

ECUMENISM I
A DOCTRINAL APPROACH

ABOUT THE COLLECTED WORKS

Fr. Florovsky devoted much attention to his *Collected Works*. Until shortly before his death, he had continued to supply a variety of materials. These included suggestions for the structuring of the volumes; changes in certain texts; new materials; updated materials; notes; revisions; suggestions for revisions; updated bibliography; and several outlines for a new structure to his work on the Byzantine Fathers. Substantial time has been expended to implement his suggestions and instructions. Some materials will be included in the final volume, a volume which also contains an Index to the entire *Collected Works*, Appendices, Notes, Errata, Bibliography, and Miscellanea. To publish *The Collected Works* in English has entailed the translation of his works from several languages, including Russian, Bulgarian, Czech, Serbian, German and French.

NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER ON

ECUMENISM I: A Doctrinal Approach
ECUMENISM II: A Historical Approach

The time and energy Fr. Florovsky dedicated to the Ecumenical Movement was enormous. This is reflected in the numerous articles he wrote on the subject. His writings on this subject span many decades and were written in various languages. Some of his writings repeat certain points. In these two volumes, however, most of the repetition has been deleted; some pieces in these two volumes have been excerpted from their original form in order to cut down on repetition. Many articles appear for the first time in English. For Fr. Florovsky's writings on doctrinal subjects, see his other volumes, especially volumes I-IV and XI-XII.

ECUMENISM I
A Doctrinal Approach

VOLUME THIRTEEN
in *THE COLLECTED WORKS* of

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End of Each Work*

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A Doctrinal Approach
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Volume I..... *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*
Volume II..... *Christianity and Culture*
Volume III..... *Creation and Redemption*
Volume IV..... *Aspects of Church History*
Volume V..... *Ways of Russian Theology: Part One*
Volume VI..... *Ways of Russian Theology: Part Two*
Volume VII..... *The Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century*
Volume VIII..... *The Byzantine Fathers of the Fifth Century*
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Volume X..... *The Byzantine Ascetic and Spiritual Fathers*
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Volume XII..... *Philosophy: Philosophical Problems and Movements*
Volume XIII..... *Ecumenism I: A Doctrinal Approach*
Volume XIV..... *Ecumenism II: A Historical Approach*

[Additional forthcoming volumes. The final volume contains an Index to the entire *Collected Works*, Errata, Bibliography, Appendices, and Miscellanea]

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IN MEMORIAM

FR. GEORGES FLOROVSKY
1893-1979

"Preeminent Orthodox Christian Theologian, Ecumenical
Spokesman, And Authority on Russian Letters."

[All quotations are from pages 5 and 11 of the *Harvard Gazette* of October 1, 1982, written by George H. Williams, Hollis Professor of Divinity *Emeritus*, Harvard Divinity School and Edward Louis Keenan, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University and "placed upon the records" at the Harvard Faculty of Divinity Meeting on September 16, 1982.]

"Archpriest Professor Georges Vasilyevich Florovsky (1893-1979), preeminent theologian of Orthodoxy and historian of Christian thought, ecumenical leader and interpreter of Russian literature . . . died in Princeton, New Jersey in his 86th year' on August 11, 1979.

Born in Odessa in 1893, Fr. Florovsky was the beneficiary of that vibrant Russian educational experience which flourished toward the end of the 19th century and produced many gifted scholars. His father was rector of the Theological Academy and dean of the Cathedral of the Transfiguration. His mother, Klaudia Popruzhenko, was the daughter of a professor of Hebrew and Greek. Fr. Florovsky's first scholarly work, "On Reflex Salivary Secretion," written under one of Pavlov's students, was published in English in 1917 in the last issue of *The Bulletin of the Imperial Academy of Sciences*.

In 1920, with his parents and his brother Antonii, Fr. Florovsky left Russia and settled first in Sophia, Bulgaria. He left behind his brother, Vasili, a surgeon, who died in the 1924 famine, and his sister Klaudia V. Florovsky, who became a professor of history at the University of Odessa. In 1921 the President of Czechoslovakia, Thomas Masaryk, invited Fr. Florovsky and his brother Antonii to Prague. Fr. Florovsky taught the philosophy of law. Antonii later became a professor of history at the University of Prague.

In 1922 Georges Florovsky married Xenia Ivanovna Simonova and they resettled in Paris where he became cofounder of St. Sergius Theological Institute and taught there as professor of patristics (1926-1948). In 1932 he was ordained a priest and placed himself canonically under the patriarch of Constantinople.

In 1948 he came to the United States and was professor of theology at St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary from 1948 to 1955, and dean from 1950. From 1954 to 1965 he was professor of Eastern Church History at Harvard Divinity School and, concurrently (1962-1965) an associate of the Slavic Department and (1955-1959) an associate professor of theology at Holy Cross Theological School.

"Although Fr. Florovsky's teaching in the Slavic Department [at Harvard University] was only sporadic, he became a major intellectual influence in the formation of a generation of American specialists in Russian cultural history. His lasting importance in this area derives not from his formal teaching but from the time and thought he gave to informal "circles" that periodically arose around him in Cambridge among those who had read *The Ways of Russian Theology* [then only in Russian], for decades a kind of "underground book" among serious graduate students of Russian intellectual history, and had sought him out upon discovering that he was at the Divinity School . . . During a portion of his incumbency at Harvard . . . patristics and Orthodox thought and institutions from antiquity into 20th century Slavdom flourished. In the Church History Department meetings he spoke up with clarity. In the Faculty meetings he is remembered as having energetically marked book catalogues on his lap for the greater glory of the Andover Harvard Library! In 1964 Fr. Florovsky was elected a director of the Ecumenical Institute founded by Paul VI near Jerusalem." Active in both the National Council

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of Churches and the World Council of Churches, Fr. Florovsky was Vice President-at-Large of the National Council of Churches from 1954 to 1957.

"After leaving Harvard, Professor *Emeritus* Florovsky taught from 1965 to 1972 in Slavic Studies at Princeton University, having begun lecturing there already in 1964; and he was visiting lecturer in patristics at Princeton Theological Seminary as early as 1962 and then again intermittently after retirement from the University. His last teaching was in the fall semester of 1978/79 at Princeton Theological Seminary."

"Fr. Florovsky in the course of his career was awarded honorary doctorates by St. Andrew's University . . . Boston University, Notre Dame, Princeton University, the University of Thessalonica, St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary, and Yale. He was a member or honorary member of the Academy of Athens, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the British Academy, and the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius."

