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Editorial

This issue, I think, manages to give a good glimpse of what the AECA is all about. Vasilije Vranic, the Velimirovic-Bell Scholar for 2004-2005 introduces himself and his work to us all. The scholarship in many ways is key to all that we do in terms of promoting dialogue, and I know that readers will warm to Vasilije's closing comments "that upon the completion of my studies I shall devotedly work for the promoting of the Anglican-Orthodox dialogue."

George Woodman then introduces the work of The Institute of St John the Theologian for Eastern Christian Studies, which is in the Czech Republic to us. If you wish to support the work of the Institute, then their address can be found at the end of the article.

John Thorne and William Cooper-Bailey give their own glimpses of the pilgrimage to Syria and Syrian Orthodoxy, which took place in Autumn 2004.

Koinonia is completed by the splendid 2004 Constantinople Lecture, which is well worth reading and pondering over. Bishop Basil demonstrates himself in his lecture to be a theologian who is primarily a pastor, as well as a theologian who is supremely pastoral.

I commend the journal to you!

Kevin Ellis
Editor

News from AECA

Pilgrimages in 2006

Members of AECA will already have received notification of the pilgrimage being led by Fr William Taylor to Ethiopia in April 2006. The take up for the pilgrimage has been very speedy indeed.

Fr David Bond, our Pilgrimage Secretary gives notice of the following pilgrimage also to be held in 2006.

I am beginning to work on the AECA pilgrimage for 2006. Our destination will be Armenia and Bishop Geoffrey Rowell who led our very successful pilgrimage to Syria in 2004 will again be our leader.

It is too early to provide details of itinerary or cost (although it will continue to be an important part of my cost planning to make it accessible to as many pilgrims as possible) but so that you can put the dates in your diary we expect the pilgrimage to run from 10th to 21st September 2006.

Although I do not expect you to commit yourself at this stage it would help me if I had some idea whether or not you were likely to be interested in joining the pilgrimage. Indications of interest by letter or email – preferably not by phone – will be welcome.

I looked into the possibility of visiting Georgia at the same time but there were good reasons for not so doing. Please do contact Fr David if you are interested.

The inaugural AECA essay writing competition

The Executive Committee of the AECA is holding an essay writing competition which is open to all ordinands and candidates for ministry.

The title of the essay is **The Debt that the Church of England owes to the Churches of the East.**

The length of the piece should not exceed 3000 words. The deadline for the piece is Monday 23 January 2006.

Essays will be judged by a panel appointed by the AECA Executive Committee.

The 1st Prize will be £150 and guaranteed publication in Koinonia.

Further details about style etc can be obtained from the Editor.

St Helen's Chapel, Istanbul

The Editor of Koinonia commends the following letter from Ian Sherwood who is Chaplain of St Helena's Istanbul, with Christ Church Pera, and All Saints Moda for your consideration.

Dear friends,

As you know St Helena's Chapel Istanbul, damaged in the al-Quaeda bombing of 2003, murdered three members of our chaplaincy and about thirty other friends and neighbours.

In 2005 we discovered that our churchyard had been further destroyed and was being secretly leased to a neighbouring hotel development, and that it had been proposed to our Bishop that the chapel itself should be leased as a place of entertainment.

We are hopeful that after centuries of use of the land, the British authorities, and Turkish courts, will not accept such a commercialisation of a sacred place.

If you wish to be on our list of supporters calling on the British Foreign Secretary to restore the churchyard and chapel, please send your name, title/job to Canon Ian Sherwood parson@tnn.net

With every blessing and prayer,

Yours sincerely,

Ian Sherwood
Chaplain of St Helena's Istanbul, with Christ Church Pera, and All Saints Moda.

Velimirovic-Bell Scholar for 2004-2005

In September 2004 the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association generously awarded me a scholarship that enabled me to pursue my studies in the Patristic period of the Church History at the Faculty of Divinity of the University of Cambridge. When I learned this, my joy was twofold. Besides the obvious reason, the secured scholarship, I was also especially happy about its source, the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association. Yet, it was not accidentally that I applied to the Association for assistance. During the lengthy course of my studies I became acquainted with the work of the Association and its noble objectives, and it was before long that I became an admirer of its work.

I was especially pleased when I learned that the Association founded a new scholarship to support the studies of the Serbian students in England. My joy became even greater when I discovered that it was symbolically named after Bishops Nikolai Velimirovic and George Bell. Accidentally (or not?) shortly before that I read a book by Dr Muriel Heppell, named 'George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovic: A Story of a Friendship'. I was absolutely touched by the love, friendliness and understanding that Bishop Nikolai, as the emissary of the Kingdom of Serbia in Britain during the First World War, experienced in his contacts with the British people. Yet, it was the remarkable sympathy of the Anglican Church and its officials in particular, especially Bishop George Bell that left a lasting impression on me. Around that time the Anglican Church kindly offered to the wounded by war Serbia support in education for a limited number of students. The offer was gratefully accepted. These students later became the most prominent experts in their fields in Serbia.

I deem it superfluous now to say that I found a symbolic connection between my situation and that in the time of the 'Friendship of the Bishops Velimirovic and Bell'. I felt that my situation was remarkably similar in many ways, but the most obvious was the disadvantaged present position of Serbia and once more the willingness of the Anglican Church to provide assistance. Moreover, academic assistance was involved again. Now, it remains for me only to hope that by this generous support of the Association I will serve accordingly to my

Church and my Nation, while working simultaneously for furtherance of the relations between the two sisterly Churches, the Orthodox and the Anglican.

Primarily, my vision is to open the Serbian Theological Scholarship, which is at present mostly orientated towards the Greek and the Russian scholars, to the rich tradition of the Patristic Scholarship in the West (and especially to the Anglican Patristic scholarship, after its revival in the 'Tractarianism' and the 'Oxford Movement'). I think that thus completely new academic horizons would be opened to the Serbian Church Historians. This aim of mine has also influenced the course of my present academic research.

While researching the theological issues that provide reasons for Ecclesiatical divisions, I became interested in working on the 'Christology of Eusebius of Dorylaeum', whose prominent role at the Councils of Ephesus 431 and Chalcedon 451 provided the ground for division between the so-called Chalcedonian (most Western Churches and the Orthodox Church) and the non-Chalcedonian (the Monophysite Churches and the Church of East in Syria, who split already after Ephesus 431). Despite the important role he played in the Christological controversies of the 5th century, Eusebius of Dorylaeum remains a very obscure person in the general Church History scholarship. He was the first to identify the teaching of the Archbishop of Constantinople Nestorius as false and to openly resist it by cutting short his sermons and by publishing a comparison between Nestorius' teaching and that of Paul of Samosata. Also, some twenty years later we find him in focus again, but this time as the first one to identify the unorthodox teaching of the ambassador of the Alexandrian see to Constantinople, the prominent Archimandrite Eutyches. He was also Eutyches' chief prosecutor at the local Resident Synod of Constantinople 448, where after Eusebius' strong argument, Eutyches' erroneous teaching was condemned, despite the hesitation of the Archbishop Flavian's. At the 'Robber Council' 449, together with the Archbishop Flavian, he was anathematised and condemned. Immediately afterwards he appealed to Pope Leo I and two years later was rehabilitated at the Council of Chalcedon 451, where he took active role in the Synodal Commission for the definition of faith. The

importance of his part in the shaping of the ecumenical Christology is evident. Yet, he remained an obscure character in the History of the 5th century Christianity. Therefore, my thesis will aim to critically analyse his Christological position and the reasons for his marginalization, proposing that neither his life nor his theology could be reason for it.
Depending of the financial availability, my further plans are to continue with a PhD research in the same field. Namely, I intend to examine the Christological teaching of one of Eusebius's contemporaries, Theodoret of Cyrrhus.

