this major man-made wound in the Body of Christ?

In attempts to describe what happened at the Incarnation one can observe two different approaches being used by the Fathers: one involves the use of a variety of different analogies to describe the relationship between the humanity and divinity in the Incarnate Christ, and for this approach, as was explicitly recognised in the 6th century by both Philoxenus on the Syrian Orthodox side, and Babai on that of the Church of the East,¹ it is essential to maintain the tension between a number of different analogies, since each describes a different aspect of the mystery; to focus just on one is inevitably going to lead to an imbalanced understanding. The second approach, which is the one that dominated the Church Councils of the fifth century, employed the analytical tools of the Greek philosophical tradition, and aimed to provide formulations of faith using carefully defined technical terms. The single most influential – and divisive – outcome of this approach was the definition of faith promulgated at the Council of Chalcedon in 451:

Following, then, the holy Fathers, we all with one voice teach that it should be confessed that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the Same perfect in Godhead, the Same perfect in humanity, truly God and truly human, the Same [consisting] of a rational soul and a body; of the same essence with the Father as to his Godhead, and likewise of the same essence with us as to his humanity; in all things like unto us, sin only excepted; begotten of the Father before the ages as to his Godhead, and in the last days, the Same, for us and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin Theotokos as to his manhood; One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten, made known in two natures [which exist] without confusion, without division, without separation; the difference of the natures having been in no wise taken away by reason of the union, but rather the properties of each being preserved, and [both] concurring into one Person (prosopon) and one hypostasis – not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-Begotten, the divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; even as [the prophets from of old [have spoken] concerning him, and as] the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and as the Symbol of the Fathers [sc. at the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople] has delivered to us.

Although this carefully-balanced statement was intended to bring all

sides together, two elements in it (the passages underlined above) were open to misunderstanding and so led to its rejection by many within the Roman Empire (the position today represented by the Oriental Orthodox Churches), and to it never being received by the Church of the East outside the Roman Empire (it should be remembered that the Council of Chalcedon was an imperial council convoked by the Roman Emperor, and thus involving only bishops within the oikoumene² of the Roman Empire).

The effects of the Chalcedonian definition

One of the unfortunate results of the controversy caused by the Chalcedonian definition of faith was that its technical terms rapidly became the norm of almost all discourse on christology throughout the Christian world, and because different people had different understandings of the key technical terms “nature” (*physis* in Greek, *kyana* in Syriac) and “hypostasis” (*qnoma* in Syriac), three verbally conflicting formulae came to represent the different banners, as it were, of the Chalcedonian Churches, the Church of the East, and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Thus in the incarnate Christ there are:

- (1) according to the Chalcedonian Churches: 2 natures, but 1 hypostasis;
- (2) according to the Oriental Orthodox Churches: 1 nature, and 1 hypostasis;
- (3) according to the Church of the East: 2 natures, and 2 *qnome*.

All three are in agreement that there is only one prosopon, or subject, in the incarnate Christ.³

In the context of ecumenical relations between these Churches today, two practical (and essential) questions arise; (1), does the verbal conflict represent a real underlying difference of opinion about the understanding of the Incarnation? And (2), does the use of these terms provide the only valid touchstone of orthodox faith? To both questions an emphatic “No” needs to be answered. Why?

The first question is one which has been the focus of attention in modern ecumenical dialogue between the different Churches and, thanks to meetings, both informal and formal, of theologians of all sides, it is now recognized that, beneath the verbal conflict, there lies a shared fundamental understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation. In order, however, to perceive the truth of this, it is essential to move away from the fog of mistrust and polemic of the past, and to look at the controversies of the fifth and following centuries in a dispassionate way, and with an awareness of different local historical developments. Here, it is important to be aware of two points in particular.

Firstly, as mentioned above, different people had different understandings of the key technical terms. This came about for various historical reasons which cannot be gone into further here. What is important to realise is that the term “nature (*physis*, *kyana*)” was, and is, understood by the Oriental Orthodox as very close in meaning to hypostasis; this means that, to them, the phrase “in two natures” of the Chalcedonian Definition is at best illogical, or at

worst, it implies a split personality in Christ. For them, the phrase “out of two natures” (i.e. divinity and humanity), which was probably present in the draft of the Definition at Chalcedon would be acceptable. For the Church of the East, however, at the other end of the Christological spectrum, “nature (*kyana*)” is very close in sense to “essence” (*ousia* in Greek, *’ithutha* in Syriac); thus, for them, this element in the Chalcedonian Definition simply corroborates the earlier statement that the incarnate Christ is “of the same essence, or substance (*homoousios*)” both as the Father and as us (a basic position accepted by all the Churches). The “one hypostasis” of the Chalcedonian Definition causes no problems for the Oriental Orthodox, but it does for the Church of the East, for whom the Syriac word regularly used to translate hypostasis, namely *qnoma*, has very different connotations from those of hypostasis, as used in the Chalcedonian Definition (where it is very close in sense to ‘person’); instead, *qnoma* for the Church of the East is much closer in sense to the term ‘particular property, or characteristic’ (Greek *idiotes*), and it is significant that where the term does occur in credal formulations of the Church of the East, it is normally in the phrase “the two natures (i.e. divinity and humanity) and their *qnome*”. Most unfortunately a number of older European translations of the Synodicon Orientale, or collection of early synods of the Church of the East, have irresponsibly translated *qnoma* in a Christological context as ‘person’, thus giving the impression that the Church of the East teaches that there are two ‘Persons’ in Christ – which in fact it has never held, and which it has always specifically anathematized.

Secondly, one needs to be aware that in different areas people were trying to avoid different clearly unsatisfactory (“heretical”) positions, and so provided different emphases in their particular doctrinal formulations. Thus the Antiochene christological tradition, represented most fully by the Church of the East, was shaped by the need felt to emphasize the transcendence of God, and at the same time to combat Apollinarianism. As a result, this tradition came to visualise salvation as being brought to humanity through the human nature of the incarnate Christ. This meant that, for salvation to be effective, it was important to make a sharp mental distinction between the divinity and humanity in Christ: Christ’s humanity, united from the very moment of conception with his divinity, makes possible the salvation of humanity in general when his humanity is raised up at the Ascension to the right hand of the Father. As a result of this way of looking at the matter, writers in this christological tradition, while taking as their starting point the oneness of the incarnate Christ, nevertheless felt the need to put great emphasis on making a distinction between the two natures, divine and human, in the incarnate Christ; for them, if this distinction is not kept, then the Incarnation cannot be seen to have proved effective in bringing about the salvation of humanity. It is precisely the same reasoning that leads this christological tradition to avoid the title Theotokos, Bearer of God, for the Virgin Mary, preferring instead Bearer of Christ.

From the other end of the christological spectrum, the Alexandrine (since its main proponent was Cyril of Alexandria), it was Arianism that above all needed to be combatted. This tradition visualized the

Incarnation more in terms of a dynamic process of descent, with the divine Word becoming fully human, and so underpinning, as it were, humanity. On this conceptual model salvation is effected by the divinity assuming humanity in everything except sin; accordingly the whole emphasis is on the oneness of the incarnate Christ, and any thought of duality is abhorrent, since this would imply (to their way of thinking) that the Word had not become fully human. Given this way of looking at the Incarnation, the Virgin’s title Bearer of God is entirely explicable and appropriate.

Turning now to the second question is the use of the technical terms employed in the Chalcedonian definition the only means of providing a touchstone for discerning an orthodox faith? From what I have just said, it should be clear how problematic these terms are, and it is most regrettable that, in modern dialogue, so much attention has been focused on what one might call the Chalcedonian agenda, to the neglect of numerous other christological formulations, official and unofficial, that are to be found in the doctrinal and liturgical texts of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. Since in many ways the liturgical texts of a Church constitute one of the best insights into the doctrinal teaching of that particular Church, it would seem important to give much greater emphasis to this aspect in any dialogue on christology. The rediscovery of proper appreciation of these other criteria could lead to an enrichment in understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation for all the Churches.

Let me turn now from these rather lengthy, but important, preliminaries, to the main topic of my lecture, the Syriac Churches in modern theological dialogue.

Oriental Orthodox – Chalcedonian dialogue

A number of different stages can be seen in the course of ecumenical dialogue over the last three and a half decades involving the various Churches of the Syriac tradition. The earlier stages were all bilateral, involving Chalcedonian (Orthodox or Catholic) and Oriental Orthodox, without reference to the Assyrian Church of the East; only much more recently has the Church of the East been involved.

The first non-official consultations involving the Syrian Orthodox to take place were the series of meetings of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox theologians at Aarhus (1964), Bristol (1967), Geneva (1970), and Addis Ababa (1971).⁴ Already at the end of the first consultation it was found possible to state that “On the essence of the Christological dogma we found ourselves in full agreement. Through the different terminologies used by each side, we saw the same truth expressed”.⁵ These non-official consultations were followed up by the creation of a Joint Commission on Theological Dialogue, which held meetings, in 1985, 1989, 1990, and 1993. The meetings of November 1989 and September 1990 produced two important Agreed Statements on doctrinal, as well as on other matters.⁶ The findings of these consultations have also borne fruit in a joint declaration by the Patriarchs of the Middle East on the unity of the faith, issued on 19th November 1987, and in an accord between the Greek (Rum) Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch (14th November, 1991).

The joint declaration of the Patriarchs puts the matter in general terms, saying that:⁷

Attempts by theologians of both families, aimed at overcoming the misunderstandings inherited from the past centuries of alienation towards one another, have happily reached the same conclusion that fundamentally and essentially we on both sides have preserved the same Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of diverse formulations and resulting controversies.

By contrast, the two Agreed Statements of the Official Dialogue go into specific detail, where the areas of agreement are expressed in both positive and negative terms; thus, for example, the formal verbal conflict of one or two natures in the incarnate Christ is resolved by each side recognising the justness of the other's formula, rightly understood. On the Eastern Orthodox side, the legitimacy of the Cyrilline "one nature of the Logos incarnate" had already been recognized by Chalcedonian theologians in the early sixth century, while the Oriental Orthodox side agreed "that the [Eastern] Orthodox are justified in their use of the two-natures formula, since they acknowledge that the distinction is, in thought alone (*té theòria moné*)"⁸ – a phrase which goes back to Severus of Antioch, the great Syrian Orthodox theologian of the early sixth century. Put in negative terms, we have the condemnation of both "the Nestorian and the Eutychian heresies" in the 1989 statement⁹. The 1990 statement goes much further in this direction, stating that:¹⁰

Both families condemn the Nestorian heresy and the crypto-Nestorianism of Theodore of Cyrrhus.

Given the ambiguity of what different parties mean by "Nestorianism" and "crypto-Nestorianism", these statements are not particularly conducive to ecumenical progress, especially once the Assyrian Church of the East became involved in theological dialogue.

But before turning to this development we need to consider briefly a series of five non-official consultations, arranged by the Pro Oriente Foundation which had been established by Cardinal König in Vienna (on November 4th 1964). These consultations, between theologians of the Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, took place in 1971, 1973, 1976, 1978 and 1988, and have been followed up by a series of seminars on specific topics. Once again, already after the very first meeting in 1971, it proved possible to include in the communiqué an agreed statement on Christology; this has in fact proved very influential over the years, and has acquired the title "the Vienna Christological Formula":¹¹

We believe that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is God the Son incarnate, perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity. His divinity was not separated from his humanity for a single moment, not for the twinkling of an eye, his humanity is one with his divinity without commixtion, without confusion, without division, without separation. We in our common faith in the one Lord Jesus Christ, regard his mystery inexhaustible and ineffable and for the human mind never fully comprehensible or expressible.