Fr. Florovsky personified the cultivated, well-educated Russian of the turn of the century. His penetrating mind grasped both the detail and depth in the unfolding drama of the history of Christianity in both eastern and western forms. He was theologian, church historian, patristic scholar, philosopher, Slavist, and a writer in comparative literature. "Fr. Florovsky sustained his pleasure on reading English novels, the source in part of his extraordinary grasp of the English language, which, polyglot that he was, he came to prefer above any other for theological discourse and general exposition. Thus when he came to serve in Harvard's Slavic Department, there was some disappointment that he did not lecture in Russian, especially in his seminars on Dostoievsky, Soloviev, Tolstoi, and others. It was as if they belonged to a kind of classical age of the Russian tongue and civilization that, having been swept away as in a deluge, he treated as a Latin professor would Terrence or Cicero, not presuming to give lectures in the tonalities of an age that had vanished forever."

Fr. Florovsky's influence on contemporary church historians and Slavists was vast. The best contemporary multi-volume history of Christian thought pays a special tribute to Fr. Florovsky. Jaroslav Pelikan of Yale University, in the bibliographic section to his first volume in *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, writes under the reference to Fr. Florovsky's two works in Russian on the Eastern Fathers: "These two works are basic to our interpretation of trinitarian and christological dogmas" (p. 359 from *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition: 100-600*). George Huntston Williams, Hollis Professor *Emeritus* of Harvard Divinity School, wrote: "Faithful priestly son of the Russian Orthodox Church . . . , Fr. Georges Florovsky — with a career-long involvement in the ecumenical dialogue — is today the most articulate, trenchant and winsome exponent of Orthodox theology and piety in the scholarly world. He is innovative and creative in the sense wholly of being ever prepared to restate the saving truth of Scripture and Tradition in the idiom of our contemporary yearning for the transcendent."

PART ONE: THE DIFFICULTIES OF CHRISTIAN REUNION

THEOLOGICAL TENSIONS AMONG CHRISTIANS

We are living in a troubled age, in a distorted world, in a "world of tensions." If we admit the current classification of historical epochs into "organic" and "critical," we shall have to describe our own age emphatically as a critical one. Indeed, we find ourselves in the midst of an inclusive and radical crisis which affects all strata and all levels of existence. To use the phrase of Toynbee, there is a "schism in the body social" and a "schism in the soul." And we feel ourselves to be desperately involved in the process of a steady disintegration of our traditional civilization. The prospect seems to be utterly dark and uncertain. One is persistently tempted to use an apocalyptic idiom and to prophesy an imminent doom and decline of our historical world.

Now, since time immemorial it was usual for man when in trouble or need to call on God, to return to religion. And religion or faith was regarded not only as a refuge of comfort or consolation but also as a stronghold of strength and inspiration. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait I say on the Lord" (*Psalms 27:14*). It was from religion that people in the ages past would normally expect an ultimate solution to all their tensions, difficulties and internecine strife. Christianity in particular has been regarded as the source and guardian of peace and concord — and it was indeed. "And on earth peace." It was a most startling announcement and possibly it has often been misunderstood. For it was, in fact, a preface and a prelude to a life of sorrow and affliction, to a crucified life, to the life of the Suffering Servant, of the "Man of Sorrows." The only way to true peace is the way of the Cross. To us it comes as a terrible blow when we discover, to our utter disappointment that the world of religion, and Christendom first of all, is also involved in the process of disintegration; there is little peace and little agreement in Christendom. No religion is commonly accepted. And Christianity itself is divided. How can Christianity help "this world" to recover health and peace, when it is itself involved in the same predicament of chaos and conflict? In this disrupted world of ours one finds oneself compelled to make a choice and take sides, i.e. to propagate the state of division.

I am supposed to speak of "theological tensions." In modern times it has been widely believed and often suggested that it was precisely theology that was primarily responsible for tensions and divisions in the Church and in the wider world of religion. And possibly the same prejudice still prevails in many quarters in our day too. It has often been contended that "tensions" and divisions were initiated exactly at the moment when the Church, or rather her leaders and teachers, decided or attempted to stabilize and formulate beliefs. If only people could escape once again into the realm of a personal religion (it was contended), all

dissensions would have been overcome. Religion and doctrine (i.e. precisely, theology) are usually still contrasted in our day. Men in pews sometimes pretend that they would have been united across all historical borders had they not been prevented by men in pulpits who impose upon them divisive "doctrines." An average believer is inclined to apply the famous dictum of Goethe to the word of religion also. "All theories, i.e. doctrines, are gray and dull, but the tree of life is ever green." Yet precisely at this point the major doubt arises. Berdiaev has recently suggested that, as a matter of fact, it is exactly our actual life that is gray and dull and hopeless, and often dirty, and only in "theory," in *theoria*, i.e. in contemplation, can we recover the dimension of truth. It is a very helpful suggestion, indeed. And, first of all, in the world of "personal religion" (of an "immediate" religious experience) we meet exactly a hopeless "variety of religious experience" which evades any integration and provides no unity at all. A freedom of "personal religion" is in fact the main divisive and disrupting factor of our spiritual life. Unity and "agreement" can be achieved only on the level of doctrine. Historically speaking, in the Christian Church, theology was usually a remedy and a safeguard against an utter confusion of free experience, an only means to overcome the vagueness of an immediate experience. Schisms as a rule were not originated in the realm of doctrine, although they were inevitably reflected in the teaching. A stabilized doctrine was usually required just to prevent a further disintegration of community and of common mind. It was not just a sound mental and spiritual discipline (although even the discipline is unavoidable). May I offer a parable? We are standing before the gate of a city, of the City of God. The gate is locked. Let us suppose that one of us had a key and another a map of the fenced city. Now with my key I can unlock the gate and enter. However, without a map I shall be lost. Yet no map would help us at all unless a key admits us into the city. With all our perfect knowledge of the map we would be kept outside. In a way, of course, a key is much more valuable than a map. But the best solution will be, obviously, to have both. The simile is certainly very inadequate. Doctrine is precisely a map. *It is very unfortunate, indeed, if a map is mistaken for the thing itself.* Yet it may be of enormous help and value in the hands of a faithful pilgrim. Doctrine is not a self-sufficient system that could replace experience but precisely a map, a guide, a traveler's companion. There is no point in dispensing with maps altogether, as there is no point in holding a map and staying home.