The two Ecumenical Councils of the 5th century Ephesus I (431) and Chalcedon (451) are chiefly associated with the shaping of the orthodox Christology. We often refer to Cyril and Pope Leo I on the victorious side and on the other to Nestorius, Eutyches and Dioscorus as the main players in the Councils. However, I think that there is another person, besides Eusebius of Dorylaeum, unjustly marginalized, who played equally important role in shaping of orthodoxy. That is Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus. His erudition made him an intellectual leader and literary champion of the Antiochene party at the time of Ephesus and the invaluable theological advisor at Chalcedon 451. However, a century after his death Theodoret's Christological works were condemned as 'Nestorian' (for dividing the two natures in Christ into two completely separate entities and thus for preaching two Sons or two Christs) by the Council of Constantinople 553, even though some of the finest Christological reflections of the 5th century owe their existence to him (e.g. the Act of Union between Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch in 433). Undoubtedly, this left a deep scar on his reputation and his marginal status in Christological terms is largely due to this denunciation.

My thesis will seek to critically analyse the Christological teaching of Theodoret of Cyrrhus and the reasons for the condemnation of his works. This analysis will take its starting point from the last major treatment of Theodoret's Christology by Bethune-Baker, as presented in *Nestorius and his teaching: a fresh examination of the evidence* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1908) in order to analyse and evaluate Theodoret's Christology.

The importance of both works is to be found in the fact that it will be the first extensive research in English of the Christology of both Eusebius of Dorylaeum and Theodoret of Cyrrhus (and to the best of my knowledge in other languages as well, apart from the outdated work by Glubokovskii in 1885). Practical application of the work lies in its importance for Ecumenical dialogues between the 'Nestorian' and 'Chalcedonian' Churches, where a better understanding of the history of Christology may facilitate the ecumenical dialogues. I also hope that this contribution to the ecumenical dialogues will have the domino effect and will promote the dialogues between the so-called Chalcedonian Churches (those that accept the decisions of Chalcedon 451), in which are numbered both the Anglican and the Orthodox Churches.

At last, but not the least, I would like to thank wholeheartedly Fr. William Taylor, Fr. Milun Kostic, Fr. Irinej Dobrijevic, and Mr. George Novakovic, who introduced me further to the work of the Association that helped me immensely on my path of academic pursuance. I am also very grateful to the Association's Committee for awarding me the Velimirovic-Bell Scholarship for 2004-2005, and thus enabling me to follow my studies in Cambridge. My gratitude also goes to Fr Kevin Ellis, the editor of 'Koinonia', who generously offered to me this opportunity to present my work and express my gratitude to the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association. I sincerely hope that I will be able to justify the confidence granted to me. However, it is certain that upon the completion of my studies I shall devotedly work for the promoting of the Anglican-Orthodox dialogue.

Vasilije Vranic

The Institute of St John the Theologian for Eastern Christian Studies

The Institute exists 'to advance the Orthodox Christian Faith' in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in Eastern Europe by a variety of activities. This is a brief introduction to the work it does and to why it came into being.

The foundation of the Institute

The Institute was built up by Petr Balcárek and his wife Manuela Gheorghe from Olomouc in the Czech Republic and by a network of people inspired by them in both Britain and the Czech Republic. The initial planning was done while they were resident in Oxford between 1994 and December 2000 and its main development in the Czech Republic has taken place since they returned to live in Olomouc. The Institute was founded at a meeting in the St Theosevia Centre, Oxford, on 26 September 1999. It operates through two committees, in Britain and the Czech Republic. In the period from 1999 to the end of 2000 some speakers were brought over to introduce Czech Orthodoxy to audiences in Britian. Since then the main focus of the British branch has been on building up the work in the Czech Republic.

The religious and cultural background in the Czech Republic

The Czech Orthodox Church is small. It consists of two dioceses, one in Bohemia and one in Moravia (with two more in Slovakia). It is of relatively recent origin, arising out of a movement that developed in the Roman Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s. Little has been written in the Czech language about Orthodoxy and much of what there is consists of hostile polemic written by Russian authors during the Communist period. However Eastern Christianity has had a long, if intermittent, presence in this region, dating back at least to the arrival of the missionary Saints Cyril and Methodius in 863. There are evidences of Eastern Christianity in Czech culture and they form an important part of national tradition. Janáček's Glagolitic Mass provides one example. However they are not widely understood correctly.

The Czech churches operate against a very secular culture. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest. Of the other churches the Evangelical Church is the largest, followed by the Czechoslovak Church, known (not, in historical terms, quite accurately) as the Hussite Church, and which arises out of a movement in the Roman Catholic Church in the 1920s and has a liberal theological tradition. As well as the Evangelical Church, there are several other historic, and extremely lively, reformed denominations. Academic theology is dominated by traditional Protestant and Catholic themes. There has been little study of Orthodoxy or of Patristics, although this is changing. There have

been distinguished Byzantinists in Czech universities, but Byzantium is only beginning to emerge as a subject studied in academic courses.

All these factors add weight to the importance of a body that encourages awareness of Eastern Christianity and provides authoritative guidance about it.

Olomouc

Olomouc is an ancient city, set in the Haná region of Moravia. In the Middle Ages it was the capital of the united kingdom of Bohemia and Moravia. Its continuing importance in the history of the region is demonstrated by the large number of historic buildings from all periods. It is the seat of both a Roman Catholic Archbishop and an Orthodox bishop. The major Roman Catholic religious orders maintain a strong presence with Dominican, Jesuit and Capuchin houses among others. There is also an Orthodox female religious community nearby, at Vilémov. The main Protestant denominations are well represented. Olomouc is also a university city. The Palacký University has lively departments of theology and philosophy and Olomouc is a centre for the training of religious and clergy of various denominations, including Orthodox. All these considerations make it an ideal base for the Institute's activities. The Institute meets in a room that became available in a medieval house in a historic square in the centre of Olomouc. After years of neglect it has been beautifully renovated for the Institute.

How the Institute promotes its aims

As mentioned above, the fundamental aim of the Institute is the advancement of the Orthodox Christian faith. The means by which it seeks to do this are as follows:

1. by developing a library of books primarily on the Orthodox Christian tradition, Church history, iconography, Church music and related subjects for the benefit of Orthodox Christians and others in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in Eastern Europe;
2. by promoting dialogue in tolerance and mutual respect between different Christian traditions and others in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in Eastern Europe;
3. by organising conferences and study days;

4. by issuing a bulletin and other publications (including translations);
5. by co-operating with academic institutions and universities in the Czech Republic and elsewhere;
6. by the arrangement of contacts and reciprocal visits.

We shall now consider these activities in more detail.

The Library:
The Library has been built up since 1998 both by Petr Balcárek and Manuela Gheorghe themselves and through the generous donations of many individuals and libraries. It now consists of some 7000 books, together with periodicals, offprints and theses. The collection is concentrated in several areas. A collection of primary source material has been built up in the fields of Biblical studies and Patristics. There are substantial sets of the patristic and post-classical Greek volumes of the Loeb Classical Library and other series of Greek texts. There is a good collection of Syriac texts, as well as sets of the Philocalia in English, Greek, Russian and Romanian. Among modern Orthodox theologians there are complete sets of the writings of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, Archimandrite Sophrony Sakharov, and Georges Florovski (the later including material that has not been published in book form). Over 90 per cent of the writings of Bishop Kallistos are also there.

Another important area in the collection is religious art and iconography. There is comprehensive coverage of Eastern religious art and architecture with emphasis on Russia, Romania and Greece. Valuable adjuncts to this collection are a collection of major exhibition catalogues and fine sets of Christies' and Sotheby's sale catalogues.
Wider fields of church history and Byzantine studies are also covered with a particular stress on relations between the churches. The collection on all these topics and their relation to the Czech Lands aims to be as complete as possible.