The Pro Oriente meetings provided a useful basis for subsequent dialogue on an official level, and, as far as the Syrian Orthodox Church is concerned, an important outcome was the common declaration of faith issued jointly by Moran Mor Ignatius Zakka Iwas, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch, and Pope John Paul II (June 1984).¹²

The incorporation of the Assyrian Church of the East into the dialogue
We come now to the gradual involvement of the Assyrian Church of the East. In the course of all this dialogue between the Chalcedonian and Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Church of the East and the East Syriac tradition was left out rather on a limb, in a position of isolation. It is true that in October 1978 the recently elected Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Mar Dinkha IV, had been invited to Rome for a good will visit, and in 1982 representatives of Pro Oriente had met Mar Addai, Catholicos-Patriarch of the other jurisdiction of the Church of the East, in Baghdad.¹³ Much more important, however, was the official meeting between Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV in Rome on 7th November 1984, at which they expressed the desire to work together towards the mutual understanding of each other's theology and christology. It was not until several years later, however, that, thanks to the initiative of both the Middle East Council of Churches and Pro Oriente, attempts were made to include the Assyrian Church of the East in the ecumenical dialogue between the Chalcedonian and Oriental Orthodox Churches. Something of the initial difficulties in this process is hinted at in the minutes of the Pro Oriente regional symposium held (at the invitation of Pope Shenouda) in a monastery in Wadi Natrun in 1991:¹⁴ in these we read that there was "... a rather lengthy exchange about the opportunity to engage Pro Oriente in a dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East, which does not accept the Council of Ephesus in 431 and was in the past considered as being Nestorian". From oral sources I gather that behind this dead-pan statement lay some exceedingly heated arguments.

One of the eventual outcomes of this initial idea to involve the Assyrian Church of the East was the "First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition", organized by Pro Oriente in Vienna in June 1994. The decision to limit participation in this Consultation to theologians of the Syriac Churches was a pre-eminently sensible one, since the historically-inherited mutual suspicion between (above all) the Church of the East and the Syrian Orthodox Church would thus be mitigated thanks to a shared pride in their common Syriac heritage.

Once dialogue on Christology had been widened to take into account the position of the Church of the East as well, it became apparent that in the course of earlier Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox and Catholic-Oriental Orthodox dialogue a number of developments had actually made dialogue between these Churches and the Church of the East more problematic. Thus, the Vienna Christological formula included the words "we all agree in rejecting both the Nestorian and Eutychian positions about Jesus Christ", while the third official meeting (1990) between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox came up, as we have seen,

in an excellent "Common Christological Declaration between the

with similar condemnations, adding "the crypto-Nestorianism of Theodoret of Cyrrhus" for good measure.¹⁵

While there is no problem about the condemnation of the Eutychian position (i.e. that the incarnate Christ is consubstantial with the Father, but not with us), the use of the terms "Nestorianism" and "crypto-Nestorianism" opens up the way to much confusion, since "Nestorianism" means different things to different people, and in particular, it is often equated with the position of the Church of the East, which has traditionally but misleadingly been nicknamed "the Nestorian Church" by almost everyone else.¹⁶

Syriac Dialogue: The First Consultation

How misleading the use of this ancient misnomer can be, was at once illustrated by the main agenda of the first Syriac Dialogue of 1994, where much of the focus was on the christology of Nestorius, rather than on that of the Church of the East.¹⁷ Needless to say, it quickly became apparent to all participants that the two cannot be equated, especially since the only work of Nestorius to be translated into Syriac was his late Book of Heracleides, for which in any case the translation was not done until the mid sixth century, well after the time when (according to the misleading accounts of almost all textbooks) the Church of the East was "Nestorianized".

One of the great merits of the meetings of the Syriac Dialogue has been to highlight, on the one hand, the ambiguity surrounding the term "Nestorianism", and on the other hand, the completely inadequate understanding of the Church of the East's Christology on the part of all the other Churches. What emerges as absolutely vital is the need to make a sharp distinction, in any discussion of Nestorius, between:

- (1) the actual views of Nestorius;
- (2) the figure of Nestorius as perceived by the Church of the East;
- and (3) the figure of Nestorius as perceived by the other Churches, in particular the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox.

In any ecumenical dialogue it is essential to realise that these three are completely different, and must not be confused:

(1) The christology of the historical Nestorius is a matter for academic discussion, and since the evidence available is inadequate, it is impossible to reach really firm conclusions, and different scholars have given very different interpretations.

(2) In the literature of the Church of the East Nestorius is primarily seen as a martyr for the dyophysite (two-nature) cause,¹⁸ condemned without a hearing at the Council of Ephesus (431). Apart from this, he is not an influential figure, and if one is looking for a Greek theologian who influenced the Church of the East's theology, it is to Theodore of Mopsuestia that one must turn.

(3) Especially for the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches Nestorius is seen as heretic who taught that there were two *prosopa* (persons) in the incarnate Christ, implying two separate Sons, a Son of God and a son of Mary. Whether or not Nestorius actually taught

two *prosopa* is a matter for academic debate. What is essential to note here is that the Church of the East has always explicitly rejected any such teaching (which of course it does not associate with the name of Nestorius). As I mentioned earlier, the misfortune and totally incorrect translation of the Syriac term *qnoma* by 'person' in many European works has only helped to confuse matters even more.

In this connection, it also needs to be remembered that the Council of Ephesus did not go further than deposing Nestorius from his episcopacy: it did *not* anathematize him (later accounts of the Council are completely erroneous when they say that this was the case).

In between the first and second meetings of Pro Oriente's Syriac Dialogue two important developments took place. On November 11th 1994 Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Mar Dinkha IV issued a common declaration of faith which included the following passage, clearly designed to remove traditional misconceptions about the christology of the Church of the East:¹⁹

"...far from constituting 'one and another', the divinity and humanity are united in the person of the same and unique Son of God and Lord Jesus Christ, who is the object of a single adoration. Christ therefore is not an "ordinary man" whom God adopted in order to reside in him and inspire him, as in the righteous ones and the prophets. But the same God the Word, begotten of his Father before all worlds without beginning according to his divinity, was born of a mother without a father in the last times according to his humanity. The humanity to which the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth always was that of the Son of God himself."

For the Church of the East this common declaration of faith represented a momentous occasion, in that here, for the first time since at least the seventh century, it was being accepted on equal terms as the representative of an orthodox, albeit somewhat different, tradition of christology.

Only a few days after this common declaration of faith a further development occurred: at the Sixth General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches, held from 15-21 November 1994 in Cyprus, the Executive Committee was officially requested to set in motion the process for receiving the Church of the East into the membership of the Middle East Council of Churches.²⁰ The initial stages of the process were duly effected in the course of 1995, and the Church of the East was to be accorded a place in the Catholic group of Churches, this being considered the most appropriate, since admission into any of the other three groups, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox or Protestant, would have been very problematic. Most regrettably, however, the process has not yet been completed, owing to opposition above all from the Coptic Orthodox. The underlying reasons for this opposition are not clear but seem to rest on the old misconception of the Church of the East's christology as "Nestorian" (in the sense of teaching two *prosopa*); this is all the more unfortunate in that a non-official meeting between theologians of the two Churches had taken place in January 1995 and this had resulted in an excellent "Common Christological Declaration between the

Coptic Orthodox Church and the Assyrian Church of the East"²¹ (this, however, appears never to have come before the Coptic Orthodox Synod).

Syriac Dialogue: the Second Consultation

The common declaration of faith made by Mar Dinkha IV and Pope John Paul II had an important effect on the way the Church of the East saw its relationship with the other Syriac Churches at Pro Oriente's Second Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition, held in Vienna at the end of February 1996.²² No longer was there the lurking feeling that this Church was, as it were, on probation; instead, its representatives now had the confidence that they were there as equals.

At this Second Syriac Dialogue one of the main topics was the condemnation of the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia at the Council of Constantinople of 553. For the Church of the East, of course, Theodore is the Interpreter par excellence, and so this past action on the part of the Chalcedonian Orthodox Church provides a very serious obstacle to relations between the two Churches. Although the Oriental Orthodox Churches were not involved in this particular Council, they share in a dislike of Theodore's strongly dyophysite christology, and their liturgical traditions include anathemas on him and his teaching.

A few ways of approaching this seeming impasse are worth mentioning here. In dealing with the condemnation of Theodore one needs to ask: How far do the excerpts quoted from his writings at the Council of 553 fully represent his actual teaching? Were they quoted accurately, and even if this should be the case, were the extracts taken out of context, thus giving a misleading impression? Furthermore, it needs to be asked whether the Syriac translations of Theodore's writings, that exercised such an influence on the theology of the Church of the East, accurately reflected Theodore's thought, or whether the translators had adapted them here and there,²³ perhaps removing some of the strongly dyophysite phraseology that so caught the attention of the Fathers at the Council of Constantinople. These are questions upon which careful and dispassionate scholarship should be able to throw light, and although the questions are ones of academic concern, the answers will have an important bearing on how far the Council of Constantinople's condemnation of Theodore in 553 has any real bearing on relationships between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. In this connection it is worth observing that the action of the Council of Constantinople in 553 seems to have had no effect at all on the accord between the two Churches which very nearly came about in 630, and which was only foiled by the turn of political events.

Syriac Dialogue: the Third Consultation

A Third Syriac Dialogue was held in July 1997, this time in Chicago. While also covering the controversies surrounding the persons and teachings of Nestorius and Theodore, this third meeting paid especial attention to the question of anathemas, and how they might be lifted. In this connection the final communiqué stated:²⁴

Regarding the issue of the anathemata of the past, pronounced by

synods and hierarchs in the context of the controversies that have divided our churches, we dedicate ourselves to the search of appropriate ways to lift them, especially from liturgical texts, as an act of love and mutual respect.

As it happened, the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East had met in Chicago only shortly before the Third Syriac Dialogue began, and when the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV addressed the Syriac Dialogue at its opening meeting he was able to announce the Holy Synod's decision, of truly momentous ecumenical significance, "to remove from their liturgical books the anathemata and all condemnations voiced against such figures as Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria and Patriarch Severus of Antioch".²⁵

By this decision the Assyrian Church of the East has thus set a precedent and an example that pre-eminently deserves to be followed by other Churches. In this connection it might be noted that in the case of the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches this has sometimes already taken place, at least in part. To cite but one example from India: in the Syro-Malankara form of the homologia, or confession of faith in the ordination rite, the name of Theodore has been dropped from the list of those anathematized.

At the same meeting of the Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East another momentous decision was taken, following an earlier one by the Holy Synod of the Chaldean Catholic Church, namely, "to inaugurate a bilateral program and agenda to bring about the full ecclesial union of the two churches."²⁶ Moves towards a rapprochement between the two Churches had been underway for some time, and the ground for this public announcement had been prepared by the first ever meeting of the two Patriarchs at Southfield (Michigan, USA) on 29th November 1996. Shortly after the announcement in July, a joint synodal decree for promoting unity between the two Churches was signed by both Patriarchs on the 15th August 1997.²⁷

Subsequent developments

It can justly be said that the three Syriac Dialogues have been successful in helping to break down the many barriers of mistrust and misunderstanding between the different Syriac Churches; they have, furthermore, shown the way forward to a much more constructive approach to the problems that separate these Churches. In this connection it seems very unfortunate that, at a meeting of the Middle East Oriental Orthodox Patriarchs convened by Pope Shenouda in March 1998, their Common Declaration includes, not only that specific inclusion of the names of Theodore and Nestorius amongst those whose heretical teachings are rejected, but also the statement the "henceforth we will engage as a family of Oriental Orthodox Churches in the Middle East in any theological dialogue with other Churches and Christian world communions".²⁸ At first sight, this statement might seem a reasonable one, but when considered from the perspective of relationships between the different Syriac Churches, it is clearly going to put a stop to the work of Pro Oriente's Syriac Dialogue, the whole point of which was to bring together, on the basis of their shared Syriac cultural heritage, the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of the East.