In any case, we are already living in the age of an obvious theological revival. Theology in our day is vindicated by that enormous appeal it makes to the growing number of believers and seekers throughout the world. There is no need to justify its claims. They are readily acknowledged by a very large group in all churches. It is true that the first outcome of this contemporary revival of sacred studies is the growth in tension and a new type of mutual estrangement which

unexpectedly cuts across many traditional borders. The hope of an easy agreement is again being frustrated. Now, before we proceed any further, let us ask ourselves one pertinent question: what do we really contemplate in our effort to solve the alleged "tensions"? Do we really contemplate the emergence of some uniform system of common convictions, in which all questions would be adequately answered and no room left for any further questioning and no room for contradiction and disagreement? Attempts of this sort have recently been made, with a disastrous effect; no tension was relieved, but some new and most painful tensions were added to the modern chaos and despair. We have to question our own intentions most earnestly: do we really mean that all tensions should be resolved and all divergencies leveled? I am not preaching relativity. Yet Pascal was probably right, as paradoxical and forbidding as his suggestion may have been, when he said of philosophers and other seekers of truth, "they sincerely believe that they are seeking rest, and in fact they seek just agitation." Is not a religious unrest usually just a symptom and a token of spiritual health? *Inquietum est cor nostrum*. Is not our life inevitably a search? A search after truth, indeed. But since Truth is essentially infinite, even the discovery of absolute truth would not relieve a sincere seeker of a further inquiry and search, with all the unrest and pain involved. Life of the spirit is intrinsically dynamic. Is life really possible without problems and risks, and conflicts and divergences? Philosophy begins with a "wonder" or surprise and grows up in the atmosphere of *aporias*. Religion begins with an initial "awe and trembling" and continues in the dimension of *mystery*. Indeed, mystery is the very climate of religion. The mystery of God obviously passes all knowledge and understanding, and the ultimate truth cannot be adequately uttered in any finite tongue. Theology itself is bound to be ultimately rather an "apophatic theology," *just a symbol* of the unfathomable mystery of God, as much as it has actually been revealed to man by God himself. The dimension of search cannot be abolished in religion but it is implied in the original distance or "tension" between God and man, between the Creator and the creation, between the Savior and the miserable sinner which man obviously is. Is not religion essentially a "tensional relation" between God and man? There is a double "tension," indeed, implied in a double "situation" of man — as a *creature* and as a sinner, which must be carefully distinguished. We cannot escape the dimension of search, precisely because ultimate Truth is not a static "world of ideas" but a Living Person, and the true knowledge of truth is not a study of some absolute propositions and their immanent dialectics but a *personal encounter and a continuous intercourse with the Living God*. The ultimate goal of religion (and, in any case, of Christian religion) is precisely the holy man and the holy community, i.e. the Holy Church, and *not just the holy system*. Of course, we have to distinguish the inevitable and healthy "tensions" of search, *physiological* tensions, as it were, and the pathological ones, which are

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implied in our sin, which is remitted and yet not exterminated to the full extent. In our actual practice, the healthy dialectics of search is still dangerously contaminated by the dialectics of error. We still belong to a *fallen* world: it is already redeemed, but not yet transfigured.

It would be presumptuous to attempt an inclusive survey of the present theological situation in the world in a short essay. And it is not for an individual either, be he a theologian or a minister of the Church, to suggest ultimate solutions. But there is at least one statement which I feel myself entitled to make, or a suggestion that imposes. The present theological state of utter tension in the theological field is much more promising than the theological indifference of the recent past, with all its moralistic, aesthetical and psychological escapes. In our days at least we realize and understand that one simply cannot escape a truly theological search and discussion. The reason is precisely that we have rediscovered the vital importance of doctrine for religion, i.e. that religion is essentially doctrinal. Religion is no longer just a "pious emotion." Teaching is its integral part or even its basis. A German would say: Religion is not just *ein Erlebnis*, but exactly *eine Erfahrung*. But it is no less "personal" because of that. And this rediscovery of the proper dimension of theology is possibly the greatest promise of our troubled age, although it does not promise any speedy or easy reconciliation. Yet, it may help all of us to reintegrate our bits of the distorted Christian tradition into a new synthesis, which will at the same time be a recovery of the common mind of the Church of old.

The *history of Christian doctrine* has been for a long time studied and treated as if it were just a history of errors, a history of a permanent draft from all immediate "experience." And let us remember how this discipline came into existence and by whom it has been shaped. We are still under the pressure of Baur and Harnack, even when we disavow their authority or, by our denominational standing, are expected to do so. Usually, we still start with their scheme, if with the purpose of refutation. But it is a wrong start. Their approach was utterly un-theological. Subconsciously we are still studying the history of doctrine as a history of philosophy and therefore we are bound to miss the very thing. For both theology and doctrine *are not* philosophy. It is not a speculation on religious topics or problems but does not exclude the theological use of reasons. But it begins, earnestly and emphatically, with revelation — not with an innate "revelation" of the truth in the human mind, but with a concrete Revelation in history, with a true encounter. It is a personal *datum* — not because it is a private business of human personalities but because it is a self-disclosure and challenge of a Divine Person of the Personal God. Let us reconsider our theological convictions and disagreements in this newly discovered light, reconsider them in the dimension of an existential challenge of God. And possibly the history of Christian doctrine, so conceived and so executed, will provide us with a relevant map of the Promised Land.

Theological Tensions among Christians 13

"Tensions" will not be immediately removed but they will recover sense and meaning.

If I may be allowed a personal note, I would suggest that the way out of the present confusion and into a better future is, unexpectedly, through the past. Divisions can be overcome only by a return to the common mind of the early Church. *There was no uniformity, but there was a common mind.*

THE PROBLEMATIC OF CHRISTIAN REUNIFICATION The Dangerous Path of Dogmatic Minimalism

"Then if any man shall say unto you,
Lo here is Christ, or there; believe it not."

(*Matthew 24:23*)

The Church is one. And this unity is the very essence of the Church. The Church is unity, unity in Christ, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (*Ephesians 4:3*). The Church was and is created in the world namely for the sake of unity and union — "that all may be one" (*John 17:21*). The Church is one "body" — that is, the organism and Body of Christ. "For by one Spirit we all were baptized into one body" (*I Corinthians 12:13*). And only in the Church is this authentic and real unity and oneness possible or feasible, through the sacrament of Christ's love, through the transforming power of the Spirit, in the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity. This is how it is and how it should be. But unity is not manifest or revealed in Christian history. It remains only an unresolved problem, and its resolution oscillates back and forth, moving towards the ultimate eschatological boundary. In Christian empiricism there is no unity. The Christian world abides in division — and not only in division but in dissent, in trouble and in struggle. In Christian history we see no more unity and agreement than in external, non-Christian history. In Christian societies, not only have the divisions which demoralize and destroy the "natural" order of life not been taken down or overcome — racial and national antagonisms have also not been reconciled or extinguished (compare with the so-called "philetism"). Moreover, in Christian doctrine itself, in the very faith in Christ, there are grounds and bases for mutual alienation, for separation and hostility, for unreconcilable arguments, for open animosity. The Christian world is divided not only on issues of this world but also on that of Christ himself. Among the Christians who are faithful to his Name, there is no agreement on him, on his acts and his Nature. This is a stumbling block and a temptation. The Church is one and indivisible in its unity. But the Christian world is divided and split. Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today and forever" (*Hebrews 13*). But Christians diverge on the question of him, and not only think differently but also believe differently. And they place their hope in different things. But no, the Church is not divided, has not been divided, did not divide. The Church is not divided and not divisible. And the very word "Church," in strict and precise word usage, does not have or tolerate a plural form — unless in the figurative and untrue sense.