This is a small selection of what the library holds. It is a unique resource in the Czech Republic and is already being widely used by researchers from Olomouc and elsewhere.

Meetings and Other Activities:
In each academic year since 2002-03 the Czech branch of the Institute has hosted a series of lectures, with speakers drawn both from the Czech Republic itself and from Britain. There have been about eight lectures in each series, held at monthly intervals. The series on monasticism in 2003-04 covered, among other aspects, Celtic monasticism, a Dominican view of contemporary monastic life, the architecture of a new monastery and monastic music. Art history has been another major theme. Sylva Novotná, a fine icon painter (who has painted the icon of the Institute's patron), spoke about the relationship of icon painting to the Liturgy. The distinguished art historian Professor Rudolf Chadraba spoke on the origins of early Christian art. Other topics have included textual criticism and the relationship of Christianity to political power. Speakers have come from a variety of religious traditions, including Anglicans, Roman Catholics both lay and religious and a member of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren. Meetings have brought together Orthodox, Protestants, Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics. Through this range of contacts and through the wide variety of users of the Library the Institute fulfils a valuable ecumenical role.

This ecumenical dimension has been further extended in several collaborative events with other institutions. In February 2004 Dr Dimitri Conomos from Oxford University combined giving a lecture at the Institute on the musical tradition of Mount Athos with one on early Christian and Byzantine music at the Musicology Department of Palacký University, Olomouc. In March 2004 Archimandrite Symeon Bruschweiler of the Monastery of St John the Baptist, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex, spoke on 'The Mystery and Dimension of the Person' at the Department of Eastern Christian Studies of the Roman Catholic Theology Faculty of Palacký University, Olomouc. The next day he spoke on the Jesus Prayer at the Institute.

Publications:

The Institute's principal publication has been its newsletter which appears twice yearly in both English and Czech and is available to its members. It includes not only news of the Institute's activities but also a

variety of other features. Visitors from Britain give accounts of their visits and their impressions of Czech life. There are articles on religious history and interviews with Orthodox clergy of both the Czech and British churches. In many ways the English newsletter complements the work of the Czech branch, by providing insights not otherwise available in Britain. The intention is to post some of this material on the website the Institute is in the process of developing.

Another recent publishing development has been the launch of *Vychodokřesťanská studia / Eastern Christian Studies,* an occasional publication consisting of publications of some lectures delivered in Czech and one in Slovak and Czech translations of some lectures delivered in English. It has also included the first translation produced by the Institute, of Dr Sebastian Brock's *The Wisdom of St Isaac the Syrian*.

Contacts:
The Institute of St John the Theologian for Eastern Christian Studies has already made an impact in developing the knowledge of Orthodoxy and of the Eastern Christian tradition in the Czech Republic. It has also done much to make a British audience aware of the Czech Lands, their culture and religious history. It can be contacted at the addresses below:
The Institute of Saint John the Theologian for Eastern Christian Studies, Dolní náměstí 22, 77100 Olomouc, Czech Republic, **tel.** +420-585.203.034, **e-mail:** isjt@post.cz.

George Woodman, Belfast

Pilgrimage to Syria – a Personal View

Two messages stand out to me about the AECA Pilgrimage to Syria. Firstly one should never eat watermelons which have been grown in polluted water: however magnificent they look, you will get a bad case of holiday tummy. Secondly if possible, one should appear to the world as a Rowan Atkinson look-alike. I successfully avoided the former, and achieved the latter: being mobbed by crowds of children from a large

primary school all demanding "The autograph of Mr. Bean" is a most pleasurable sensation.

Syria, and more particularly Mesopotamia which we visited though has a long history. Abraham lived there, in the fertile region between the Tigris (now on the border with Turkey) and the Euphrates, as did Isaac, Jacob and Esau and many of the prophets. In the Christian era, not only was it where Saint Paul went on retreat after his conversion in Damascus, but particularly through the monasteries which sprang up in north east Syria, southern Turkey, and northern Iraq, which were a central powerhouse of early Christian thinking and writing.

The Pilgrimage was however well structured, and started from Damascus (which one rapidly discovered was most effectively explored on foot. Old Damascus was a notable rabbit warren of small streets and shops. The Group was split between two adjacent monasteries: one Orthodox and one Roman Catholic – the latter being generally more modern and efficient, and both were adjacent to a Melkite Church which combined Orthodox services with Roman vestment colours). The ancient remains – notably at Aleppo, Crac des Chevaliers, Palmyra and Bosra were impressive, some from the Crusader era, but many back to the second millennium BC when Aleppo and Damascus were already well established cities, and generally well preserved in the dry climate.

The highlight of the pilgrimage was undoubtedly the stay in the brand new and very large Syrian Orthodox monastery at Tel Wardiat, a "stone's throw" from both the Turkish and Iraqi borders (we did not verify this: throwing stones at the Iraqi – or indeed Turkish – borders is not encouraged, but we were apparently near),and represented another of the oldest corners of Syria, although a long way inland – around 300 miles, from Aleppo and Damascus.

Tel Wardiat in Mesopotamia (between the Tigris and the Euphrates) is of course at the heart of a hot, although well irrigated and prosperous land. Cotton picking was in full swing, wheat harvesting, and oil (nodding donkeys) were much in evidence, and the Christian Church – mainly Syrian and some Armenian Orthodox – is growing fast with

some 4 churches and one large new church school opening every year. Construction costs (and indeed all wages) are very low, and the Christian churches enjoy a high reputation: the new churches (open to all) all have a chilled water dispenser (important in what is essentially an arid land), and a fenced concrete yard outside the church with plastic chairs where anyone can take their picnic, meet their friends and have a gossip. Wages are generally low, and one was aware of everyone in the Christian community participating by offering their skills from work, especially architects and engineers.

The monastery itself was built with a cloister around a marble flagged square, featuring a fountain in the centre. One was reminded yet again of the significance of Water as the Old Testament symbol of blessing – one thinks particularly of Noah, Moses in the bulrushes, the crossing of the Red Sea, Elijah and the prophets of Baal, when the water of blessing blotted out all the sinfulness, but the chosen people were saved. One thought too of Christ's first miracle in Cana in Galilee (somewhat to the south-west – not visited – attempting to wander over the Israeli border is also discouraged), when His first sign after His baptism was to convert the water of blessing, into wine, symbolising the blood of redemption, so of course a church or monastery by the waterside was most appropriate, stressing the importance of confirmation or chrismation as opposed to merely baptism.

The monastery, many of the new churches, church schools and indeed a planned thalassotherapy or hydrotherapy spa were largely the brainchild of our host – Archbishop Matta Roham of Al Jezira and the Euphrates, and until a few years ago Syrian Orthodox Bishop of New York, an extremely energetic Christian leader with a shiny black turban, much attached to modern technology, a mobile telephone, and a very new large black Mercedes with tinted windows.

The keynote was set the first evening in Tel Wardiat with vigorous dancing in the monastic Cloister led by a band of young people notably many Scouts/Guides (Syrian Orthodox had a Syriac Cross on their dress woggle; Armenians had a katchkar. Dress woggles were in metal or silver as opposed to routine woggles which were made of, well anything but usually leather or twigs). The music of course was live;

the lyrics to the songs being a translation into Arabic of hymns and songs by – well yes of course – Saint Ephraim. One wondered what Ephraim would have made of it all. On the other hand "praise him in the cymbals and dances" (Ps.150) would surely have come to mind.