Another aspect of this brake put on dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East is to be seen in the failure to implement the initial agreement to grant membership of the Middle East Council of Churches to that Church, owing to objections brought on procedural grounds by, it seems, the Coptic Orthodox Church. When the Assyrian Church of the East was invited instead to attend the Middle East Council of Churches' General Assembly just as observers, the Catholicos Patriarch wrote with great dignity to the General Secretary on the 23rd April 1999, pointing out (with complete justice) that "accepting to be present as mere observers is accepting a grave offence against our beloved Church", and concluding "we therefore find ourselves unable to accept the MECC's invitation to be present as mere observers".²⁹ To the outside observer it is a matter of utter astonishment and dismay that an indigenous Middle Eastern Church with such a venerable history of witness to Christ should be excluded from a body of fellow Middle Eastern Churches.

Although the optimism in evidence at the Third Syriac Dialogue has been dampened by these subsequent developments, as far as relations between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Syrian Orthodox Church are concerned, considerable progress has already taken place in implementing:

"The Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church". A specific programme and timetable for the Joint Commission has been worked out,³⁰ and among the aims are the following:

- the establishment of a common Institute for Ecclesiastical Formation;
- the production of a catechism for use in both Churches;
- the editing of specific existing liturgical texts for common use, and the printing of a common lectionary in an agreed Modern Syriac dialect;
- the unifying of liturgical vestments;
- preparation for agreement over *Communicatio in Sacris*;
- mutual provision of pastoral care, and preparing for clerical and lay collaboration at a local parish level.

The aim is to have agreement on all these aspects by the time the Synods of the two Churches meet in 2000, and following these meetings there should be a joint approach to the Vatican's Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue.

At this point I should add that there have been annual official meetings between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Vatican's Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue ever since the historic Common Declaration of Faith made on November 11th 1994 by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha. (In parentheses, one might note that November seems to be a good month for ecumenical break-throughs!).

So, what of the Future? In order to heal the divisions created by the christological controversies of the past, above all patience is required.

If one searches for the roots of these divisions (an important task for scholars in all the Churches to undertake), the causes almost always will be found to lie in failure to listen to what the other party was really saying, and at the same time a failure to ask why they were saying what they did; instead, in the heat of the polemics the position of the other party was presented in a distorted and one-sided way, with the result that, as time went on, these false pictures came to be accepted as true ones and thus become embedded into text books – where they all too often remain to the present day.³¹ Once it is recognized that the stereotypes of the past are both misleading and false, then the process of real understanding can begin. And here it is essential to realise that genuine ecumenical dialogue definitely does not involve either party having to compromise its tradition; even less does it mean having to give away anything to the other. Rather, it is a matter of the widening of vision on both sides, accompanied by the stripping away of past misconceptions and misunderstandings. There are no losers here, for everyone is a winner, in that everyone has become the richer in understanding. As the communiqué of the Second Syriac Dialogue puts it:³²

The aim of our dialogue is not to require that any of us should reconsider the christological doctrine of our own Tradition, but rather, that each of us, while remaining completely true to our own Tradition, should come to perceive that the christological teaching of the other Syriac Traditions, when correctly understood, represents a legitimate expression of our common faith in the one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the mystery of whose Incarnation can never be exhaustively formulated in words.

Unity does not mean uniformity

It is essential to realise that unity of faith does not imply the necessity for uniformity in the expression of that faith. This is particularly important to remember in connection with the Syriac Churches which, from an early date, developed different ways of expressing their christology. What is required is to identify certain parameters within which different traditions of doctrinal formulations can all be accepted. Here one might suggest that, as far as the three different Syriac Christological traditions are concerned, these parameters would be defined by two basic requirements for an orthodox christology: that there is a single *prosopon*, or subject, in the incarnate Christ, and that Christ is consubstantial both with the Father and with us.³³

Some practical ways forward on an everyday level

Let me conclude by suggesting some practical ways forward on an everyday level. Progress in any Official dialogue between Churches inevitably moves rather slowly, though every now and then there are some dramatic leaps forward. But it needs also to be remembered that, on the level of the ordinary Christian, progress in ecumenical relationships between the different Churches is an option present in everyday life. One very practical step that everyone can take is to avoid using the pejorative terminology customary in the past. Thus the terms "Nestorian" and "Monophysite" should resolutely be dropped from usage; not only are both offensive to the Churches to which they

are applied, but they are also perniciously misleading and so have been the cause of totally unnecessary misunderstanding, confusion, and trouble. Instead, the terms used by the Churches themselves should be employed. If descriptive terms are needed to refer to the two main christological traditions, then dyophysite (or diphyssite) - 'two-nature', - and miaphysite - 'one-nature' -, serve the purpose very satisfactorily.³⁴

For those involved in teaching Church History and the History of Doctrine there are many obvious ways of presenting these subjects in a more ecumenical spirit, even if many textbooks still reflect the polemical attitudes of the past. Loyalty to one's own particular tradition definitely does not require one to take a partisan position in teaching these subjects. What is required, is to teach them in an even-handed way, giving a fair presentation of the material. Obviously, as new textbooks are produced, it will be of the greatest importance to ensure that these are written in an ecumenical spirit.

For those involved in any way with liturgical revision, whether in a formal or an informal context, the potential opportunities are obvious. The liturgical texts of the Syriac Churches have never been monolithic structures, but have developed and changed over time; indeed, what is both remarkable and admirable about these liturgical traditions is their flexibility within a stable structured framework, allowing for considerable choice of different material, above all where verse texts are involved. Thus, for example, in Syrian Orthodox liturgical texts, there is no good reason why any stanza which includes a specific condemnation of Nestorius should be retained in the *Shehimo*, or Weekday Office, for Saturday (Safrō):³⁵ plenty of excellent substitute stanzas could readily be found in the manuscript tradition. As an example of the creative handling of the West Syriac liturgical tradition one can point to *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit*, published by the Kurisumala Ashram.³⁶ This English adapted translation of the *Shehimo* (Weekday Office) and *Fenqitho* (Sunday and Festal Hymnary) has very successfully dealt with the problem and has removed all such negative references (including the anti-Jewish ones).

By way of conclusion

Uniquely in the case of the Syriac Dialogue, three christological traditions are involved. While two-way dialogue between Chalcedonian Churches and either the Oriental Orthodox or the Assyrian Church of the East is (as experience has already shown) relatively straightforward, the space between the Oriental Orthodox Churches (in this context, the Syrian Orthodox Church) and the Assyrian Church of the East is obviously much greater as far as their respective christological traditions are concerned, and so the process of gaining mutual understanding and acceptance of the validity and essential orthodoxy of each other's position is inevitably more difficult, but the experience of Pro Oriente's first three Consultations in the series of Syriac Dialogue suggests that this process is now well underway, and it is to be hoped that these initiatives on a non-official level will in due course be reflected at an official level.

This three-way dialogue between the Churches of Syriac liturgical tradition, is of a wider significance, in that it provides a broader and

more comprehensive background and perspective for dialogue between other Churches, where never more than two christological traditions are involved at any one time.

The most important thing that the three meetings of Pro Oriente's Syriac Dialogue have achieved is an insight that was anticipated over seven centuries ago by two great scholars and canon lawyers of the Syriac Churches, Barhebraeus (Bar 'Ebroyo) in the Syrian Orthodox tradition, and 'Abdisho' in that of the Church of the East. Writing around 1300, 'Abdisho' of Soba (Nisibis) states that "all Christians accept the faith of Nicaea and assent to it, even though they differ somewhat in their formulations of it".³⁷ Slightly earlier, and only shortly before his death in 1286, the Syrian Orthodox Barhebraeus wrote a short work on the spiritual life, entitled *The Book of the Dove*, in the course of which [Ch. IV] he adds an autobiographical note. In this he says that, after having earlier on in his life taken part in disputations between the different Churches on doctrinal matters, eventually³⁸

when I had given much thought and pondered on the matter, I became convinced that these quarrels of Christians among themselves are not a matter of factual substance, but rather, one of words and terms. For they all confess Christ our Lord to be perfect God and perfect human, without any commingling, mixing or confusion of the natures. This binary likeness³⁹ is termed by one party 'a nature', by another 'a hypostasis', by yet another 'a prosopon'.⁴⁰ Thus I saw all the Christian communities, with their different christological positions, as possessing a single common ground that is without any difference. Accordingly I totally eradicated any hatred from the depths of my heart, and I completely renounced disputing with anyone over confessional matters.

These statements were not uttered lightly, nor were they based on conclusions reached in a superficial manner, for each of these two men was the author of works that still remain the classic expressions of their own Church's traditional christology, 'Abdisho' in his *Book of the Pearl* (*Marganitha*) and Barhebraeus in the *Candelabra of the Sanctuary* (*Mnorat qudsho*).⁴¹ Thus there is all the more reason to listen to them in the context of theological dialogue today.⁴²

Sebastian Brock

FOOTNOTES

1. Philoxenus, *Tractatus tres* (ed. Vaschalde, CSCO Scr.Syri 9), pp. 152-155; Babai, *Liber de Unione* (ed. Vaschalde, CSCO Scr.Syri 34), pp. 233, 249-50.

2. This is of course the origin of the term 'ecumenical council' - something that needs to be remembered in modern ecumenical dialogue. Compare my "The Church of the East in the Sasanian Empire up to the sixth century and its absence from the Councils in the Roman Empire", in *Pro Oriente, Syriac Dialogue 1* (Vienna 1994), pp. 69-85.

3. In the heat of the controversy in Late Antiquity the dyophysites described all miaphysites as "Monophysites" (implying that they were Eutychians), and the miaphysites described all dyophysites as "Nestorians". By force of habit these

misleading terms have become ingrained into most modern textbooks (with the latter term restricted to the Church of the East), and emphatically need to be avoided today (see also below).

4. The main papers of these meetings were published in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, and then subsequently a selection was reprinted in a useful volume published by the World Council of Churches, edited by Paulos Mar Gregorios, W.H.Lazareth and N.A.Nissiotis, and entitled *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite? Towards Convergence in Orthodox Christology* (Geneva, 1981).

5. *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite?*, p.3 (and specifically quoted in the introduction, p.viii).

6. The texts are conveniently reproduced in Christine Chaillot and Alexander Belopolsky (eds), *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches* (Geneva, 1998), pp.60-61 and 63-64.

7. See *Towards Unity*, p.36.

8. *Towards Unity*, p.63.

9. *Towards Unity*, p.60.

10. *Towards Unity*, p.63. This is surprising from the standpoint of the Orthodox, in that Theodore had been rehabilitated at the Council of Chalcedon.

11. Pro Oriente, *The Vienna Dialogue: Five Consultations with Oriental Orthodoxy: Communiqués and Joint Documents* (Vienna 1990), p.46.

12. The main sections are reproduced in Sobornost/Eastern Churches Review 7:1 (1985), pp.54-55. Here it might be noted that the Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Forum (which has met on several occasions since 1985) has primarily been concerned with pastoral matters.

13. The schism in the Church of the East between the New Calendarists (under Mar Dinkha) and the Old Calendarists (under Mar Addai) still remains, even though there have been moves to heal it.

14. Pro Oriente, Booklet 3, *Middle East Regional Symposium, Deir Amba Bishoy, October 1991* (Vienna, 1993).

15. For the references, see notes 9 and 10.

16. On this point, see my "The 'Nestorian' Church – a lamentable misnomer", in J.F.Coakley and K.Parry (eds), *The Church of the East: Life and Thought* (= Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 78; Manchester, 1996), pp.23-35.

17. The papers are published in Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 1: First non-official consultation on dialogue within the Syriac Tradition* (Vienna 1994). A summary of the papers can be found in Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 2* (Vienna 1996), pp.203-222.

18. The following passage from one of the main liturgical books of the Church of the East is characteristic: "The holy martyr Nestorius endured sufferings on behalf of Truth" (*Hudra*, ed. T.Darmo; Trichur, 1961), p.256 (Wednesday, 3rd Week of Lent).