Nonetheless, the Christian world is in a state of dissent, conflict and — is it not time to admit it? — collapse. Let us say that what occurred was neither a division of the Church nor a "division of the Churches."

Let us more accurately speak not of disunion in the Church, but of dissociation from the Church. But the very fact of dissent and schism remains. And the Church cannot stop this schism and fragmentation of itself. Centrifugal forces not only prevail in the external world, but also penetrate into the Church itself. The Church is sorrowful and persecuted — and persecuted not only by enemies and opponents, but no less frequently by false brothers. "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (*John* 16:2). Herein lies the fundamental paradox of Christian history. And there are epochs in which all the bitterness and pain of this paradoxical schism and collapse is experienced and endured with renewed severity. The mind is overwhelmed by this enigma of human resistance and obstinacy. How is it possible, and what does it mean? "It seems a mystery." How will we overcome decay and death? It seems that we are entering — and indeed, have already entered — such an epoch. And the need for reconciliation and unity blazes forth. The tendency towards unity has been born and will gather strength. The idea of Christian unity and union is becoming the theme of the era, the theme of the time, the theme of history. The entire unnaturalness of the divisions, the irreconcilability and the lack of love for Christ are being laid bare in shame and alarm. But the tendency towards unity should not stop at a vague alarm and trembling of the heart. And sentimentalism over Christ is bewitchment and impotent self-deception. Unity in Christ is realizable only through sobriety and spiritual vigilance. The will to unity must mature and be tempered through penitential trials and deeds of faith.

No one would quarrel with the idea that the Christian world should be and become unified. One hardly needs to prove that it is befitting or proper to unite and reunite. But from this indisputable postulate it would be wise to draw some distinct and practical conclusions. Indeed, the major difficulty lies elsewhere: how can the Christian world become one? That is: what does it mean to become unified and be one in Christ? What is the meaning of this reunification? And where are the paths or path to unity? In history there have been more than a few, and rather too many, attempts to restore Christian unity, to realize a kind of "everlasting world," at least for Christians. But one must realize right away: these attempts were not successful. And nothing disturbs the course of real rapprochement and unification as much as these unsuccessful attempts, of which at best there remain only bitter memories and a tired lack of hope. In any case, one must first explain and establish the sense and essence of this tragic Christian division, of what called and calls it forth and what exactly is required to overcome it. One must start with such a penitent and judgmental ordeal, however burdensome and agonizing this autopsy of the Christian world may be.

The first thing that one must feel and understand from the very beginning is that the question of division and unification cannot be settled or decided on purely moral grounds. This is definitely not a

question of peace or tolerance alone. Squeezing the "union problem" into an unsuitable moral framework is misrepresenting and simplifying it. A historian should protest first and foremost against any such hasty and one-sided attempts at the moralization of history. The history of the Christian divisions can likewise not be deduced from or built on the basis of the principle of intolerance, nor the principles of pride, lust for power, concupiscence or meanness. Of course, human passion in all its power is "decked out" and exposed in the divisions of Christianity. But the initial source of these Christian schisms was not moral depravity or human weakness, but delusion. This thought may be expressed as follows. Yes, the source of the divisions is lack of love. But first and foremost, it is not lack of love for one's fellows, but precisely lack of love for God — and the spiritual vision of man therefore clouds over, and he no longer recognizes his own Heavenly Father. Indeed, only the pure of heart, in the transparency of their hearts, see God. And not knowing the Father, they do not know or recognize their brothers. In other words, the source of the divisions and schisms lies primarily in the difference of opinions about the Truth.

The division of the Christian world has a primarily dogmatic sense. It is always division in faith, in the very experience of faith, and not only in formula and creed. The division is therefore overcome not so much through gentleness and brotherly love as through agreement and unity of thought — through spiritual enlightenment, in the unity of the Truth. It should be firmly stated: there is too little unity of love and in love. It is fitting to love one's enemies too, and even the enemies of the Truth — and one must love them precisely as brothers, and agonize over their salvation and their addition to the assembly and image of Christ. However, such a love still does not generate true unity. Real unity of love is hardly possible without unity in and of faith. Differences in thought are always felt to be at the foundation of schisms, a different perception and understanding. This is why the schism cannot be truly overcome through sentimental brotherly love and obedience alone, but only through fundamental agreement. "Union" (*unionalnyi*) moralism itself contains its own "dogmatic" premises. It is tacitly assumes that there were not and are not adequate reasons for the division to occur, that the entire division is only a tragic misunderstanding — that the differences of opinion seem irreconcilable only because of insufficient loving attention to one another, out of not inability but rather unwillingness to understand that despite all the differences and dissimilarities there is sufficient unity and agreement for what is most important. The isolation of the most "important" points is a highly controversial premise. It is proposed to consider the controversial point nonessential, thereby avoiding dissent. In this way, "moralism" is always a kind of dogmatic minimalism, if not outright "adogmatism." It is nourished on and emerges from a kind of dogmatic insensibility, or indifference, or nearsightedness. One may say: it emerges from the unnatural abrogation and opposition of Truth and

Love. But only in Truth is there real and spiritual love, and not merely soulfulness and languor.

Strictly speaking, moralism is a dogmatic fixture, a special "creed" in which the poverty of the positive content is balanced off by the resoluteness of the negations. And a moralist not so much raises himself higher than the divisions as simply gets used to looking at them from above. This is hardly evidence of brotherly love, but it does at least demonstrate simple respect for the faith of one's fellows, which in the minimalist interpretation is condescendingly lowered to the level of a personal opinion or point of view, and is tolerated and accepted as such. In such an interpretation there is not even enough sincerity. "Moralism" is a call to unite in poverty, in impoverishment, in need — not accord, but agreement in silence and preterition. This is equalization in indigence, in accordance with the weakest common denominator. This type of solution is sometimes accepted out of indifference as a means of knowing the Truth. Often, the very possibility of commonly meaningful judgments in dogma and even metaphysics is called into doubt, and the dogmas themselves are accepted in moral or moralistic symbols or postulates. Then, of course, it is not necessary to achieve unity of thought and accord in the areas of doubt and irresolution. Less seldom, people hide in minimalism out of fear and faithlessness, in desperation of achieving accord in those areas where there were the most arguments and disagreements. In a word, moralism is abstention, but not so much in humility and asceticism as in indifference or doubt. But can one be united in denial and doubt? Unification and communion must be sought in richness and fullness, not in poverty. This means: not through condescension and adaptation to the weakest, but through ascension, through striving towards the strongest. Only one image and example is and was given — Christ the Savior.