The welcome from Archbishop Matta was however effusive, not only with the quality of the monastery with en-suite facilities, air conditioning and bottled mineral water in the bedrooms, but also Archbishop Matta came with us to visit many of the churches, church schools, and establishments in his archdiocese. One sensed it was a great occasion for the local parish priest as well. In the major towns, we were often welcomed by a large enthusiastic Scout band parading in the streets, and the importance of the Scouting movement soon became apparent as a way of introducing Christianity into the schools. Schoolroom in general have many posters on the walls, but I have never seen so many posters with quotations from Lord Baden-Powell (in English usually) as there were in the schools in Syria. Usually the children would sing traditional English songs – notably "Old Macdonald had a farm" and "Clementine" which apparently are top of the pops (or rather the latest in cool) in this country, and one could soon appreciate the Queen's reaction to the National Anthem from the number of times we heard these favourites. That was of course until they realised that Mr. Bean had arrived.

The Archbishop was also enthusiastic to welcome other parties of visitors, notably if possible British school choirs and others to meet their opposite numbers, and the schools we visited frequently put on massed bands in the streets, and special events to welcome us. The downside of course as has already been pointed out is that it is a long way inland and away from the more touristic areas, and there is not much else there to attract visitors.

One was indeed conscious of the central importance of Syrian Christianity. Syriac Christian literature, which particularly in the early days, was distinguished by a lively illuminated style, more Semitic based, and very different from the more philosophical style of the Greeks and from Latin theology which like the Pont du Gard, is rather rough and ready, but superbly engineered and durable.

Pre-eminent among the local saints is indeed Ephraim the Syrian (c 306-373), who mainly wrote spiritual songs and hymns, full of imagery and life: his pictures of the mountain of Paradise, guarded by a cherub with a sword, are still in print today. Also of major importance is Isaac of Nineveh (late 7th century), one of the world's great writers on spirituality, and the desert and Mesopotamian air seems to have bred a profound ability to reflect on prayer and the Christian life, and perhaps equally important, to write it down in more than one sentence, while reflecting spiritually as opposed to writing a rule book.

Strange though were the Syrian icons in the churches, which were not only representational in a sugary style, but frequently surrounded by fairy lights as are sometimes seen on Christmas trees. This was unexpected, and certainly one might have expected to see more stylistic icons, rather like many of the modern Coptic icons which combine modern simplification with traditional themes, analogous to some of the cartoon line drawings frequently seen in the secular press.

It is of course the land too of the Melkite and Maronite churches, which emerged in the seventh century, and which use the Orthodox service books, although in communion with Rome. Particularly the Melkites are renowned at the practical level in this country for their Byzantine Daily Worship – the one volume Orthodox Breviary and Missal in English, containing the full 8 daily offices, the three great Orthodox Liturgies and the funeral service, all in one volume, with clear rubrics in red (what else) and with marker ribbons. One is continually surprised at how little experience people in this country appear to have of Orthodox services in English: a few months ago, one of my friends received a severe shock on hearing the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom for the first time in English – it was revealed as a serious act of worship, as opposed to a fascinating performance, with magnificent costumes, but (like the opera) unintelligible lyrics.

Although not overt, one was aware though of anomalies and political tensions. At the most superficial level this manifested itself by a lack of American instant food chains, ATM machines for drawing out cash, and the normal range of supermarkets. Almost without exception shops

were all small – about Petra or Pompeii size, and prices unmarked so that negotiation was necessary. The streets generally felt safe (at least the pavements: crossing the road was something else), and busy, if full of potholes. Although tap water was claimed to be safe, in practice almost everywhere provided bottled water.

The Christian church is of course in a minority, and although it is respected, it conducts itself with caution: the photograph of the Prime Minister was widespread, even in the monastery. However, there appeared no hesitation about blocking main streets either to welcome us with a massed Scout band, or for a full church procession with icons. The Christians have apparently scored major successes, for example by brokering a peace to hostile feelings between the Arabs and the Kurds in Mesopotamia, when there had been rioting: it turned out that although both are mainly Muslim, both trusted the Christians.

The last morning before we were leaving Syria, not least the magnificent Damascus brocades and damasks bought by many of the party for priests' vestments and altar frontals (silk brocade which looks red when viewed from one angle, but green from another, would surely give theological difficulties when deciding whether it was a suitable vestment for the day in question), we had a Pontifical Eucharist (Common Worship) celebrated by the Bishop of Gibraltar, and an "Orthodox Matins in English". As one of the party pointed out with a twinkle in his eye, as no-one on the trip had an Orthodox service book, our version of "Matins" really owed as much to Thomas Cranmer as to John Chrysostom. On the other hand not time wasted, or as Saint Babai the Great (of Syria and Iraq) put it "like a man chasing a gazelle while riding on a donkey. He fails to catch the gazelle, and wears out the donkey". Perhaps no bad insight into the improving links between churches of East and West.

Useful Further Reading

The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life - *ed. Sebastian Brock* – Cistercian Publications. 1987 387pp. Although notionally on Prayer and related subjects, actually a good and readable introduction to 12 of the key Syriac Fathers, with clear explanations and

introductions to the relevant passages. Taken gently in sections it is an interesting and edifying read. Perhaps a good idea for Lent.

Byzantine Daily Worship – *compiled by Archbishop Joseph Raya and Jose Devinck* – Alleluia Press 1969 1019pp. A combined Orthodox Breviary (8 offices) and Missal with the Funeral Service in a single volume. Melkite, which essentially means Orthodox services, but traditional Catholic organisation, with rubrics in red and ribbons. Less detailed, but easier to follow than a Hapgood Service Book (which of course was based on the Book of Common Prayer format), although translations less familiar.

Hymns on Paradise – Saint Ephrem the Syrian *Tr. and ed. Sebastian Brock* – St. Vladimir's Seminary Press 1998 240pp.

Web Sites

There are many web sites on Tel Wardiat and Archbishop Matta Roham. Use Google or any search engine to find a variety.

William Cooper Bailey

The AECA Pilgrimage to Syria
21st September to 2nd October 2004

I am happy to report that this Pilgrimage matched and even surpassed the many I have been on before. When travelling abroad, one very often sees plenty of interesting things but rarely makes contact with local people. This was definitely not the case of the Pilgrimage to Syria, where we stayed mainly in monasteries and met many clergy and lay Christians, in this predominately Muslim land. Our first interesting encounter was with Ignatius IV Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Damascus and all the East. Before the reception we made our way among many battered old buses, parked near by. They turned out to be school transport for the three nearby church schools. We entered the beautiful limestone courtyard of the Patriarch and were ushered into a wonderful reception hall with chandeliers, Persian carpets, velvet

curtains and most important of all, red and gold chairs, sufficient for all twenty eight pilgrims to sit down on. Bishop Geoffrey Rowell, our leader explained who we were and the Patriarch responded in excellent English and in very friendly terms. He explained that his diocese had thirteen churches in Damascus, two seminaries and one theological university for the training of priests. There is no shortage of vocations. Unbelievably there are seven bishops in Damascus and nine Christian denominations but all are on extremely friendly terms. There is no terrorism in Syria and relations with the 80% Muslim majority are very good. Sadly a much respected Muslim cleric, the Grand Mufti of Aleppo had recently died. He was a saintly man and a good friend to the Christian minority. We also learned that since the second world war nearly half the Christians in Syria had emigrated, mainly to North America.