19. The text is reproduced in *Sobornost/Eastern Churches Review* 17:1 (1995), pp.52-54.

20. Mar Dinkha had originally applied to bring the Assyrian Church of the East into the Middle East Council of Churches in 1985, but the application had been turned down, above all due to the suspicions of the Coptic Orthodox representatives that

the Assyrian Church of the East was indeed "Nestorian" in the heretical sense (i.e. holding that there were in two Prosopa in the incarnate Christ).

21. It is to be hoped that this unpublished Common Declaration may still one day serve as a basis for rapprochement.

22. The papers are published in Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 2* (Vienna 1996), and summaries can be found in Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 3* (Vienna 1998), pp.151-171.

23. As Luise Abramowski has recently shown, this seems to be the case with the Syriac translation of Theodore's de Incarnatione (see *Oriens Christianus*, 79 [1995], pp.1-8). This is also what has happened with the text of Evagrius' Centuries: the version that was widely read in monastic circles of the Church of the East had several of the more speculative elements of the original text either left out or altered.

24. Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 3* (Vienna 1998), p.139.

25. See Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 3*, p.138.

26. Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 3*, p.138.

27. The text is given in Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 3*, pp.185-188.

28. Paragraph 5 of the Common Declaration; Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius, along with Arius, Sabellius, Apollinarius, Macedonius, Paul of Samosata and Eutyches, as authors of heretical teachings in Paragraph 3.

29. The text is reproduced in *The Voice of the East* (Trichur) 46:5-6 (May-June, 1999), pp.8-10.

30. I am most grateful to Mr Edmond Michaels for letting me see the full text.

31. It is to be hoped that the relevant entries concerning the doctrinal position of the non-Chalcedonian Churches in the third edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (1998) are more satisfactory than those of the earlier editions (especially the first).

32. Pro Oriente, *Syriac Dialogue 2*, p.193.

33. See the table in my "The 'Nestorian' Church – a lamentable misnomer", p.27 for the various doctrinal positions.

34. In English 'henophysite' would also be possible, but 'miaphysite' is to be preferred since it is a more suitable word formation of use in other European languages. The objection to 'Monophysite' is that it is ambiguous, in that it is often understood to mean 'Eutychian'. On the need for two separate terms, Miaphysite and Monophysite, see for example Bishop Amba Bishoy's words in Pro Oriente, Booklet 6: *The Vienna Dialogue, Kerala Regional Symposium, Kottayam* (Vienna, 1995), pp. 160-161. See also note 3.

35. This was a point well made by Mar Gregorios Yuhanon Ibrahim at the Third Syriac Dialogue.

36. Vol. I (1980) contains the Weekday Office, while vols II-IV (1982-1986), subtitled *The Crown of the Year*, correspond to the *Fenqitho*. The work of translation and adaptation was done by Fr. Francis Acharya.

37. *Ordo Iudiciorum Ecclesiasticorum*, I.1, tr. I-M.Vosté (Rome, 1940), p.33.

38. Opening of Chapter IV. There is an English translation by A.J.Wensinck, *Bar Hebraeus's Book of the Dove* (Leiden, 1919); the translation below, however, is mine.

39. Barhebraeus deliberately uses unfamiliar terminology (though 'likeness' of course is taken from Phil. 2:60-7), and the word translated 'binary' is extremely rare and unusual in Syriac; etymologically it is a Greek word meaning 'flying equally together'.

40. The terms used to denote the unity of the divinity and humanity in Christ will readily be recognized as being those of the Syrian (and other Oriental) Orthodox, the Chalcedonian Churches, and the Church of the East, respectively.

41. There is an English translation of 'Abdisho' of Soba's *Pearl* by G.P.Badger, *The Nestorians and their Rituals* (London, 1852), pp.380-422. Most of Barhebraeus' *Candelabra of the Sanctuary* is available in French translation in *Patrologia Orientalis* (Book IV, dealing with Christology, is in vol.31, 1964).

42. This paper represents a somewhat different form of an article entitled "The importance of the Syriac Traditions in ecumenical dialogue on Christology", to appear in *Christian Orient* (Kottayam, Kerala) 20:4 (1999).

**ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE
ANGLICAN AND EASTERN CHURCHES ASSOCIATION
AT S.AUGUSTINE'S KILBURN ON 8th JULY 2000
by THE VICAR FATHER ANTHONY YATES**

"We hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God." Acts 2:12

For me, I think the most fascinating and moving places in Christendom is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, known by Eastern Christians as the Church of the Resurrection. There Christians of all rites and language gather to worship at the Tomb of Christ.

If you visit the Church after eight in the morning you have to plough your way through the *sug* where stall holders shout out the prices of fruit and vegetables in shekels and pushcarts and cars drive on the narrow streets, taking up almost its entire width. Pilgrims and tourists to the west only add to the confusion.

To get to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre you must confront the busyness of the market place; and in the heat of the day you are likely to experience physical exhaustion and weariness. Perhaps it was rather like that on the first Good Friday as the Lord carried His Cross through those streets and fell to the ground under its weight. Not the sort of *spiritual* experience He would have chosen!

Once inside the Church the tourist or pilgrim is likely to be jostled yet more as he tries to get to the Tomb. It all seems to lack the *reverence*, people say. And even the most secular tourists always manage to pick up something of the reality of Christian division and know that priests of different rites sometimes squabble amongst themselves and have at times resorted to physical violence. There does seem to be contact

with much that is *unredeemed* in the experience. That is perhaps why many Protestant and Western Christians prefer Gordon's Tomb which is the Hollywood version – just what they imagined it ought to be like.

But go to the Church very early on a Sunday morning before 5.30am. The courtyard is silent except for the singing of a few birds. There will be few people in church. From somewhere behind the Tomb there is the sound of chanting. The Copts have a small chapel there and a few of them begin Matins at four o'clock. By 5.30am a few Latin Christians – in the west we call them Roman Catholics – are assembling in front of the Tomb for the Latin High Mass. The organ thunders and drowns the Copts; the Mass is sung by the Franciscans who have the custody of the Holy Places. For the Eucharist Prayer the celebrant goes inside the Tomb and all that can be heard is the bell ringing at the elevation of the Host. After the Mass has finished you can go out again through the entrance to a small chapel to the right of the courtyard used by the Ethiopian Orthodox. The monks have small cells on the roof of the Holy Sepulchre. The colourful Ethiopian liturgy which has also been underway for several hours is an Africanized version of the Coptic rite. Worshippers have taken off their shoes and many are dressed in white. At 7am there is a clashing of bells which announces the Procession of the Greek Orthodox as they make their way to the Tomb and begin their Liturgy in the Church opposite. At 8 am the Syrian Orthodox begin their Liturgy in a cave-like chapel close to what is known as the Tomb of S. Joseph of Arimathea. By this time the Copts who were being drowned by the organ have become a significant crowd and are holding their own, against the Greeks. Next come the procession of Armenian Orthodox from their seminary in the Armenian quarter. Their Liturgy is that of S. Gregory the "Illuminator" who is regarded as the "Father" of the Armenian Church. It is led by a choir of boys and men in colourful robes; the singing has an almost operatic quality about it.

What other church, what other cathedral hosts an empty tomb? None! Such a Church is found only in Jerusalem. Our roots stem from this Empty Tomb. The Empty Tomb makes sense of our lives.

What other church or cathedral contains so many Christian rites and languages under the same roof? None! The Empty Tomb makes all citizens of Jerusalem – not only this earthly Jerusalem, but also the heavenly Jerusalem, where we look forward to feasting on the Heavenly Bread.

To those who have not caught this vision of the Church it may seem at first like the confusion of Babel and represent humanity unredeemed. But the reality is that of Pentecost – not the experience of a perfect Church demonstrating a unity which has been fully accomplished. But a Church based on the reality of the Resurrection and the Empty Tomb.

"They were all filled with Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech."

"Did not our hearts burn within us when He talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?" was the exclamation of the disciples after their experience of the Risen Lord at Emmaus. From

that eucharist sharing, the unfamiliar became familiar. The disciples had been with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane and they too had seen Him carry the Cross through those narrow streets. They were flawed. They would have liked something different. They would like to have been different. But when they recognised the Risen Lord they became aware of the unity and purpose that they had in Him.

We are not to seek the living among the dead. In our pilgrimage in this world we must concern ourselves not just with Holy Places but with the Holy People, the Living Stones that make up that spiritual Temple which is the Church of God. As we do so we shall become aware in a fresh way of the reality of the Resurrection and of our unity of our common Baptism. Then our hearts will burn within us. That is the message of the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre which it contains. That is the reality which we are to encounter as we celebrate, as we take the Bread and the Cup asking the Holy Spirit to change it that it may become His Body and Blood, asking the Holy Spirit to change *us* that we may become One Bread, One Body.

The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

ANGLICAN AND EASTERN CHURCH RELATIONS TODAY: SOME OBSTACLES AND SOME OPPORTUNITIES

GREGORY WOOLFENDEN

Introduction

The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association has a long history that really goes back to a time when most Western Christians knew little about their Eastern brethren and cared even less. We may sometimes think that things haven't really changed that much, but the period between the World Wars saw a very considerable rise in interest, largely because there were now more Orthodox about to talk to. The Russian revolution did not bring all that many Orthodox to Britain, but they were not far away, in Paris and elsewhere in France. Contacts became more frequent and led to the founding of the Fellowship of SS Alban and Sergius, while after the Second World War, with some easing of persecution in the Soviet Union, it became possible to conduct a more official dialogue. A dialogue in which the Greek church was now very much more prominent than it had been in the past, not least because of the great increase in Greek and especially Cypriot immigration to this country.

I would hazard a guess that at the beginning of the twentieth century there would have been only the Greek churches in London, Manchester, Liverpool and Cardiff, and the Russian embassy chapel in London. At the cusp of the twenty-first century there are thirty orthodox churches in London (and some half dozen Oriental Orthodox churches as well), and most major cities have at least one, often more than one, at least within reach. Far more western Christians are likely to have met Orthodox believers, and although many remain lamentably ignorant, there are many who have actually attended an Orthodox service. This last being made the more easy by

the ready availability of services in English – something that was very rare only thirty years ago, when my first experience of the Liturgy in English was the annual one in St Albans Cathedral. The only other place at the time with a regular English liturgy was probably St. Basil's House, the headquarters of the Fellowship of SS Alban and Sergius.

In spite of the greater opportunities for contact, there is still much ignorance and a pervasive feeling that Orthodoxy is a strange foreign religion that is unsuited to western Christians. It should only be necessary to point out, as this audience well knows, that Christianity itself is an 'eastern religion', at least it is no more Western European in origin than Judaism or Islam. Having said that the feeling of foreignness still remains, and I think that nowadays this has a lot to do with the ways in which eastern and western Christianity have been diverging since at least the 1960's and probably since the 1950's. In this talk I want to address some five areas in which Orthodoxy and western Christianity, but largely Anglicanism, have diverged in recent years; so making relations that much more difficult. On the other hand I do not believe that these obstacles to closer fellowship are the whole story, so I am going to balance them with five corresponding areas of opportunity.

A. The Obstacles

1. The Ordination of Women

We had better start with the most sensitive area! There is no point in glossing over the fact that the ordination of women has created a real obstacle in the way of closer union between the Anglican and Eastern Churches, just as it has between the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. That obstacle will become the more intractable as more women are ordained to the episcopate, especially when that should happen in England.

We should not however think that baldly stating the problem is sufficient. It is patently obvious that conversations are still going on between Anglicans and Roman Catholics, and between Anglicans and the Orthodox, but it is clear that these two dialogues are carried on in very different contexts. It is highly likely that many of the Roman Catholic theologians involved in dialogue with the Anglican church see no theological objection to the ordination of women, and many have expressed themselves in print as being actively in favour of such ordinations¹. These theologians are in the difficult, and ultimately unsustainable, position of now being unable to discuss the matter openly without endangering their ecclesiastical status. By contrast there are very few Orthodox theologians who are clearly in favour of the ordination of women, though many have pointed out the weakness of the normal arguments adduced against, but they are more able to discuss the matter openly with less fear of censure, since Orthodoxy does not have a single visible centre of unity that can, independently of others, make a decisive ruling on this matter.