There are contentious issues for which the Church did not give and does not have simple answers. However, here too skeptical ambiguity is entirely ruled out, and the comforting "ignōrabimus" is also not appropriate. For indeed, completeness of vision was given initially in the experience and consciousness of the Church, and only needs to be identified. And for this identification, maximalism is needed — and thus unity of faith, not only unity of love. But unity of faith does not yet exhaust the unity of the Church. For Church unity is first and foremost unity of life — that is, the unity and communion of the sacraments. True unity can be realized only in the Truth — that is, in wholeness and strength, not in weakness and insufficiency. In the identity of mystical experience and life, in the wholeness of "indivisible faith," in the completeness of the sacraments. Real unity can only be this unity in the sacraments, taken in the entire fullness of their hieratical and theurgical realism. For this is unity in the Spirit, a true "unity of the Spirit." There is yet another flaw in "moralism." In it, there is too much complacency and optimism. Reconciliation seems close, possible, and not difficult — for there is not enough gravity and

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courage in the very perception and view of the division. Moralism is insufficiently tragic and tragedy fits badly into the boundaries of morality, even moral tragedy, and this is by far the clearest evidence of the restrictiveness of morality as such. Unification is possible only through the experience and feat of resolving unresolved questions, not through abstention or digression from them. Here there is a certain unknown quantity which remains to be found and defined. The division itself testifies to the presence of questions. There is a problematic of division and schism. It is impossible to abolish it or replace it with sentimentalism. There are real *aporia* to unity; it is a difficult path. The way is hard, "a mountain road" — the way of courage and daring.

THE NEED FOR PATIENCE (1937)

The Edinburgh Conference was above all a school of patience. It was a great experiment in Christian charity and courage, and an adventure as well. And "charity suffereth long."

At the conference Christendom was portrayed as utterly divided. It may be a painful experience to recognize that fact. And yet is it not this very pain which makes a recovery possible at all? A wound can hardly be healed unless it is properly identified. For an effective cure, an accurate diagnosis is necessary. One must suffer from "our unhappy divisions"; their burden must become intolerable for us. But a real desire for unity can emerge only from these sufferings, from this experience of pain and failure.

The unity of the Church has been broken by various causes in past ages. Christianity was recently described by Karl Barth as an "array of various churches, each of which represents to the others a problem, a critic, a rival, possibly also a disturber and an enemy" — a prospective disturber or an actual enemy. And these isolating tendencies are still at work. An alleged "decade of objective progress in church unity" has not greatly improved the situation. However, the call to unity has been sounded. The present Ecumenical Movement, in all its forms and branches, reveals a genuine will to bring all divided Christians closer together. The greatest inspiration comes from the missionary field, and the voice of missionaries was often heard at the conference. The noble initiative of missionaries is effectively corroborated by the appeal of preachers and social workers who are very anxious to join all Christian resources in the face of contemporary unbelief and godlessness.

Many pious expectations have been sadly contradicted by the course of events since the Ecumenical Movement first began. Difficulties proved to be much more profound than many then believed. The unexpected catastrophe of the World War, of an ecumenical war indeed, brought with it a new revelation of human sinfulness and obstinacy, and even perversion. And now we are in the midst of ecumenical unrest, perhaps on the eve of a new ecumenical conflict. There is certainly a good number of those uncompromising optimists who are still dreaming glorious dreams and utopian visions of their own. But the common mind has changed profoundly. It is now commonly agreed that reunion, even in the realm of "practical Christianity," is an ultimate goal, and a very distant one, rather than a step to be taken immediately. It is also recognized that the greatest obstacle to further progress would be created by hasty action. The need for reunion is now felt more than ever, however. But the method is to be changed.

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It is perfectly clear that divided Christian bodies are still united. Otherwise no ecumenical conference could ever be held. The Edinburgh meeting this year was by no means an artificial gathering. And there was an unusual spirit of friendship and sincerity pervading all the deliberations, even the most controversial ones. A certain agreement was reached, and it was of great importance that a common "Affirmation of Unity" could be produced in the name of the conference, *nemine contradicente*. There were some, however, who silently abstained from voting, respecting the unanimity of the vast majority of their brethren with whom they felt themselves unable to stand.

The scope of agreement reached is very, very small. There is only one real agreement, an agreement to differ and not to impose uniformity even in beliefs. And this is the crucial point of the whole movement. It was declared from the very start that "the beginnings of unity are to be found in the clear statement and full consideration of the things in which we differ as well as those in which we are at one" (Initiatory Report, Cincinnati, 1910.) And surely these differences are too evident to be concealed. They are too often veiled and underestimated. The Ecumenical Movement, as suggested by the late Bishop Brent, is concerned not with controversy but with conference. It may be perfectly true. But there are still controversies in Christianity, and they cannot simply be stopped; they must be resolved. Strangely enough, "controversy" now seems to be the most irenic and certainly the most effective method of reunion.

Two general considerations would be of real help in furthering reconciliation. In the first place, at Edinburgh as before, all differences were deliberately recorded anonymously in the reports. Some maintain thus and so to be true and others do not. Then there are still others. The very meaning of these divergences is completely betrayed by this unfortunate and conventional phrasing. It conveys the impression that these disagreements are of a private character or are disagreements between occasional groups. There is a very dangerous anti-historical and anti-theological attitude behind this drafting method. The ultimate cleavage between great historical traditions is very poorly indicated by this deliberate use of indefinite phraseology. There is now an urgent need to contrast the divergent traditions frankly and emphatically.

Secondly, it is a misleading procedure to take isolated and particular points in order and to record agreements or disagreements according to them. For a doctrinal system is not a mosaic of disconnected parts but an organic whole, and the real meaning of any particular topic depends completely upon the spirit of the whole. And it is certain that we differ not on points, but on principles. The very essence of Christianity is understood differently. Two very different conceptions of reunion have been proposed. One emphasizes first and foremost variety. Another lays the greatest stress on unanimity. In the first case we are asked to visualize a new body built by our agreements, embracing all the existing traditions and denominations — a sort of "minimum program,"

a minimum form of reunion. In the other case, the reunited Church is envisaged as a new reality, but is really still in its previous form! But all existing confessions must "collapse or dissolve into union," to use the well-turned phrase of one of the conference speakers. There are very different conceptions of the Church behind these schemes. And this difference is the crucial one. We do differ on essentials.