We then journeyed on to Aleppo where we attended the Divine Liturgy, celebrated by his Eminence Archbishop Johannes Ibrahim. The singing was wonderful and afterwards a number of students received their Baccalaureat certificates. The Archbishop invited Bishop Geoffrey, Revd Victor de Waal and Canon John Beckwith to help with the prize giving ceremony. Their duties included kissing a number of very attractive young lady students. At the reception afterwards, we had the opportunity of meeting and speaking with a number of parishioners, over generous refreshments. We then journeyed ever northwards to St Mary's Monastery near Haseke, the home of a young dynamic man, Archbishop Matta Rohan, Syrian Orthodox Archbishop of Al-Jezira and the Euphrates. For three long days this dynamic and charismatic cleric took us round his diocese. Since he became bishop he has built two monasteries, one being the wonderful limestone round arched building we stayed in, with its beautiful open air central cloister. The Archbishop has built four schools and a factory to process food. He has started four youth choirs and many scout troops. We visited some of his schools and in several places we were welcomed by scout bands. By means of youth choirs and the scout movement he had rejuvenated the commitment of teenagers to the church in a most amazing way. After three years in his company we were full of admiration for his Christian leadership. Needless to say, he spoke excellent English and was able to explain his work on the

coach journeys. Fr William Taylor, our Chairman, is hoping that a youth pilgrimage might be organised to enable young people from England to meet young Syrian Christians at St Mary's Monastery. The Archbishop refused to charge us for his generous hospitality but in return our members responded generously to an appeal to help Archbishop Matta's missionary work.

We then sent out for the lovely city of Deir-Ez-Zor where we walked over the suspension bridge over the mighty Euphrates. We visited the fine modern octagonal Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs. This church was built to remember the one and a half million Armenians massacred by the Ottoman Turks in 1918. The pictures of this genocide brought tears to my eyes. Bishop Geoffrey and the parish priest said prayers for the dead. In some ways this massacre was even more poignant than the Jewish holocaust because very few people know about this terrible event and the modern Turkish Government refuses to acknowledge that the massacre happened at all.

Needless to say we visited many great ancient sites, the Roman City of Palmyra set in a desert oasis, the huge Crusader Castle of Crac des Chevaliers, the great Citadel of Aleppo, the Grand Mosque of Damascus and the mighty ruined church of St Simeon Stylites, the largest church in Christendom when it was built. We also went to Malula, the village where people still speak Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, and we travelled to the Iraq border. Wonderful as these places were, it was the "living stones" that we encountered which impressed me most. Meeting with present day Syrian Christians, many of them teenagers, was a most exciting, moving and broadening experience, which I shall not forget.

We are hugely indebted to Fr David Bond, our Pilgrimage Director, and to Fr William Taylor, our ubiquitous Arab speaker. Finally, we owe a great debt to Bishop Geoffrey for leading us. His wide knowledge of the Eastern Church and his sensitive impromptu prayers at appropriate places were both invaluable to the great success of our Pilgrimage which enabled us to appreciate the vibrance and richness of the Syrian Christian tradition

John Thorne

'For the Remission of Sins': Eucharist and Atonement

Constantinople Lecture

25 November 2004

Yours Grace, friends, I have agreed to speak to you this evening on an aspect of the Eucharist that puzzled me for some time, until I began to look at background of our eucharistic prayers in another manner.

You will all be aware that there is a serious discrepancy in the Gospels concerning the date of the Last Supper. In the Synoptics the Last Supper is a Passover meal. In the run-up to their last meal together the disciples ask Jesus, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?'(Mk 14:12). And he gives them directions, directions that we shall look at later. The effect of this is that the Crucifixion itself takes place on the following day, Friday, on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

In the Gospel of John, however, the Passover meal takes place after the Crucifixion, since when Jesus is taken from Caiaphas to Pilate, those who take him there do not 'enter his headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover' (Jn 18:29). According to John, the Passover meal had not yet taken place, and the Crucifixion was carried out at the same time that the paschal lambs were being slaughtered.

These two chronologies cannot be reconciled, and in the 1950s a French scholar, Annie Jaubert, suggested that at the time two Jewish calendars were in use, one the 'official' lunar calendar, according to which Passover did indeed fall on Saturday that year, and another, older solar calendar, represented by calendrical texts found in certain passages of the Old Testament and in the materials from Qumran. According to this older, solar calendar, Passover fell on Wednesday

every year, and it was on this day, in the evening, that Jesus and his disciples ate together in the Upper Room.

It is unlikely that we will ever know exactly what happened during those days, but the directions given by Jesus for locating the place where he and his disciples would share the Passover meal do give cause for reflection. In a lecture I heard in Moscow, Sergei Averintsev pointed out how strange they are. Christ says to two of his disciples: 'Go into the city, and a *man* carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him' (Mk 14:13). But in the Middle East *men* never carry water! It is exclusively a woman's task, as it is in Albania, for instance, today. Just think of Christ's meting with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well: even *he* doesn't think of drawing water for himself. If a man carries water, it is because there are no women present to do the job. Averintsev concluded, not unreasonably, that the man in question belonged to an all-male, celibate brotherhood similar to that whose existence seems to be confirmed at Qumran. If this man was not utterly taken aback at the disciples' question about preparations for the Passover, he too must have been following the 'old' calendar.

I have begun in this way because I wish to underline that we probably know much less about the origins of the Eucharist than we normally think we do. For example, what are the links between the Eucharist and the Passover as liturgical celebrations? We have already seen that it is not possible to be sure that the Last Supper was a Passover meal. This is not the only problem, however. The tradition in its developed form considers the Eucharistic Liturgy to be a sacrifice carried out by a priest, ultimately by Christ, our Great High Priest. But the Passover is a sacrifice carried out by a *layman*, originally in family units wherever the family happened to be, as in Exodus 12, and later, after the reform of Jewish worship following on the Exile, 'at the place where the Lord thy God shall place his Name', i.e. in Jerusalem, as prescribed in Deuteronomy 16. These sacrifices would presumably have taken place in the courtyards and streets around the Temple proper. It is interesting to note that Philo was aware of this anomaly within Judaism, and synthesizes his understanding by saying that 'on this day the whole nation performs the sacred rites and acts as priest' (*On the Special Laws*, 2, 145).

Another problem with the connection between the Eucharist and Passover is the fact that the tradition of the Church is unanimous in associating the Eucharist with forgiveness, with 'the remission of sins'. The phrase occurs in Matthew's account of the Last Supper (Mt 26:28), linked with the blessing of the Cup, and is usually extended in the Eucharistic Liturgy to the breaking of the Bread as well. The Passover meal, however, is simply a memorial of a past event, celebrated to commemorate the fact that when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain, the Lord 'passed over' the houses of the Israelites that had been marked with the blood of the Passover lamb (Ex 12:26). I don't think there is any reference in the Passover *seder* to the forgiveness of sins.

What I would like to do this evening is to approach this question from another angle entirely, by starting from the Byzantine Eucharistic Liturgy as it is celebrated today.

Let me begin by looking at the church building itself, which forms the architectural context for the celebration of the Eucharist, as this is understood in the Eastern tradition. For a start, the building is not in the first instance called a 'church', but a 'temple' (*naos* in Greek, *khram* in Slavonic). The Septuagint uses *naos* regularly to translate the Hebrew *heikhal*, or 'temple', and we should note that *ekklesia* in the New Testament is used exclusively to refer to people, and not to a building. We might note in passing that the word 'synagogue', *synagogi*, which refers in the first instance to the 'gathering' of the people, is already used in the New Testament of the building in which the gathering takes place, and so the development in the meaning of *ekklesia* is quite understandable. Perhaps we should also note that the synagogue excavated at Dura Europos in the 1920s and 30s, which dates from before *ca.* 256 AD, contains wall paintings that deliberately recall the Jerusalem Temple. Clearly the notion that a place of meeting outside Jerusalem could mimic the Temple was available at an early date.

The architecture of a Byzantine church, however, also mimics the Temple. You will all be familiar with the use of space in an Eastern church, how you generally enter what is called a *narthex*, a long narrow space across the western end of the church, through which you pass

into the nave, or body of the church, only to find in front of you the icon screen that separates the body of the church from the sanctuary in which is located the altar. A prominent feature of the icon screen is the curtain that is drawn across behind the central doors and kept closed except at certain times during the services.