It is probably true to say that in traditionally Orthodox societies, such as may be found in Greece, Romania and the Middle East, and even

to a remarkable extent in modern Russia, the question of the ordination of women has hardly been raised. This would appear to be because of rather traditional attitudes to gender roles more than being anything to do with conscious theological reflection. The main argument against the ordination of women can be summed up as tradition. It has quite clearly never been part of the tradition, but that does not actually close the debate as to the actual value of this tradition². Does it express divine intention, or is it simply something that may change with a very much changed society? It may be worth pointing out that Orthodoxy does not see the priest celebrating the eucharist as 'another Christ – alter Christus', rather "He is only the instrument that mediates the personal and invisible presence of Christ". The writer of this statement, Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, went on to say: "The priest is thus the spokesman for the eternal Word. He lends his voice to the Word. Can this voice not be a feminine one?" This opinion of a very respected Orthodox lay theologian may be very much a minority one, but the debate is not unknown to Orthodoxy and will not go away. Although I do not expect to see any change in my lifetime, perhaps this obstacle is not as insuperable as it may first appear to be.

2. Theological Trends

The most common Orthodox criticism of modern Anglicanism is more likely to be of its perceived modernist and 'liberal' theology. In fact the ordination of women is often seen as a direct result of such modernist thinking. The Orthodox find it difficult that an Anglican priest or bishop, shall we say, a Don Cupitt or a John Spong, can express with impunity views that are not only clearly contrary to the faith of the early councils and the Fathers but to that expressed in the Thirty-Nine articles or other foundational documents of Anglicanism. In fact the furore over some of David Jenkins' remarks some years ago led to a prominent Anglican priest joining the Orthodox church. I must add at this point that I myself have often felt that Bishop David Jenkins had a slightly unfortunate gift for glib one-liners that could be quoted out of context - for example I entirely agree with his widely known, and almost deliberately twisted, statement that the Resurrection has to be something more than a 'conjuring trick with bones'.

Bishop Jenkins is not the villain of this particular piece, the real villain for a thoughtful Orthodox is not a person but a state of mind. The decrees of the Council of Chalcedon may need explanation and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed may well need unpacking; but Orthodox theology regards them as serious attempts to set the bounds of legitimate discussion of, for example, the divinity and humanity of Christ, and the doctrine of the Trinity. To simply abandon these for the latest theological fad, or to deny central tenets of Christianity such as the incarnation, simply because they do not square with a particular type of contemporary secular philosophy, strikes the Orthodox as putting oneself outside of the community of faith, the Church. To then see such theologians still holding pastoral office in a church which professes to believe much the same as the Orthodox Church, strikes us as odd, to say the least.

To be honest, this is more of a perception than anything else. In my own experience, the vast majority of Anglican theologians are clearly orthodox when it comes to the principal doctrines of the Christian faith. A disproportionate amount of space is given by the media to those who are seen to be newsworthy, and such people tend to be 'out on a limb'. At the same time there is a real desire to protect academic freedom, even when some may appear to use that freedom irresponsibly. Many Orthodox have no experience of the academically autonomous theology faculties of places like England and Scotland, and tend to look for a careful re-statement of the party line rather than any creativity on the part of the theologians. There are independent and creative Orthodox thinkers, especially in Greece, for example, Christos Yannaras - they also tend to be lay men and women and thus not perceived as involved in a conflict with the worshipping life of the church.

I think that most careful Orthodox observers can in fact distinguish between the more 'outrageous' statements of some theologians and the official positions of the church to which they claim to belong. The problem that does not so easily go away, is the whole question of what might indeed be an 'official Anglican position' on, for example, the sacramentality of ordination. This was the substance of an objection to the validity of Anglican order voiced by Professor V.A. Sokoloff in 1897⁴. Similarly, in the 1950's, a Professor A.I. Ivanov examined the 39 Articles and suggested that 5 (double procession of the Spirit) and 22 (Purgatory⁵) contradicted Orthodox teaching, but others could be re-formulated, such as those concerning scripture, the church, the councils and the sacraments, and so the obstacle might be overcome⁶.

The above should be a timely reminder that even if the Church of England had not ordained women, there is little likelihood that some form of intercommunion between Anglican and Orthodox, or Anglican and Roman Catholic churches might have been on the horizon. The Anglican church has a Protestant strand as well as a Catholic one, and the theological positions of many Anglican Evangelicals, notably on the question of justification, necessitates a very careful dialogue with the Orthodox and other Easterners on one hand, and with the whole Augustinian tradition on the west on the other.

3. Changes in Life and Worship.

From the time the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association was formed it involved the participation of some famous Anglo-Catholic clergy. One such was Fr H.J. Fynes-Clinton, Rector of St Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge. I was once told, or read that Fr Fynes-Clinton did not give communion at Mass during the week, he only gave communion outside of the eucharistic celebration so that he could personally inquire into the potential communicant's devotional preparation, in particular, whether they had fasted from Midnight. A Russian priest would find nothing really strange here, though he would happily conduct the enquiry over the rim of the chalice during the Liturgy!

Fasting communion was once seen as a badge of Anglican Catholicism, and even people in quite low church parishes expected to

eat breakfast after, rather than before, communion. The Parish Communion movement popularised relatively early sung masses, so as to encourage both fasting communion and the general communion of most of those present. Not only has this almost entirely ceased to be an issue, many Anglicans are happy to follow the Roman single hour before the moment of communion, which means that in both Roman and Anglican communions, fasting communion has largely disappeared. Similarly, books of devotion no longer contain the lengthy and often penitential prayers that helped prepare for communion, and there is a sense that if one is present, one is expected to communicate, whether one is ready or not.

By contrast, the Russian church, which has seen a vast increase in frequency of communion since the 1940's, still usually requires confessions before each communion⁷, the communicant should have kept the Wednesday and Friday fasts strictly, and prayed the canons to Christ, the Mother of God and the Guardian Angel, as well as the canon of preparation for communion and the nine or ten communion prayers. Many women still do not receive communion when menstruating and it is common to abstain from sexual relations as well as food, the night before communion. Rules and frequencies of communion vary, but one can say that the Orthodox still prepare for communion as an awesome and challenging encounter with the divine, moreover even where frequent communion has been re-established non-communicants have no sense of pressure to simply join everybody else as they go forward to the chalice. It is worth bearing in mind that Orthodox laity would expect similar standards of preparation in others before any form of intercommunion could command general support.

Another area of change is one that has occasioned a powerful lament by Roman Catholic scholars such as Mary Douglas, the disappearance of the Friday fast⁸. The laudable intention of encouraging a positive act of charity does not seem to have really caught on, and an ancient ascetic discipline has been lost. The Church of England had already largely lost this discipline, but according to the reminiscences of a former chorister at Christ Church in Oxford; in the middle of the nineteenth century the choir school had a joint of meat every day for dinner except Wednesday and Friday when there was only pudding⁹. By contrast, although not everybody is equally good at observing them, the Wednesday and Friday fasts are still widely kept in all the eastern churches, and so are the other fasting seasons in addition to Lent; the Nativity fast before Christmas, that leading to the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and that prior to the Dormition of the Mother of God.

I notice that a number of my students do indeed go vegetarian in Lent, but on the whole, most western Christians have lost any sense that what one does or does not eat or drink can in any way be a matter relating to spirituality. All this indicates a growing apart - western Christians have become more centred on mental activity in prayer and spirituality, and I would respectfully suggest, have lost some part of a sense of incarnated spirituality. The body and how we use and treat it is relevant to spiritual life.

4. Liturgical Change.

All the western churches have been involved in programs of liturgical change, Vatican II made it seem all right to change everything, and now the eastern churches seem backward as well as exotic in their rigidly unchanging conservatism. Of course one can exaggerate the lack of change, but without a doubt, radical liturgical change on the western pattern seems unlikely to command a great deal of support across Orthodoxy, with the exception of certain pockets.

The sort of changes that are happening in the east are often towards greater clarity, together with a concern for a higher level of comprehension, and an increased level of more obviously active participation. These were of course the sort of things sought after by the leaders of the western Liturgical and Parish Communion movements, neither of which were at first, greatly concerned about revising liturgical books in a particular direction. Most were happy to adapt what was there already. This was particularly true of the Parish Communion leaders who tended to use the Book of Common Prayer, but who might for example substitute the Kyries for the Ten Commandments, place the Gloria near the beginning, and perhaps use the interim rite combination of the Prayers of Consecration and Oblation. Revisions that simply tidied all this up seemed harmless, but soon the itch to meddle became too strong, and now there is a powerfully pervasive attitude that clergy should be creatively changing things every week. There seems to be little recognition that this soon leads to manipulation of congregations and their responses to the liturgical celebration, and to a sense that they no longer 'own' the liturgy, it is something done to them by the clergy and their teams of experts.

I was amused when attending a weekday Lenten Matins in a Moscow church in April, when the deacon failed to appear for a Little Litany. There was a pause and the reader gave a prompt but there was still no sign of action, so a lady in the choir leant over and rapped on the iconostasis - that worked and out came the deacon! The point of this story is that there is a powerful sense of ownership of the liturgy by the people at large in all the eastern churches. They do not feel that the clergy control the services, but rather that the services control the clergy! This is probably made easier by the almost complete absence of anything like private masses or personal obligation to pray the Breviary or other daily office. The services are the responsibility of the whole church, and require the participation of at least some members of the church other than the clergy. The service I refer to took place in an ordinary central Moscow parish church, a priest and deacon were assisted by a weekday choir of three or four and a sacristan, as well as a congregation of between twenty and fifty.

By contrast, in a recent conversation with an old college friend who is a Roman Catholic parish priest, capable liturgical scholar, and able musician; he expressed the opinion that what he was doing in church was no longer seen as what the church does, but as what Fr Alan does. He is quite certain, and I fear he is right, that another priest will come after him and quite possibly sweep all that away and do his own thing whether good, bad or indifferent. I am reasonably confident that when

I leave my little parish in Portsmouth it will largely continue along exactly the same liturgical paths - my successor might shorten the Vigil and may say more prayers aloud, but he too will clearly be guided by the Typikon rather than by his own knowledge and tastes. Once again we have a widening gap of understanding and general outlook.

5. Ecumenical Presuppositions and Ecclesial Discipline.

My final area of widening division and misunderstanding is about how the churches relate to one another at the grass roots. Many non-Orthodox, including nowadays Roman Catholics, simply do not understand why they cannot receive communion in an Orthodox church, and often find it difficult to take no for an answer when an Orthodox says that he or she will not be receiving communion with them. I have heard it said by Anglicans and others that this is seen as a rejection of hospitality, and as a sign of our non-recognition of their orders, and hence of their right to be seen as legitimate Christian bodies.

We should remember that when I was a teenager, many Anglicans were not sure that they could welcome to communion those who had not been episcopally confirmed. I was told of Anglo-Catholic churches that had notices barring members of the Church of South India from receiving communion. It was until recently taken for granted that at a nuptial mass celebrating the marriage of a Roman Catholic and a baptized and practicing Anglican, only the Roman Catholic party would be able to receive Holy Communion - and that itself was a considerable move from a very bare wedding ceremony with no mass at all!