And finally, in the Ecumenical Movement there is still a very dangerous tendency to underestimate and even disregard "intellectual differences." Theological professors are therefore often disqualified as a band of people who create unnecessary complications in the whole business. This tendency is rather out of date and is precisely what would obstruct the progress of real reunion. We are now in the new phase of our existence, and this phase is a theological one. For the modern generation, theology is not vain speculation but rather quite the opposite. Sound theology is the only safe basis of Christian unity; it is the only means by which to create real understanding. Missionaries, prelates and ecclesiastical diplomats have said their word. It is now the turn of theologians to raise their voice. It will be a voice of discrimination.

And above all it is important to always remember that the will of God alone can bring us peace and unity. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

ECUMENICAL AIMS AND DOUBTS
An Address at the First Assembly of the World Council
of Churches in Amsterdam, 1948

The ecumenical problem is the problem of schism and its healing. Christendom is utterly divided and polarized. There is no common mind in the Christian world. The first ecumenical task is namely that of creating it. There is no common voice that could speak with authority and conviction to all Christians, or on behalf of all Christians. All ecumenical gatherings themselves are but exhibitions of Christian disunity.

We are here together first of all to rediscover one another. I mean, to rediscover one another as fellows and brethren in Christ. For we have been isolated and estranged from each other for years and years. We have to regain and rediscover a common language. We are here now as official representatives of our respective "churches"; that is, of our manifold and diverse traditions. This means that we are representing divided Christendom, representing primarily our diversity and separation. And whatever promise and importance our coming together may have (and let us hope, *will have*), no ecumenical gathering can by itself annul or even conceal our state of separation. We have to record our dissensions before we can come to any consensus. But no "consensus" is now possible. Let us keep in mind that we are given no power or authority "to legislate for the churches"; that is, to go beyond the walls of partition.

One must be bold and courageous enough to face and acknowledge this fact, sad and uncomfortable as it indeed is. Only a frank recognition of this grave situation can set us on the right road if we are really going to make any advance towards a true solution to the ecumenical tension. For there is indeed a tension. The ecumenical situation is utterly antinomical and rather ambiguous, and the ecumenical problem is tragic. For Christians, tragedy means no less than sin. There is therefore no "irenical" solution. Tragedy culminates only in catastrophe or crisis. The human tragedy has already culminated in the catastrophe of the Cross. The human response to this Divine crisis of history must be repentance and faith. Peace and glory come only by the Cross.

This does not mean that we have to ignore the recent ecumenical achievements, the growing Christian cohesion or the mutual gravitation of Christians towards one another, the growth of mutual understanding and friendship, the readiness for discourse. But paradoxically enough, at every step of ecumenical advance we discover new and deeper difficulties, new differences, new and burning points of disagreement. Again and again we have to reconsider and revise not only our policy or tactics, but our very aims and purposes.

The problem of Christian reconciliation is forced upon us — I mean, upon our generation — first of all by practical considerations. Should I say, by our disillusionment and despair? It must be acknowledged that we are moved and embarrassed primarily by the present "disorder of man," by his present confusion and *impasse*, by the crisis and decay of our civilization, by the threat of atomic power and total war, by the end of an age. We find ourselves in a situation of emergency when urgent and immediate action is required. "Our unhappy divisions" appear more and more as an enormous impediment to any effective Christian action in any field, both to effective Christian resistance and to any crusading initiative. Obviously, only joint and concerted action has any chance of success. *Some* kind of Christian cooperation, *some* coalition of Christian forces is badly needed if we are to meet both the challenge of "rival gospels" and the needs of the changing world as Christians. It seems that Christians must somehow come to terms amongst themselves in order to not compromise their cause by their quarrels and disputes. The range and scope of this expected agreement is, however, usually left rather vague and obscure.

Nobody would contest the weight and relevance of all these strategical considerations. The rediscovery of the sense of Christian responsibility for the world is indeed a true and precious ecumenical achievement. Christianity is, of course, not merely a proclamation of certain general principles, but fundamentally a program of daily life. Christianity must be *practiced* and put into action here and now, *hic et nunc*; it must be applied to any and all situations, at any point and at any time, *semper et ubique*. The other-worldly character and goal of the Christian message does not signify cold indifference to earthly needs, to the needs of suffering and helpless man. Charity and Mercy are the marks and tests of any genuine Christian life. Human dignity and social justice are inevitably among the most immediate concerns of the Church. And the Orthodox Church in particular can never forget the vigorous plea of St. John Chrysostom for social charity and justice.

And yet, this *applied Christianity* is the greatest temptation in the whole of human history, now as ever. The main feature is this: we face the challenge of the world instead of challenging the world ourselves. We commit ourselves to the dubious task of an occasional approval or disapproval of the happenings and tendencies of this fleeting world. We desperately discuss and argue whether the churches should join with Communism or with Capitalism, or with somebody else, and which of the existing social and political programs could be endorsed by conditional or unconditional Christian approval. We are simply watching the course of history, commenting, sometimes passionately, on its failures or achievements, welcoming this or denouncing that. The question we ask is: *in this world*, what is to be accepted or recognized by Christians and what should be repudiated: in which areas can and should Christians wholeheartedly or tactically join the sons of this world in a common endeavor to reshape and administer the daily life of

men; and in which areas, if any, must they refuse all cooperation and follow their own particular way? What we miss here is the spirit of true *Christian initiative*. The ultimate conflict between the Gospel and "this world" is thereby dangerously obscured and veiled in our ecumenical deliberations. We are testing the features of this world by worldly measures. We are in danger of being enslaved by our own strategy.

The true Christian standard is not strategy but truth. Let us admit for a moment that we could *somehow* agree on *some* more or less definite and distinctive statement with regard to the urgent needs of our particular time. Let us imagine that we could really speak with one voice to the present political, social or international situation. In a sense it would be a very spectacular success, a true strategical achievement. And yet, would it have marked any real advance towards a true ecumenical solution — I mean a solution of the real ecumenical problem; that is, the healing of the schism? I venture to submit that in my personal opinion it would have been rather a disastrous failure. May I put it this way? Can true Christian unity be restored by agreement on secular issues? Would it not have been an absurd situation if Christians could have been at one in secular unessentials and still at variance in essentials? An anomalous unity *in dubiis* and disunity *in necessariis*! Would it not have proved and suggested that all doctrinal or confessional disagreements were of no *vital* importance whatever? For in this hypothetical case, Christians could behave as if they were united. Would a man in the pew then ever ask for anything better? In this hypothetical case, would superficial human agreement not be mistaken for true Christian reconciliation? In any case, a common Christian front is not yet reunited Christendom, it is not really the reunited Church, and not the *Una Sancta*.