This structure replicates the structure of the Temple, in that it provides for gradual access to the most holy place of all, the sanctuary. In the Jerusalem Temple the Temple building itself was surrounded by courtyards, the outermost for the gentiles, the next for Jewish women, the next for Jewish men, the next, still outside the Temple, for the priests and the altar for animal sacrifice, after which you entered the Temple proper, or *heikhal*, and saw in front of you the curtain that separated the *heikhal* from the *dvir*, the Holy of Holies itself, into which only the High Priest could enter, and that only once a year.

This pattern of gradual access to what is 'most holy' was the architectural norm in the ancient Middle East, and indeed is found throughout the world. What is significant here is the use of the curtain in a Byzantine church, which recalls quite clearly the veil of the Temple. And just as the veil of the Jerusalem Temple was rent in two at the time of Christ's crucifixion, representing the access gained to God by Christ's self-sacrifice on the Cross, so the veil in the icon screen of a Byzantine church is pulled aside at significant moments in the Liturgy to give liturgical expression to our increased access to God through the revelation of the Gospel and gift of sacramental communion.

Let us look now at other aspects of the Byzantine Eucharistic Liturgy. The Byzantine altar is square. It may be called the 'holy table', but it does not look like a normal table. In a Russian church today, it can be so large that a short man can hardly reach to the middle of it. In Exodus 27 the altar of sacrifice outside the tabernacle is also square, five cubits by five cubits and three cubits high. In the Second Temple it was much larger. The Byzantine square altar, however, is located inside the sanctuary, behind the icon screen, and not outside the temple in the open air, where it had to be originally because of the flames on the altar and the smoke generated by burning flesh. The move is possible

because the sacrifice of the Eucharist takes place 'without shedding of blood'.

There has been a certain spatial compression here, as there has been in the case of the seven-branched candlestick or lamp stand, which originally stood in the *heikhal* on the north side as you entered, but is now placed behind the altar in a Byzantine church. The practical reason for this seems clear: it is out of the way, outside the body of the church, which is now filled by a congregation of lay people who would not have had access to the Temple in Jerusalem. But we need to bear in mind also the vision of St John as described in Revelation. A door is opened in heaven and he sees the heavenly sanctuary in which there is a throne and 'one seated on the throne'. In front of the throne are seven 'lamps of fire, which are the seven spirits of God' (Rev 4:2-5; cf. Is 11:2). In a classical Byzantine church the bishop's throne is behind the altar, against the east end of the apse, and the seven-branched candle stand is directly in front of him behind the altar. Thus today, looking through the holy doors at the bishop on his throne behind the altar, you will actually see him 'in the midst of the seven lamp stands', just as St John saw 'one like the Son of man' (Rev 1:12f.). The effect of moving the seven-branched candle stand into the sanctuary is to create a scene that is closer to heavenly sanctuary seen by St John than was the Jerusalem Temple.

Another form of compression has taken place in the case of the 'table of shewbread', now generally referred to as 'the table of the bread of the Presence' (*lehem panim*). This was originally in the *heikhal* opposite the seven-branched candle stand, and in the early Church seems to have remained in the nave to which the *heikhal* corresponds as the table on which the gifts to be offered during the Eucharistic Liturgy were collected before being presented for consecration. In the Septuagint of Exodus 39:36, in the expression 'the table with all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence', the word 'table' is translated as *tin trapezan tis protheseos*, 'the table of the offering'; and the shew-bread can simply be called *oi artoi tis protheseos*, 'the breads of the offering'. The latter expression appears in Matthew 12:4 in connection with the conflict over plucking grain on the Sabbath, and in the form *i prothesis ton arton*, 'the setting out of the bread' in the description of

the tabernacle in Hebrews 9:2. Origen already connects the bread of the Presence with the self-sacrifice of Christ and with its commemoration in the Eucharist (*Hom. in Lev. 13.3,5*), while with the passage of time the term *prothesis* itself came to designate both the place where the preparation of the gifts takes place and the table on which it is done. That place and its table seem to have moved first to a side chapel, as in the Great Church of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople, and then into the sanctuary itself, as is the practice in most places today. Once again, the reasons for this move are probably of a practical nature: it gets the work of preparation out of harm's way.

The point I wish to make here, however, is simply that the connection between the Eucharistic Liturgy and the furnishings of the Jerusalem Temple have been part of the Eastern tradition since at least the beginning of the third century.

Let us now look at another aspect of the Liturgy, the entrance of the bishop. We tend to forget that the Byzantine Eucharist is designed to be celebrated in the first instance by a bishop. The episcopal Liturgy is the normative form and that celebrated by a 'presbyter' or 'priest' is an adaptation and diminution of that form. By the way, even those of you who have seen an episcopal Liturgy celebrated in this country are unlikely to have seen it fully done.

From the commentary on the Liturgy by Maximus the Confessor (+662 AD) we can see that the Eucharist in his day began with the entry of the bishop into the church through the west door. This is still the case, when the episcopal Liturgy is properly done. In present practice, after he has said the entrance prayers, he stands in the middle of the church and lets himself be divested of all his outer garments. Then, while the choir sings appropriate verses from the Psalms, he is formally vested for his role in the service as the *arkhiereus*, the 'high priest' of the community. In the liturgical books that are used he is regularly referred to as the 'high priest', *arkhiereus*, and not as the 'bishop', *episkopos*. Already in the first Epistle of Clement, at the end of the first century, the functions of the Jewish high priests, priests and Levites are brought into relation with the various ministries of the Church, and by the fourth century the term *arkhiereus* can be used without hesitation of any

bishop, though in the earliest years of the Church it was used only of Christ.

What has happened here, of course, is that the bishop has come to be understood as a 'type' of Christ. The true celebrant of the Liturgy is Christ, but the bishop represents him liturgically. This is what Maximus has in mind when he says that the entry of the bishop into the church represents the entry of Christ into the world: 'The first entrance of the bishop into the holy church is a figure and form of the first appearance in the flesh of Jesus Christ the Son of God and our Saviour in this world' (*Mystagogia* 8). It is not difficult to conclude, though Maximus does not say this, that the removal of his outer garments and any outer splendour represents Christ's 'taking the form of a servant' (Phil 2:7), while his vesting in his robes represents his becoming 'a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of his people' (Heb 2:17).

Let us look at what happens next. According to present practice the bishop remains in the centre of the church while the choir sing the appointed psalms and hymns. Then the Gospel Book is brought from the sanctuary by the deacon, who then precedes the bishop as he enters through the holy doors into the sanctuary for the first time. In earlier practice it seems that these psalms and hymns would have been sung on the way to the church, and that the bishop would have entered the sanctuary almost immediately. In any case, Maximus assumes that after further singing the bishop ascends to this throne behind the altar: 'After this appearance, his [i.e. Christ's] ascension into heaven and return to the heavenly throne are symbolically figured by the bishop's entrance into the sanctuary and ascent to the priestly throne' (*Mystagogia* 8). In other words, *before* the reading of the Gospel the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ have symbolically already taken place, and the reading from the Gospel that follows the bishop's ascent to his throne represents the preaching of the Apostles after Pentecost.

Having taken his place on the heavenly throne, however, the bishop soon descends. For Maximus this represents the Second Coming, and the dismissal of the catechumens that takes place before the Great

Entrance and the presentation of the gifts corresponds to the separation of the sheep and the goats that will take place at the Last Judgement (*Mystagogia* 14): 'After the divine reading of the holy Gospel the bishop descends from his throne and there takes place the dismissal and sending away of the catechumens and of others unworthy of the divine vision of the mysteries to be displayed.'