The Orthodox position is not however just one of conservatism - either, 'we have stayed true to the traditions of the past whilst you have rejected them', or perhaps; 'we are rather old-fashioned but we will catch up with you some time!' More correctly and more theologically, the Orthodox position is that intercommunion can only exist between those who are in communion with each other, and that can only be guaranteed by their bishops being in public and visible communion with each other. Throughout the liturgy, and especially in the Anaphora, we pray for our Patriarch and our diocesan bishop by name - not because they especially need our prayers, though they may well do, but as a public statement of communion, of oneness with this bishop, and through him with all the bishops and communities of the Orthodox church. In fact at one time, a priest would only commemorate his bishop, while the bishop alone commemorated the Patriarch, and the Patriarch commemorates all the other Patriarchs. To give to or receive communion from one who is not in communion with one's own bishop is to act out an untruth. This is not said as an evaluation of another church and its spiritual mission, it is a statement of a regrettable fact that will not go away just because we try to ignore it. We must instead continually move towards a true relationship of communion, which of course, entails doctrinal convergence as well as mutual appreciation of each other's spirit and forms.

One needs to add here that although we have frequently disobeyed the tradition of there being only one bishop in one city, the jurisdictional

chaos of modern Orthodoxy outside of its traditional lands is more an accident of history than a deliberate pastoral solution. In view of this, Orthodox can only regard with alarm the use of extra-diocesan structures in the Anglican churches, and certainly the idea of refusing the sacramental ministry of one's territorial diocesan seems to us to be tantamount to leaving the Anglican church, not attaching oneself to another part of it.

B. Opportunities.

1. Rediscovering the role of Women and the question of Ordination

Let us now turn to look at some areas where I believe there can be a fruitful mutual interaction on some of the pressing questions that address all the churches at the present time. Having started with the position of women in the church we will turn to that first.

I have already said that I think that it is too simplistic to simply say that the Orthodox church does not and cannot ordain women and leave it at that. As I indicated, the role of women in society is changing in traditionally Orthodox societies as well as modern Western ones, where many Orthodox may happen to live. The changing expectations of women in the world are going to lead to changing expectations in the church and they will, sooner or later, have to be addressed. In all this time the Orthodox would be wise to watch carefully and learn how other Christians in general, and Anglicans in particular, are coping with these changes.

A more interesting, if long-term, possible development is the mooted restoration of the female diaconate. The widely venerated St Nektarios of Pentapolis actually went ahead and did this in 1911 on the island of Aegina, not a great distance from Athens. A lot of careful discussion has been going into this question, not least over the question as to whether the deaconesses of the past were ordained in a sacramental manner, or simply appointed to an office. I feel that proponents of the first, that women deacons were truly ordained, just as much as male deacons, and not in a way analogous to subdeacons or readers, have established the argument. The problem of course, will be deciding exactly what function a modern woman deacon might exercise, when it is clear that ancient women deacons had a strong pastoral role, but a very limited liturgical one¹⁰.

This also raises the whole question of what we mean by ordination. I have often countered a certain kind of discussion of the possibility of ordaining women by suggesting that we really ought to think about how and under what conditions we can ordain anyone. It is clearly not enough for a person, man or woman, to be ordained simply because they have a powerful, internal sense of being called by God to the ministry - to put this as brutally as one can, no matter what one might think personally, if there is no call by the church, then there is no vocation. In fact the need of the church should always be seen as having priority over even the most deeply held conviction that one is indeed called.

When a deacon or a priest is ordained in the Orthodox church, the candidate is led to the altar by two other subdeacons in the case of a candidate for a diaconate, and two other deacons where the candidate

is to be ordained priest. At the gates of the altar the candidate is handed over to two deacons, where he is to be a deacon, and two priests, where he is to be a priest; in both cases these two now conduct the candidate three times about the altar. This is all rather touching ceremonial, but originally it was to stop the candidate running away!

Until recently most Greek village priests were chosen by the villagers and sent to the bishop to be ordained. The 'peasant priests' were close to their people, but it is important to note that they were not normally permitted to hear confessions or preach unless they had undertaken a good deal more education than most had ever had. This way of doing things is dying out as Greek society becomes more sophisticated and educated, clergy now have to address problems and questioning unknown to their predecessors. It is striking that just as the Orthodox churches step up the level of education required for ordination, the Church of England appears to be reducing it - but many local ordained Anglican clergy are not peasant farmers but early retired stockbrokers with time on their hands. Of course, I exaggerate, but I think my point is made; the church has a need of ordained leadership, not just to confect the Eucharist but to lead. Leadership qualities need to be recognized and those people persuaded to put themselves forward, not just for ordination, but for the rigorous academic and spiritual formation that they will need.

None of the churches today can sit back and regard their clergy as simply people who can validly provide them with the mysteries, the sacraments. Our theologies of ordination have got to include the leadership and formational values of a priest's life, preaching and teaching, as well as the mechanics of taking church services. All of us can learn from this process and mutually enrich one another through it.

We might also see the role of the deacon as one that could profitably be explored by all the churches. Deacons in the Church of England tend to be seen as clergy who can do everything but absolution and the Eucharist. The areas that they cannot do have been steadily whittled away, and much that was liturgically distinctive has been handed over to the laity on the mistaken grounds that the ability to carry out certain minimally valid sacramental acts is all that distinguishes a priest from a layperson. An Orthodox deacon, especially in modern Russia, is valued as a liturgical minister and may remain such all his life, and yet cannot bless objects or people, rarely, if ever preaches, and cannot even wear his vestments to take a service in the absence of a priest, because the priest must bless his vesting. On the other hand, it has been more difficult to establish the deacon's pastoral role in Orthodoxy. Once again I believe there are areas to explore about a wider and broader theology of orders that would profit Anglicans and Orthodox. The need is urgent as I saw when I arrived early for a conference in Kottayam in India last year. The conference I was attending was preceded by an Anglican liturgists' consultation, and I was getting reports of the discussions from the friend I was sharing a room with. The topic was liturgies of ordination, and it was clear from the lack of consensus that the sort of theological discussions I am calling for are urgently needed. Most urgently I would suggest, is a

need for Anglicans to get away from the clerical triumphalism of modern ordinations - not so possible in Orthodoxy because one can only ordain one person on a specific occasion.

2. Rediscovering Classical Theology

Continuing my reverse journey, I have noted with interest how many excellent works are written these days on the classical Christian doctrines. The newspapers may be more interested in the so-called trendy theologians who appear to deny central tenets of the Christian faith, but most of the weighty books, and much at the popular level as well, is expounding and exploring the central doctrines such as Trinity and Incarnation.

Fr Boris Bobrinskoy of the Institut Saint-Serge in Paris has recently published an excellent book on the Trinity in Biblical and Patristic tradition¹¹. His bibliography shows that he is in dialogue with modern authors such as Yves Congar, and Walter Kasper amongst Catholics; Jurgen Moltmann and Donald Baillie among the Protestants; and Olivier Clement and Bishop Kallistos among the Orthodox. Not only is this not a backward looking work even when reflecting on the work of the Fathers, it is a work that has a place alongside authors from different traditions who are working in the same direction. This is an excellent example of something very common in modern theology and as true of at least some Orthodox as it is of Westerners; theologians no longer work in denominational compartments hermetically sealed off from each other. We have an Orthodox, Nikolai Lossky, who is a major exponent of the classical Anglican thinker Lancelot Andrewes; we have Archbishop Rowan Williams popularizing the thought of Fr Sergey Bulgakov; and Vladimir Lossky (Nikolai's father) was a major influence in much modern Anglican thinking, including that of one of my own colleagues at Cuddesdon.

If in the past there was a sort of theology that seemed to be so anxious to commend religion to a scientific world view that it virtually sold the pass; we now have figures like my eminent colleague Professor Keith Ward engaging wholeheartedly in the debate between science and religion from a position that may be seen as thoroughly orthodox (with a small 'o')! At the same time it may well be as a result of the fact that we now do all read each other without looking for ammunition to fire at each other, that has made possible major agreements such as those on justification between Anglicans and Roman Catholics and Lutherans and Roman Catholics. There are signs that the *Filioque* could cease to be as divisive as in the past, partly because of the growing willingness of western Christians to remove this uncanonical insertion from the Creed, and also because many Orthodox can recognise a similar faith in other currents of western theology, though the compromise formula of Florence remains unacceptable¹².

Once again, if we are engaged in these discussions and learning from each other's theology, there are still many hopeful ecumenical opportunities to be explored and encouraged. I do however recognise that there are some anti-ecumenical theologians around as well, not least on the Holy Mountain of Mt Athos; but also in hard-line pockets of Protestant Anglicanism.

3. *The challenge to live a Christian Life in Today's World*

While the eastern churches now seem rather isolated from other Christians in their very strict fasting practices, there has been a very considerable rise in what one might call moral vegetarianism in the developed west. Sometimes this is driven by considerations of personal health and beauty, but sometimes it is a desire to make a statement about one's commitment to creation, especially animal creation. The vegan diet of Orthodox Lent when properly observed, and when observed in the right spirit, can itself be seen as a return, albeit temporarily, to the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve ate only of plants and trees (Genesis 1.29 and 2.15-16). The growing concern for our fragile earth is one of great importance for the present Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness Bartholomew I.

This concern for the environment seems more contemporary than the common concern for the suffering. But today we know so much more about suffering elsewhere in the world and we are sometimes overcome by the sheer magnitude of all that needs to be done. Christians can and do try to show the way through and I would just mention two interesting initiatives of which I have personal experience. The first was meeting a young woman from Russia studying Health Care Management in order for voluntary groups in parishes to have more effect on the run-down Russian hospital system. This lady was Orthodox, and, I think the wife of a priest, she was funded by a Roman Catholic charity and studied at a Roman Catholic college in Oxford. Another case is the hospice for terminally ill cancer patients started up in recent years by the Patriarch of Moscow. The Manchester born chaplain explained to me that this was supported actively by the Hospice movement in England.

Suffering of this kind is readily apparent and it is clear what we can do for each other. More complex is the situation of Christian believers, frequently Orthodox or of other Eastern churches, in countries like Serbia and Iraq, who feel that they are being scapegoated for the evils of rulers who can only be removed by serious force. Not only do they feel betrayed and abandoned by countries such as Britain and the USA which they had thought of as beacons of hope, many in other Orthodox countries agree with them. Fr Andrei Logvinov in the Russian city of Kostroma with whom I stayed last summer, is an intelligent man and a very good pastoral priest. To him Nato treatment of Serbia looks like a continuation of the cold war by other means. There is much room for a solidarity between Christians of east and west which would show in a practical way that there really is much in common, in spite of the continued attempts of some authors to write off Orthodoxy as uncivilised and probably unchristian.

4. *Rediscovering the Transcendental in Worship*

Another colleague, Fr Andrew Burnham of St Stephen's House, often says when we talk of traditional liturgical practices, "It will all come back". Maybe he is right, but a problem I would see is that so many people have no memory of the way things were in times past. How many younger people could even imagine how this fine church was used as a liturgical space when the high altar was the place where High Mass was celebrated? In a discussion some years ago, Dr Eamon

Duffy, author of *The Stripping of the Altars*¹³, opined that for some young Roman Catholics, including clergy, the past they wished to create was often an *imagined* past and not a *remembered* one. Numerous Roman Catholic authors have begun to explore the shortcomings of the reforms that followed upon Vatican II¹⁴, though they do not always appear to recognise that the glories of Plainsong and renaissance polyphony, and grand, measured ceremonial were not the weekly fare of the vast majority of Roman Catholics. The best authors are now pointing to the need to re-evaluate ritual as a human reality, taking many ideas from the works of modern cultural anthropologists. I believe that this approach has great promise for liturgical theology generally, but it is difficult to see the direction in which Roman Catholics might possibly go.

For many more Catholic Anglicans the changes have not destroyed the sense of transcendence and ritual behaviour as much as might be perceived to be true of Roman Catholicism. For others, the almost complete takeover of Evangelical Anglicanism by the charismatic renewal seems to have replaced austere dignity with sitting-room familiarity. For perhaps the large majority, there seems to be a sense of being neither one thing nor the other. Somebody really needs to tell clergy that simply pulling the altar away from the east wall, in a church with a rood-screen and lengthy Victorian choir benches, is going to do precious little for active participation. There are signs of hope in Common Worship, such as the Marriage rite's creative re-working of traditional material, and the presence of a Eucharistic prayer based on that of St Basil, and so having an integrated epiklesis which does not divide the Spirit's work in consecrating the gifts from the same Spirit's work in sanctifying the people.