The judgment begins with the House of the Lord. It is not enough to be moved towards ecumenical reconciliation by some sort of strategy, be it missionary, evangelistic, social or any other, unless the Christian conscience has already become aware of the greater challenge, by the Divine challenge itself. We must seek unity or reunion not because it might make us more efficient and better equipped in our historical struggle (and in this case nobody would go far beyond what is strictly required for a victory on the battle-field), but because unity is the Divine imperative, the Divine purpose and design, because it belongs to the very *esse* of Christianity. Christian disunity means no less than the failure of Christians to be true Christians. In divided Christendom nobody can be fully Christian, even if one stands in the full truth and is sure of his complete loyalty and obedience to the truth "once delivered unto the saints," — for no one is permitted freedom from responsibility for others. For everyone — and this is the privilege of Christians, at once odious and glorious — is the keeper of his brethren. The *catholicity* of the Church is never broken by human secessions, but her universality is heavily compromised by the "unhappy divisions." Christian provincialism — "the Protestantism of a local tradition," to

use the phrase of Vladimir Soloviev — is no less a failure than a doctrinal error. And if heresy prevails, is it not chiefly because the witness to the orthodox truth has been inadequate or sorely neglected?

Christian disunity is an open and bleeding wound on the glorious Body of Christ. Attempts have been made to interpret the existing differences and divergences of Christians as complementary; that is, as isolated and exaggerated aspects of the whole which could be reconciled simply by a wider and inclusive synthesis. It has even been claimed that historical differentiation was a necessary preliminary stage on the road towards this synthesis. And yet the disintegrated whole can never be redeemed merely by an arithmetic operation. Christian disunity is not an inevitable imperfection of a transitional stage in Christian history, while the Church is still on her pilgrimage in this world, still *in via*, and the full glory of the Divine Fatherland cannot be disclosed as the fullness of time has not yet been completed. On the contrary, it is an open failure and unfaithfulness. We know too well that the true unity of Christendom really has been broken. The whole can never be reconstructed simply by adding together the distorted particulars. Again, many of the "traditions" are purely negative or polemical, they only stand by opposition. In any case they cannot be summed up as they are. They must be reshaped and remoulded to become fit for reintegration. This means that the only way towards ecumenical synthesis is the way of combined return and renewal, of rebirth and repentance. No unity among Christians can be achieved before certain historical differentiations die out. In the "reunited Church of the future," if we permit this rather ambiguous phrase, there is no room for those who would still claim to be of Peter, or of Paul, or of Apollos, or of any other, whatever modern name these new Peters or Pauls may have assumed. Differences must be overcome, not simply overlooked. And parity of the divergent traditions or interpretations can hardly be admitted. Some definitive choice must be made. True synthesis presumes a discrimination.

Saying all of this does not necessarily mean advocating any precipitate action or imposing any ready scheme of reunion and reconciliation. On the contrary, it is to challenge or even dismiss all such schemes, to warn against any unseasonable or premature action. Or indeed, it means to invite ourselves and all those for whom the blessed name of Jesus Christ is in very truth above any other name in the world, to invite ourselves and them to the Cross, to sorrow, suffering and repentance. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation. A repentance that bringeth no regret" (*II Corinthians* 7:10; R.V.).

A true ecumenical fellowship can only be universal and all-inclusive. But it does not mean that it should and could be an "open communion." Certain very strict and definite terms are inevitably prescribed and presupposed. We have accepted a basis for conference and cooperation: the belief in Christ as God and Savior. One may doubt, however,

whether the phrase is apt and definite enough. It is, possibly, for practical cooperation. But again, this practical cooperation should by no means be identified with the ultimate ecumenical aim and goal. We have to make a clear distinction between the ultimate goal of the Ecumenical Movement and its immediate objective. Any confusion in this matter would be disastrous, and would lead us into either utopian deceptions or humanitarian trivialities. The ultimate goal — the true restoration of Christian unity in faith and charity — is indeed beyond human planning and human reach, and it is perhaps even on the other side of all historical horizons. The ultimate unity can come only from above, as a free gift of Almighty God. Our immediate objective is much more limited: to do away with our prejudices and our shortsightedness, to come closer together in understanding the true meaning of the existing dissensions and their real roots and causes. This ecumenical scrutiny will perhaps bring little consolation, and indeed will bring rather tragic unrest. But the way to salvation is inevitably a narrow path.

Frankly speaking, the World Council of Churches is formed exactly for cooperation only, for conference and consultation. I am referring to the Constitution (paragraph III, Functions, point 4), and this is, I believe, the real point: "to promote the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the members of all churches." And at this point we have to ask ourselves at least the following two questions.

First, is it enough to rediscover the "lowest common denominator" of all the denominations (of course, within the framework that has already been accepted) and to take it as the proof or token of unity. To be frank, this would have proved to be too much, *nimum probat*, and would therefore have proved nothing at all, *nihil probat*. There is indeed such a denominator, and a very real one, says the Creed. Does it, however, bring us much beyond our present stage of disunity? Just because we can recite it together even now while we are still separated (and let us not forget that some of our brethren are doing so, but with reluctance or regret), it proves to be an inadequate basis for true reconciliation. For we are permitted to interpret it as we may decide. But surely the Creed, as well as the Scripture itself, to use the phrase of St. Hilary, *est non in legendo, sed in intelligendo*. That is, what is essential is the meaning, and not the *letter itself*. Or, again, it is not enough to agree on the "historical episcopate" while defending a unified doctrinal interpretation. Words and institutions do not work *ex opere operato*.

In short, we must seek deep theological *consensus*. It is the only guarantee of a sound awakening of ecumenical consciousness. Only on such a level will our cooperation in practical matters also be a genuine common action of Christians as Christians. It is not enough to register the existing agreements, to acknowledge the existing unity. The unity we are seeking is precisely that unity which does not exist, historically or empirically speaking. In any case, ecumenical does not and should not mean either pan-Protestant or non-Roman, or anything of the sort.