At this point there follow, in the Byzantine Liturgy, the presentation of the gifts and their consecration on the altar behind the icon screen. In other words, the liturgical *anamnesis* of all the God has done for us, including the celebration of the Last Supper, takes place symbolically *after* the Second Coming and therefore in the world to come. Then, after the consecration, the curtain is drawn, the holy doors are opened, and the bishop emerges with the deacon to give communion to the faithful. As he gives communion to each person he says: 'The servant of God, *N.*, receives the most precious and holy Body and Blood of our Lord and God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins and life eternal.'

Now the fundamental movement here, and the fundamental purpose, is the same as that associated with the Day of Atonement as described in Leviticus 16. On that day, once a year, the high priest, by himself, enters into the holy of holies, bearing with him as an offering the blood of a bull with which he purifies first the holy of holies itself and then the *heikhal*. This he does for himself and for his family. He then repeats this action using the blood of one of the two goats that have been offered (the other being the so-called 'scape-goat' that will be sent out into the wilderness 'for Azazel'). Then he purifies the altar of sacrifice outside the temple using the blood of both animals, and finally ends up by purifying the courtyard of the temple. In doing so he carries out the process of atonement for himself and for all the people, thereby restoring them to a proper relationship with God. The process is not just one that forgives sins, however, but one that conveys life. As God tells Noah in Genesis 9:3f.: 'Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you ... Only, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.' Blood is life, and blood that has been carried into the holy of holies, into the very presence of God, and then brought out again bears with it the divine life, capable not only of wiping away sin, but of conveying to

those who are touched by it, even indirectly, the blessing, the grace, the life of God.

We have striking testimony to this effect in the Bible itself. Let me cite the passage from Ecclesiasticus (*The Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach*) that describes the appearance of one particular high priest when he came out of the Temple on the Day of Atonement: 'The leader of his brothers and the pride of his people was the high priest, Simon son of Onias, who in his life repaired the house, and in his time fortified the temple. He laid the foundations for the high double walls, the high retaining walls for the temple enclosure. In his days a water cistern was dug, a reservoir like the sea in circumference. He considered how to save his people from ruin, and fortified the city against siege. How glorious he was, surrounded by the people, as he came out of the house of the curtain. Like the morning star among the clouds, like the full moon at the festal season; like the sun shining on the temple of the Most High, like the rainbow gleaming in splendid clouds; like roses in the says of first fruits, like lilies by a spring of water, like a green shoot on Lebanon on a summer day; like fir and incense in the censer, like a vessel of hammered gold studded with all kinds of precious stones; like an olive tree laden with fruit, and like a cypress towering in the clouds. When he put on his glorious robe and clothed himself in perfect splendour, when he went up to the holy altar, he made the court of sanctuary glorious' (Eccl 50:1ff). It is no wonder that, according to the tractate *Yoma*, after the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement the people sought to greet and touch the high priest, often keeping him from his home until midnight.

The basic point I want to make here, however, is that the liturgy of the Day of Atonement, its movement and its purpose, is repeated in the Byzantine Eucharistic Liturgy. The high priest, the bishop, representing Christ liturgically, proceeds through the temple proper, through and beyond the curtain separating the holy place from the holy of holies and effects atonement through the consecration of the Bread and Wine. He and his clergy are the first to partake thereof. In this way God and man are reconciled through the forgiveness of sins and the gift of life. The bishop, as high priest, then comes out of the holy of holies, following the deacon who bears the Body and Blood, and, through the

distribution of the gifts, effects atonement for the people, who are now, of course, the true and living temple, both individually and as the corporate Body of Christ. Christ is indeed the Passover lamb, slain in Jerusalem (according to the Gospel of John) on the very day that the Passover lambs were slain. But the thrust of the Byzantine Eucharistic Liturgy does not reflect the Passover celebrations. It reflects the liturgy of the Day of Atonement.

How can this be? What is the link that joins a liturgy that developed under the kings of Israel (and would seem to go back even further, into the period before David and Solomon) with the Liturgy celebrated today in the Byzantine Church?

We have already seen that links and points of contact can be found in the early Church Fathers, and indeed in the Book of Revelation. But the real connection becomes clear when we look at the Epistle to the Hebrews. There we find a combination of Temple tradition and the world-view of antiquity that will enable us to understand how the Eastern Church could have developed the Liturgy it celebrates today.

The first thing to note is that the author of Hebrews is convinced that there are two temples. (At this point I should point out that he is writing at a time when the Second Temple was still standing, i.e. before its destruction by the Romans in 70 AD. This is made clear in Hebrews 8:4: 'Now if he [i.e. Christ] were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law.' The letter could, in theory, have been written at any time between Pentecost and 70 AD.) Christ himself, he says, is now 'seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent that the Lord, and not any mortal, has set up' (Heb 8:1f.). This invisible and true tent or tabernacle was shown to Moses on Mount Sinai, and he was asked by God to model the earthly tabernacle on what he had seen. 'The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights' (Ex 24:16ff.). While

Moses was in the cloud God gave him instructions as to the worship he expected would be offered him by the children of Israel: 'And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them. In accordance with all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so shall you make it' (Ex 25:8f.). The instructions are then conveyed in verbal form, but it is clear that the writer intends to tell us that Moses actually saw the heavenly tabernacle whose copy he was to construct. In it were the mercy-seat, the ark of the covenant, the cherubim, the seven-branched candle stand, the table for the bread of the Presence, or 'shew-bread', the altar of incense and all the utensils needed for their use.

Now according to Hebrews Christ, at his Ascension, actually entered the tabernacle that Moses saw. 'For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf' (Heb 9:24). 'But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things to come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption' (Heb 9:llf.) [Here we might note that the phrase 'not of this creation' tells us that there have been two creations, one perceptible to the senses and the other imperceptible and invisible. As we say in the Creed: 'maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible'.] From this we can seen that the author of Hebrews thinks of Christ's Ascension as his entry into the heavenly holy of holies, the eternal created pattern established by God on the basis of which the earthly tabernacle and temple were built. In this particular passage the author speak of Christ's obtaining 'eternal redemption (*aeonian lutrosin*)', but a few lines later he speak of his having won for us 'remission (*aphesin*)' [of sins], as he does later on in Heb 10:18.

The connection between Hebrews and the Byzantine Liturgy is provided, as we might have suspected, by Maximus the Confessor. In his explication of the Divine Liturgy, before he deals with the service itself, he addresses the hidden meaning of the church building. He notes, for a start, that the church building carries on the activity of God

'by imitation and in figure'. For God, 'who made and brought into existence all things by his infinite power contains, gathers and limits them and, in his Providence, binds both intelligible and sensible beings to himself and to one another' (*Mystagogia* 1). The church building itself can thus 'be shown to be working for the same effects as God, in the same way as the image reflects its archetype', for 'men, women and children who are distinct from another and vastly different by birth and appearance, by nationality and language, by customs and age, by opinions and skill, by manners and habits, by pursuits and studies, and still again by reputation, fortune, characteristics, and connections' are all 'born into the Church' and 'are made one by it through faith'. Though Maximus does not say this specifically, the church as a building performs this function liturgically by bringing the faithful 'together in one place' (*omou epi to auto*: Acts 2:1), thus realising God's purpose for the world and for mankind. For Maximus, however, the church building is also 'an image of the perceptible world as a whole, since it possesses the divine sanctuary as heaven and the beauty of the nave as earth. Likewise the world itself is a church, since it possesses a heaven corresponding to the sanctuary, and for a nave it has the structured beauty of the earth' (*Mystagogia* 3).