There are Orthodox who want to change our liturgical traditions, I would rather prefer us to understand them better and put them into practice more intelligently than is sometimes the case. I was immensely impressed in Kostroma not only by the sense of the peoples' involvement in a very traditional liturgy, but by their enthusiastic participation in some litanies and hymns. I have a video filmed in the central Russian town of V'yazma in which the congregation obviously regularly join with the choir in singing the peoples' parts of the Anaphora. They would not have done this twenty years ago, they do so now with obvious reverence, and without the aid of any books to take their attention from the action in which they are all participants. I would think that one major way forward to increased participation and a greater appreciation of the flow that liturgy should have, would be to encourage a familiarity in words and music that weaned people from their dependence upon printed paper.

While in India I visited Mar Aprem, the Metropolitan of the Church of the East, in Trichur. His church uses the original liturgy of the Christians of India, the Chaldean or East Syrian. As you all well know, these Chaldean Christians were heavily Romanised by Portuguese missionaries and many broke away, and ended up using the West Syrian rite of Antioch. However a small group tried again to be Chaldean and yet free of the Romanising prelates, this is the group led by Mar Aprem. When he became bishop these people were still very

hybridized in their liturgical practices - this is no longer true, and the Iraqi people who attend the Assyrian church in Hanwell would now feel very at home in Trichur. It can be done, but I don't know how, my hope one day is to go and stay for a longer period with Mar Aprem and see how this was possible.

5. *Thinking about Ecumenism and the Church*

As liturgy has recently benefited from the discipline of ritual studies, so the liturgy in its more obviously sacramental aspects has benefited from a great re-evaluation of symbolism and how we might define a sacrament¹⁵. This process has been particularly valuable where it has helped to break the stranglehold of the argument about the number of the sacraments, two or seven. A re-discovery of broader sacramentality is welcome to Eastern thinkers who have themselves begun to move away from the slavish imitations of western theological method that were roundly decried by the late Fr Georges Florovsky. [The move is uneven of course, one will find much more evidence of an old-fashioned Roman approach to sacraments in parts of modern Russian than you will in Rome.]

An area of major progress must be that of Initiation. All the western churches have revised their liturgies of initiation to be integrated complexes of Baptism, Confirmation and Communion. The Roman Catholic church even adopted the Orthodox formula "The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" for the revised rite of Confirmation - they say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery! This is an ongoing process as I am sure I do not have to tell this audience, Roman Catholics have begun to break the necessary connection between the bishop and confirmation, and in some places have restored confirmation before communion; but the post-baptismal anointings are still unclear in meaning while confirmation is still perceived as a separate sacrament. In Anglicanism there is a growing desire to give communion to young children, which is entirely welcome to the Orthodox; and yet at the same time the Gordian knot of Episcopal confirmation remains uncut, and many upholders of a more restrictive Baptismal discipline show that they would really like to baptize only upon mature profession of faith.

Baptism is also important in that the greater part of the mainline churches involved in the ecumenical movement all recognise one another's baptism¹⁶. This has allowed the development of a promising new stress of Baptismal ecclesiology. Less fortunate is the tendency to downplay the Eucharistic ecclesiology associated with Afanasiev, and more recently with Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon¹⁷. One has noted a certain kind of modern Anglicanism that actually wants to downplay the eucharist on the grounds that the Parish Communion movement is in danger of turning the Church of England into a 'eucharistic sect'. To an Orthodox, the eucharist is never sectarian, it is always potentially open to the wider church and its always potentially open to the searcher. Part of the problem appears to be the prevalent idea that all church services must be immediately comprehensible even to the most unchurched stranger, and that all such strangers must be able to have all the privileges of membership as soon as they walk in off the street. It may be right that an

unchurched stranger be faced with something that sharply challenges them in a way they have never been challenged before - if it is all completely familiar might they not instead say, 'I know all that, there is nothing new here for me'? Equally there may be a need to make clear that if one wants to become part of this, there is a way in to be found and followed. Challenge should be a good thing, but it must be a challenge that has the power to attract - and much traditional worship had that.

Another aspect of Baptismal ecclesiology that needs examination is the way in which it privileges a western pattern of infant baptism for all, and confirmation and communion for the committed or at least the children of the committed. The newly baptized Orthodox is given communion at that time, or the next day - all Orthodox are full members and potential communicants even if they have not been seen in church for years. This I think, says that one cannot actually drive a wedge between Baptismal and Eucharistic ecclesiologies, they are aspects of the same thing and this needs to be pursued.

Conclusion

I hope that I have managed to show that although some of the more obvious aspects of ecumenism in general, and Anglican and Eastern church relations in particular, may appear to be in the doldrums, there is still a vast field that needs work. It is a field where we all need to learn from each other. The ARCIC agreed statements are of as much interest to the Orthodox as I hope Anglican-Orthodox statements are to others. So far the only ARCIC statement which gives me serious qualms is the most recent on Papal primacy. The document shows how most of the claims that were historically made by the Roman see for something more than a primacy of honour are unsoundly based, and often contradicted by the words of undoubtedly Orthodox Popes like St Gregory the Great. Unfortunately the document then seems to make a leap into a pragmatic argument that the church needs a visible centre of unity; this would be disputed by most Orthodox as having no grounds in scripture and tradition; pragmatism is not a theological virtue. The Orthodox emphasise that the true centre of the unity of the Church is precisely invisible; for it is Our Lord Jesus Christ - luckily I think that we can all agree to that.

Footnotes:

¹ E.g., John F. Baldovin SJ, "Liturgical Presidency: the Sacramental Question" in *Worship: City, Church and Renewal* (Washington, DC: Pastoral Press, 1991), 115-134.

² An excellent treatment of this is in Bishop Kallistos (Ware), 'Man, Woman and the Priesthood of Christ' in Thomas Hopko (ed), *Women and the Priesthood* (revised edition, Crestwood, NY, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999), 5-53.

³ *The Ministry of Women in the Church* (Redondo Beach, CA: Oakwood, 1991), 177-8.

⁴ *An Enquiry into the Hierarchy of the Anglican Episcopal Church*, in Athelstan Riley (ed), *Birkbeck and the Russian Church* (London: 1917), 278-9.

⁵ Although Orthodox reject the classical Roman understanding of purgatory, they would even more vehemently reject classical Protestant condemnation of all forms of prayer for the departed.

⁶ H.M. Waddams (ed), *Anglo-Russian Theological Conference, Moscow July 1956* (London: Faith Press, 1958), 64-5.

⁷ The requirement is not so strict everywhere, for example in this country many would communicate most Sundays, and confess some four times a year. The minimum is annual confession and communion at Easter.

⁸ See 'The Bog Irish' in *Natural Symbols* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1973), 59-76.

⁹ P. Barrett, *Barchester* (London: SPCK, 1993), 204.

¹⁰ For a good and comprehensive recent study see Kyriaki Karidoyanes FitzGerald, *Women Deacons in the Orthodox Church* (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1998).

¹¹ *The Mystery of the Trinity* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1999).

¹² *Ibid.*, 295-303.

¹³ (New Haven & London: Yale UP, 1992).

¹⁴ One of the best (and most judicious) is David Torevell, *Losing the Sacred* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000).

¹⁵ On symbolism see especially David N. Power, *Unsearchable Riches* (NY: Pueblo, 1984).

¹⁶ One notes with sorrow that some Orthodox still insist on re-baptizing converts, even from Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism - the reasons for this are often distinctly untheological when carefully examined. One would also express sorrow at the reports one gets of Anglicans baptizing with an 'inclusive language' formula that would be regarded as invalid by Orthodox and Roman Catholics.

¹⁷ *Being as Communion* (London: DLT, 1985).

PILGRIMAGE TO FINLAND AND RUSSIAN KARELIA SUSAN MATTHEWS

Pilgrimage to Orthodox monasteries and churches of Finnish and Russian Karelia June 6-12, 2000 in the company of Bishop Kallistos and Bishop Michael Manktelow of the Anglican Church.

We, the 28 pilgrims, flew to Kuopio where we were met by Arja Friman, our guide, and our driver, both infinitely helpful, patient and kind throughout our pilgrimage. From Kuopio we went to Iisalmi, a small town an hour to the north. I was astonished to find that our hotel, the "Artos", with its dining room completely covered in frescoes, was also an Orthodox Cultural Centre selling a variety of souvenirs including models of churches no longer in existence in Eastern Finland. We were welcomed by Father Elias whose church was just a stone's throw from the hotel. After a succulent meal with him we went to the church for evening prayers led by Bishop Michael. All our meals were delicious with a choice of meat, fish, cheese and vegetables and most of us did justice to all of these at every meal. I heard no complaints about the food!

We encountered our first lake shimmering in the evening sun that first evening and lakes and islands were to be a constant feature from then on. In Iisalmi we experienced our first white night... well, whiter than any I have ever known though thankfully I was not awake all night to check on the degree of darkness! Another feature of Finnish life I would like to mention is space... there it was in abundance, wide streets, shops, hotels, bars and so on and hardly anyone to be seen. This is not surprising though, when you learn that there are only about five million people in Finland, one million of whom live in the capital.

Since 1999 Iisalmi has been the setting for a winter passion play which is a remarkable depiction of the suffering of Christ. The play, "Via Dolorosa", is performed for three short periods each year from February to April in a park in the town centre. It comprises eight biblical scenes: Christ and the moneychangers in the Temple, the raising of Lazarus, Christ's entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, Judas's betrayal in the garden of Gethsemane, the trial before Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The audience follow these, scene by scene, starting outside the Orthodox church and finishing in front of the Lutheran church, a distance which corresponds to the exact length of the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem (450 metres). Snow, ice, music and lights are all part of the performance which takes approximately an hour and a half.

The highlights of the following day were a guided tour of the Finnish Orthodox Museum and a visit to Archbishop John in Kuopio. The beautiful icons, vestments and many other items exhibited were brought from the Old Valamo monastery in Lake Ladoga, Russia, saved by the monks as they fled during the Winter War in 1940. Thanks to God, Lake Ladoga was frozen enabling them to escape on vehicles before the spring thaw. Archbishop John received us most warmly speaking excellent English. He spoke to us of the history explaining that Finland was christianised from Novgorod. Early in the 18th century St. Petersburg was founded and inhabited by Russians. Until that time the area had been inhabited by Finns. The Russian Church granted autonomy to Finland in 1923 when the Church became autocephalous under Constantinople... without any special Russian characteristics. Finnish became the liturgical language about 1870 and the seminary was established in 1918. The Finnish state is helpful in that it pays some salaries, has given some buildings and maintains the Finnish Orthodox Museum and Archbishop's rooms in which we were sitting. He mentioned that the Russian state is not asking for the treasures to be returned (like the Elgin marbles by Greece); they realise that without the Finns nothing at all would have been saved.

Back in Iisalmi, the following day Bishop Kallistos celebrated the liturgy for the feast of the Ascension. We said goodbye to Father Elias and as we continued our journey by coach I had time to reflect on a word 'pilgrimage' as I understand it in the Orthodox Church. Three well-known books came to mind though first and foremost Jesus Himself says 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life'. But what does this 'Way' comprise? This is THE question for all of us. It seems to me a good place to start is with books that we, acquainted with Orthodoxy, if not all members of the Orthodox Church, have possibly already read...



The Pilgrimage Party at New Valamo



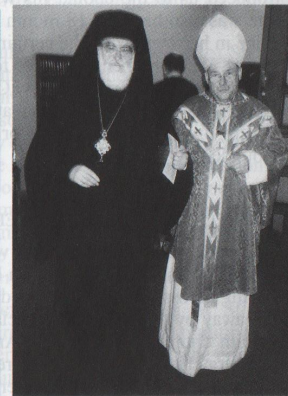
Bishop Kallistos and the Abbess at Lintula Convent



Archbishop John of Karelia and all Finland



Old Valamo Monastery



Bishop Kallistos and Bishop Michael Manktelow



Ilomantsi Church

'The Way of a Pilgrim', 'Great Lent' by Father Alexander Schmemmann and 'The Orthodox Way' by Bishop Kallistos. In the first few pages of each of these we are given a real sense of journey, pilgrimage. To read them through we are given signposts, life-giving directions which we do really need to come back to many times in our journey, our pilgrimage through life. I should also like to mention here how Orthodoxy is very much a family affair, not necessarily always in the conventional sense of father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, etc., though this is not infrequent, and in the wider sense of the family of the Church. It was touching how our visit to the church at Ilomantsi demonstrated this.

ILOMANTSI

When we arrived the service was already underway. Crisp clear voices of only four people, three young women and one young man, rang across the church so sonorously, an exemplary rendition of the dialogue between the priest Fr Rauno and the choir. After the service the priest introduced us to the choir... his wife, a son, a daughter and a niece! There was also his little 18 month old daughter evidently enjoying the service in her own way.. she certainly did not cause her mother to miss one note. We were then all invited to a splendid meal followed by wine-tasting at his nearby Irijala Charity Centre beside a lake. In south-eastern Finland we were rarely far from water. We could not always be sure that we were on land or by a lake or on a sizeable island more or less surrounded by water.

RUSSIA OLD VALAMO MONASTERY

We were, however, quite sure we were on a group of islands when we reached Old Valamo monastery in Lake Ladoga. We had spent an hour bumping across the water in a hydrofoil to reach it. Our bishops were taken away by two monks as special guests while we were shown into the main church by our guide, Anatoly, a theology student from St. Petersburg. Here, as outside, there was considerable scaffolding and badly damaged frescoes. How interesting it would be to return in about ten years, there are after all 120 monks now and the monastery has been reopened since 1990. Old Valamo Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Saviour was founded by Sts Sergius and Herman in the tenth century some time before the Baptism of Russia in 988. Many Russian saints either took their vows or spent some time at Valamo and later became founders of monasteries all over Russia. St Herman of Alaska, the first Orthodox saint of North America and who took Orthodoxy to the American continent in the 18th century had also been a monk at Valamo.

Life for the monks of Valamo has always been hard. Situated on the border between Russia and Sweden, the cloister was frequently raided and demolished by the Swedes. The monks, following God's commandment, never took arms to defend themselves. They either took refuge in the nearest monasteries elsewhere or surrendered to the mercy of the invaders and died as martyrs. In the 17th century the cloister was completely destroyed and for a hundred years these lands were under Swedish rule. After the Northern War at the beginning of the 18th century the cloister was revived and by the middle of the 19th century

it had become one of the richest and most famous monasteries in Russia.

Most of the buildings still standing at Valamo were erected during the 19th century by the superior of the monastery, Hegumen Damaskin. Thanks to the effort of the monks under his guidance, sketes were founded, churches and chapels built, roads constructed and veneration crosses on the roadside before which one prayed were erected. The monastery had about 30 workshops, including small factories. The cloister produced tar and candles, had its own tannery, brick works and forge. The farm had 70 cows and there was also a stable with as many horses. The monastery provided itself with everything it needed. In addition, it had an icon-painting workshop, an art studio, a photography workshop and an outstanding library.

Yet prayer was always set above all else. The unhurried course of the church services, including the feast services that lasted all night according to ancient tradition and the Znamenny chant, all brought peace to the soul aspiring to God.

Hegumen Nazary took the strict Rule from the monastery of Sarov at the end of the 18th century. It regulated every sphere of the monks' life. They were to spend most of their time in silence, were not allowed to keep donations given to them personally, were not allowed to drink alcohol or smoke. Furthermore, they could not leave the cloister or enter into any correspondence without the Hegumen's special permission. All three forms of monastic life (coenobium, skete and pustyn, or hermitage) were practised at Valamo. By the beginning of the 20th century there were 13 sketes in the monastery, situated in different parts of the archipelago and on some other islands in Lake Ladoga. Unfortunately, many of the monastery buildings were later destroyed.

At the beginning of the 19th century the disciples of St Paisy Velichkovsky who went to Valamo restored the 'starets' tradition. This meant that every novice had an elder or 'starets' to whom he confessed all his deeds and thoughts to help him to overcome self-will and pride. The elders thus guided their disciples to salvation.

Over the years the fame of the monastery's spiritual life, its unique natural setting, the beauty and austerity of its services have attracted many pilgrims, both ordinary people and visitors of distinction. I should point out here that it is necessary to make an overnight stay to attend the services as there are none, with the exception of certain feasts, in the middle of an ordinary day.

From 1811 to 1917 the archipelago belonged to the Grand Duchy of Finland, part of the Russian empire. After the Revolution of 1917 it became part of the newly founded independent Finland. For this reason, unlike most other Russian monasteries, it was neither destroyed nor even closed. It remained one of the very few living oases of Holy Russia. However, in 1940, during the war between Finland and the Soviet Union Valamo was returned to the USSR. Shortly before the end of the war, in February 1940 the monks, aware of persecution by the Soviet authorities, were forced to evacuate to Finland. They founded a new monastery on the estate of Papinniemi, 100 kilometres from Kuopio, which became known as New Valamo.

Not until half a century later, in December 1989, was monastic life restored to Valamo.

In 1991 the monastery was granted stavropegial status, which means that it is under the direct control of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and that the head of the monastery, the Hegumen, is appointed by the Patriarch. In addition to the coenobite form of monastic life the sketes are also being restored. The cloister has preserved its old Rule, one of the strictest of monastery Rules. The ancient Znamenny chant, unique to the Valamo tradition, is being revived. The main festivals of the cloister are the feast days of Sts Sergius and Herman, the monastery's founders, on 11 July and 24 September and the day of the Transfiguration of the Saviour on 19 August. These occasions are celebrated with great solemnity especially when the Patriarch visits the island.

Before taking their vows those seeking monastic life undergo several stages of noviciate. They live with the monks at the cloister and work on restoring the newly reclaimed buildings or concern themselves with everyday matters which require much work and patience.

The cloister provides assistance to the secular residents of the island. A parish with a Sunday school for children and adults has been organised and a charitable canteen has been opened. In addition the monastery boats provide communication with the mainland. In Moscow, St Petersburg, Priozersk and Sortavala the 'podvorye' of the Valamo monastery have been reorganised. A 'podvorye' is an annex affiliated to the main monastery but located in the town, linking the monastery with the outside world.

There is a lot of hard work ahead, work which will return Valamo to its former glory. The process is underway; prayers are said in sketes and churches, the ringing of the main monastery bell echoes across the waters of Lake Ladoga, services take place at the proper time and the souls of pilgrims derive spiritual strength in the Faith and in prayer.

KITEE

On our return to Finland we went to the small town of Kitee. Arriving a little behind schedule we joined a vigil. We found ourselves in a beautiful new church and community rooms. Everything was so fresh, so colourful both inside and outside and the choir was led by a newly-arrived professional choir director. The sights, sounds and smell of incense were such a delight here, as elsewhere in the parishes we had visited, a striking contrast to the state of the Old Valamo churches so badly damaged, not yet restored. We were then invited to another abundant buffet which we tucked into without delay before short, informal talks by our bishops and general chatting with members of the congregation.

LINTULA CONVENT AND NEW VALAMO MONASTERY

We had time for only two rather short visits to these beautiful places. Alas, here too we were unable to attend any monastery services; our visits simply not corresponding to the times of the services. As at Old Valamo we were kindly shown around, by the Abbess at Lintula convent and by a novice monk at New Valamo. New Valamo is in outer respects

the antithesis of the Old in that it welcomes visitors and caters to all their needs. Meals were available at any time in a self-service dining hall. There was also a large shop. The abbot graciously invited our bishops and us to tea with him. Finnish hospitality is superb. Russia is another time as well as another place. They do things differently at the monasteries.

HELSINKI

And so it was time for us to fly back to Helsinki, to say good-bye to Karelia and our driver. Arja accompanied us to Helsinki to introduce us to our new guide, Liza.

On Sunday Bishop Michael celebrated Holy Communion and confirmed three young people in the Anglican church, dedicated to Michael Agricola, and celebrated Holy Communion. He asked Bishop Kallistos to preach the sermon for Pentecost.

Bishop Kallistos spoke to us of the effect of the Holy Spirit on our lives, summed up by the present Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatios, thus:

1. GIVER OF LIFE

Without the Spirit

God is far away

Christ is in the past

The Gospel is a dead letter

The Church is a mere organisation

Authority becomes domination

Mission is turned into propaganda

Worship is reduced to bare recollection

Christian action becomes the morality of the stone

But in the Spirit by virtue of our unbreakable co-operation with Him

God is near

The Risen Christ is present with us

The Gospel is the power of life

The Church signifies Trinitarian communion

Authority becomes liberating service

Mission is (an expression of) Pentecost

The Liturgy is a making-present of both past and future

Human action is divinised

The Patriarch is saying that the Holy Spirit makes the Risen Christ immediately present to us here and now and makes everything come alive. Bishop Kallistos then goes on to develop this in further detail, thus:

2. FINGERS TOUCHING

Take fingers touching expressed in an image and then in two words.

(i) Image: Sistine chapel... creation of Adam... God-Adam... fingers touching... through this touching of fingers Adam is filled with the breath of life... becomes a living soul. (Gen.2:7)

(ii) First word (2 Cor. 13:13)

Communion (Koinonia)

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of communion, fellowship, relationship, touching (recall image)... relationship/touching between God and me (vertical relationship) and between me and fellow human beings (horizontal relationship).

The Holy Spirit

transforms distance into nearness
makes individuals into persons
turns isolation into community
and loneliness into togetherness

(iii) Second word Creed (Zooipoion)

The Holy Spirit is the Maker of Life...

The letter kills but the Spirit gives life (2 Cor. 3:6)

on a cosmic scale

creating order and beauty in the world around us

on a personal level

moulding character, shaping vocation

in Church, through the Sacraments

consecrating the Holy Gifts in the Eucharist

the supreme moment when the Holy Spirit renders Christ

immediately present

but also in the sacrament of Confirmation/Chrismation

3. A PERSONAL PENTECOST

The meaning of Confirmation is a personal Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descends as in tongues of fire in Jerusalem, invisible but with no less power. We may not feel that in full consciousness today for Christianity is not a question of feelings but of personal commitment.

Bishop Kallistos ended by inviting us all to come to know the Holy Spirit in our hearts on a level deeper than feelings and to pray for the renewal of our faith in the Holy Spirit:

Who makes Christ present

through Whom we touch God

Who establishes Communion

Who, All-Powerful, yet infinitely gentle and generous,

creates life and recalls for us the prayer to the Holy Spirit used by the Orthodox Church at the start of almost every act of worship:

Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art in all places and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life, come and abide in us, cleanse us of all impurity and, O Good One, Save our souls.

On our last day in Finland Bishop Kallistos was invited to celebrate the Liturgy at the splendid Uspenski cathedral. It was a privilege to be present at the Liturgy on the Monday, the day of the Feast of the Holy Spirit. The Finnish Church is on the same calendar as those in the West (at present time the only Orthodox Church in the world to be so). We were blessed in Karelia, both Finnish and Russian, and then the Orthodox among us returned to Britain to celebrate Pentecost all over again!

Heartfelt thanks to all my fellow pilgrims for their excellent company and good humor and to David Bond for all his hard work of organisation on our behalf.

Any errors in the outline of Bishop Kallisto's sermon are entirely my responsibility.

Susan Matthews