Maximus goes on to interpret the structure of the church building in a variety of ways that don't concern us here. But he does say, and this is important for us, that the church, as divided into sanctuary and nave, corresponds to 'the entire world of beings produced by God in creation', since creation is 'divided into a spiritual world, filled with intelligible and incorporeal beings, and into this perceptible and bodily world that is ingeniously woven together of many forms and natures' (*Mystagogia* 2). This weaving together is done is such a way that 'the whole of one enters into the whole of the other, and both fill the same whole as parts fill a unit ... For the whole spiritual world is mystically imprinted on the whole sensible world in symbolic forms for those who are capable of seeing this, and conversely the whole sensible world is spiritually explained in the mind in the principles (*logoi*) which it contains' (*ibid.*).

In this scheme the sanctuary corresponds to the unseen but intelligible world, while the nave corresponds to the visible, perceptible world. Thus the universe 'is like another sort of church not of human

construction which wisely revealed in this church which is humanly made, and has for its sanctuary the higher world assigned to the powers above, and for its nave the lower world which is reserved to those who share the life of the senses' (*ibid.*). At this point Maximus clearly has in mind the two tabernacles with their differing forms of worship that are spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And he explains that in one of them, the higher, worship is carried out by 'the powers above', i.e. the angels, while in the other, the lower, worship is carried out by men. Their unity is maintained by God, who 'realizes this union among the natures of things without confusing them ... in a relationship and union with himself as the cause, principle and end' (*Mystagogy* 1).

Thus for Maximus the relationship between the sanctuary and the nave is the same as the relationship between the invisible and the visible world, and is therefore the same as the relationship between the heavenly tabernacle and the earthly temple or tabernacle, the physical church. To move from the nave to the sanctuary is to move from the visible to the invisible world and to enter the heavenly tabernacle. It is to reproduce liturgically what is described by the author of Hebrews when he says that 'we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens' (Heb 4:14), who is 'exalted above the heavens' (Heb 7:6). It is also the same movement as is described in Peter's speech before the Sanhedrin: 'The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus ... [and] exalted him at his right hand ... so that he might give repentance to Israel and remission of sins' (Acts 5:31). The difference is that for Maximus, and for the Byzantine Liturgy, this ascent is followed by a descent, by the return of Christ 'in his kingdom'. It is as if in the Liturgy the ancient prayer, 'Maran atha', 'Come, Lord Jesus', found in St Paul and the Apocalypse, had been answered liturgically (1 Cor 16:22; cf. Rev 22:20).

Perhaps at this time we should take a sideward glance at a contemporary of Christ, Philo of Alexandria, a leader of the Jewish community in that great city. On several occasions when he writes about the Passover, Philo translates the name of the feast, *pesakh* in Hebrew or *paskha* in Aramaic, as *ta diabateria* or *i diabasis*, i.e. 'the offering made at crossing over [usually a border or river]' or simply 'the

crossing over' or 'the passage' (cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Easter in the Early Church*, p.120). He does this because he understands the deeper meaning of the feast, which at one level commemorates the escape from Egypt, in relation to the individual, and in particular to the soul: 'This is the real meaning of the Pascha of the soul: the crossing over from every passion and all the realm of sense to the "Tenth", namely, to the realm of the mind and of God. For we read: "On the tenth of this month let every man take a sheep for his house" (Ex 12:3), so that from the tenth day there may be sanctified to the "Tenth" [i.e. to God] the sacrificial offerings which are kept in the soul (cf. Ex 12:6)' (*On the Preliminary Studies*, 106). To fully understand this passage, we should bear in mind that the Hebrew letter 'yod', which is used for the number ten, is also the first letter of the Tetragrammaton, the Divine Name.

What a passage like this shows is how widespread in the first century AD was this fundamental cosmological picture of a perceptible realm of the senses and an invisible realm of the spirit. And not just in the Greco-Roman world. It is built into the oldest strata of the Hebrew Bible, not just in the story of Moses on Mount Sinai, which has probably been subject to post-exilic revision, but also in the undoubtedly early texts in Ezekiel and Isaiah. The visions of Ezekiel and Isaiah are visions of a world that is normally hidden and can only be seen through grace and by eyes that are purified.
What has happened is that Philo, who lived in both the Jewish and the Hellenistic worlds, has drawn them together into a single whole. But there seems to be no indication that the author of Hebrews knew Philo, and so we can probably infer that others had previously been engaged in the same activity.

Let me summarise. The Byzantine Eucharistic Liturgy assumes a cosmology that can be found in Exodus, in Hebrews and in Philo. It represents this cosmology spatially in its use of a sanctuary and nave that are separated by a curtain and screen, and in this way reproduces the spatial configuration of the Temple in Jerusalem. Understanding the sanctuary as the invisible creation that lies behind the visible creation, it plays out the Incarnation and return to the Father through the Ascension against this background through the entry of the bishop as high priest into the church, and his passing through the holy doors to

take his place on the throne behind the altar. In this respect it follows closely the Epistle to the Hebrews. The bishop's descent from the throne to stand before the altar then indicates, however, not only that the action that follows takes place in the unseen world, but also that it takes place at the end of time. At this point the consecration takes place, as the elements are taken up into eternal tabernacle in which Christ himself celebrates eternally. They are then returned to the people as his Body and Blood – 'for the remission of sins and eternal life'.

This movement into the sanctuary and return to give atonement to the people through the gift of forgiveness and eternal life reproduces in outline the liturgy of the Day of Atonement as described in Leviticus 16 and explicated by the Tractate *Yoma*. Its only connection with the Passover is derived from the fact that the so-called 'words of institution' are assigned in the Synoptics to a paschal meal that took place before the Crucifixion, with the result that the Crucifixion itself would have taken place on 15 Nisan, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It seems to me more likely that Jesus, as we read in the Gospel of John, was crucified on 14 Nisan, while the paschal lambs were being slaughtered. This is the fundamental connection between the Eucharist and the Passover. Otherwise the fundamental movement is a 'passing over' from this world to heaven. The link between the two was perhaps facilitated by the way in which Philo (and no doubt others) understood the Passover in a spiritual sense as a 'passing over' (*diabasis*) from the world of the senses to the invisible world of the angelic powers and God, in which was found the eternal tabernacle 'not made with (human) hands'.

Finally - and this must certainly be taken into account – in the Liturgies of St John Chrysostom and St Basil the Great neither the Passover nor even the Exodus from Egypt is ever mentioned, in spite of the fact that St Basil passes in review the great things that God has done for Israel. It is we who make the connection.

The Crucifixion thus appears as the ultimate *rite de passage*, fulfilling in a definitive and unrepeatable way the Liturgy of the Day of Atonement as described in Leviticus. Through the Crucifixion and Christ's

subsequent Resurrection our human nature is taken up into God by the incarnate Son of God. The Eucharistic Liturgy exists in order to enable us to experience in some way that movement by enabling us to share in the life of the One who has gone before us as the 'pioneer and perfecter of our faith' (Heb 12:31). The prerequisite for our sharing in his life is the Atonement that he has accomplished, and which he passes on to us through the forgiveness of sins. In the final analysis, the Old Testament Day of Atonement is fulfilled and relived in the Church every time we celebrate the Eucharistic Liturgy.

Bishop Basil of Sergievo

2005 Constantinople Lecture

The Constantinople Lecturer for 2005 will be the Anglican Lord Bishop of Oxford, the Rt. Revd and Rt. Hon. Richard Harries. The Lecture will take place on Thursday November 24.

Apologies from the Editor

The Editor wishes to apologise for the fact that in the last issue that Dr Tatiana Soloviyova was not credited with authorship of the article entitled *The Sketch of the Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue in the XIXth Century*. This was entirely my mistake.

The Editor further apologises for the fact that in going to press the footnotes of the articles by Dr Soloviyova and the Revd Dr Colin Davey followed without a break between the articles. My apologies to Dr Soloviyova and Dr Davey

Print Size for *Koinonia*

Following a number of comments after the last issue, the Editor has decided to use Arial font size 11 for this and all future editions of the journal.

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