No true ecumenical cooperation, no true Christian fellowship, and obviously no Christian Reunion can be achieved unless Rome can be included. I do not mean the present Rome, but the truth and heritage for which Rome stood and still stands, in spite of all that should be said against "Romanism." The ultimate integration of Christendom is to be truly total and universal. Everything else is inevitably only partial and provisional, fundamentally inadequate and incomplete, and perhaps even misleading. No sentimental fraternization will ever help. But let us not be confounded. We can go much further than we have already admitted. Thorough theological quest would enable us to acquire a broader vision and overcome our unnecessary historical fears. We have cherished our local traditions too much. Let us restore our catholic sense. Doctrinal precision will help, not hinder, true unity.

And secondly — it is but another aspect of the same point — the real strength of the Christian position is in its "otherness." For indeed, Christianity is not "of this world" and is not merely one of the elements of the worldly fabric. It is a world in itself. This is precisely what we consistently fail to perceive and to maintain. We are hampered by our fear of being detached from current life. But in truth, the strength of Christianity is rooted in its opposition to everything Christless. No secular allies would ever help the Christian cause, whatever name they may bear. As Christians we have but one Heavenly ally, Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom all power has been given in Heaven and on earth, even in this perplexed and rebellious world of ours. For this very reason, Christians can and should never admit any other authority, even in secular affairs. Christ is the Lord and Master of history, not only of our souls. Again this gives ultimate priority to the theological issue. For our practical disagreements inevitably bring us back to the diversity of our interpretations of the Divine message and the Divine solution of our human tragedy and fall.

Let us remember these glorious verses of Newman:

The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.

Keep Thou my feet! I do not ask to see
The distant scene: one step enough for me.

Let us hope and believe that we shall be permitted here and now by the Love of God, by the Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to take one sure step towards a true healing of the Christian schism.

THE TRAGEDY OF CHRISTIAN DIVISIONS

No Christian can ignore the fact of Christian divisions. No one can deny the need of a Christian reintegration. There is but One Church, as there is but One Lord, Christ Jesus, and the only hope of Life Eternal, in him and through him. Yet, *Christians are divided*. The Christian World is in schism. Christendom is split into antagonistic camps. In fact, Christians dwell in their several separated "worlds," which are for them the only real spheres of thought and action, and it is only with strain and even reluctance that they go occasionally beyond the borders. The problem of communication between the "divided Christians" is a real problem, utterly complex and involved. The "divided Christians" seem not to have common terms of reference, and probably there is no common "universe of discourse." There is no "common mind" among the Christians. In fact, there is a diversity of minds. And every "ecumenical conversation" is more or less a controversy. There is no common "Christian language," which could be conscientiously and spontaneously used by all. Even the use of Scriptural language in ecumenical dialogue proves too often to be ambiguous and unreal. And there is, in many quarters, a strong resistance to the use of this allegedly archaic idiom, which, as it is sometimes contended, fails to convey any precise meaning to the "modern man." Christians of different persuasions meet each other very often rather as foreigners and strangers. The years of the modern Ecumenical Movement may have improved this situation, but not to any considerable extent. For, in any case, the Movement itself was confined rather to an advanced minority in the Churches. Again, the Movement has not seldom been conceived precisely as an alliance of the non-Roman Churches, to the exclusion of one of the largest sections of the divided Christendom. In fact, churches are still divided.

The topic for discussion at the Evanston Assembly is: *Our Unity in Christ and Our Disunity as Churches*. What is the exact meaning of the phrase? Christians are said to be *one in Christ*, and yet *to be divided as "churches."* In fact, the phrase may mean a number of different things.

First of all it may mean, that Christians are united by Christ, in his Redeeming love, from which no human being is excluded, as Christ died for all men and for the whole humanity. Christ Jesus is the Lord of all, of the whole creation, and his Lordship includes both heaven and earth. This is, of course, the plain teaching of the New Testament. Yet, and this is also plainly emphasized in the Apostolic message, man can miss the day of his visitation, and God's redemptive purpose can be obstructed or frustrated by human obstinacy and blindness, by human failure to respond. The will of God is not yet done on earth as it is in heaven.

Secondly, the phrase may suggest that Christians are actually at one in their common allegiance to the same Lord. Surely, this link of common allegiance is a *very real* link, and one should add, a supernatural link, as no man can confess Jesus to be the Lord, except by the Holy Spirit. We must gratefully acknowledge this "bond of peace," this community in hope and allegiance, which alone makes our ecumenical fellowship of search possible at all. Still, this very allegiance is so variously and divergently interpreted and understood by the "divided Christians" as not to provide a sufficient ground for our unity "as churches." Even when Christians are willing and ready "to stay together," in charity and love, they may find themselves in an inextricable predicament of a conscientious disagreement. In spite of their common allegiance and brotherly affection, in spite of that common ground which all Christians do possess in Christ's Gospel and in the Apostolic Preaching, they may be unable to join, sincerely and with conviction, in a common profession of faith.

Thirdly, and perhaps this was, in fact, the intended meaning of the phrase, it may be contended that "our disunity as churches" is just an expression of our inability to manifest and embody that greater and deeper unity or "oneness in Christ," which had already been achieved or rather granted. In other words, the phrase may contend that there is already a kind of an *ultimate* Unity achieved among the Christians across the existing denominational or institutional barriers, and that *this* Unity is the only true reality, whereas the disunity of "churches" belongs exclusively to the imperfect level of human affairs. Such an interpretation does, obviously, imply a very particular conception of the Church, and it is at this point that no agreement between the divided Christians exists or is available at the present — or rather it is at this very point that the tension between the different trends or sections of the divided Christendom is the sharpest.

When Christians of different traditions meet in an "ecumenical setting," as they met, e.g., at Amsterdam in 1948, they always have to face the fact of their *conscientious disagreement* on many points, in spite of their earnest desire "to stay together," i.e. to recover unity. The greatest achievement of the modern Ecumenical Movement was probably in the courage to acknowledge that *there was a major disagreement*, our deepest difference (to use the Amsterdam phrasing,) which simply cannot be exorcised by any appeal to charity or toleration. We must take this existing tension or divergence within Christendom with utter seriousness. We should be frank and outspoken with each other: *there is difference, there is disagreement*.

Now, it is precisely at this point an objection may be raised, as it had been often raised: Is this "disagreement" truly valid? Is it not rather an illusion of self-complacent man? Is it not just an obstinate resolve to continue in obsolete walks of an out-lived past? In fact, it has been suggested more than once that all Christian divisions are now, as they probably always have been, just human misunderstandings, conditioned

ultimately by a lack of charity and comprehension, by a narrowness of mind and heart, by certain inherited and inveterate prejudices, by rivalry and pride. It is some times contended that, after all, there is no real reason for Christians to stay divided, and all alleged reasons are, ultimately, irrelevant. This is to say that Christians simply stubbornly refuse to recognize and acknowledge that they are actually at one *in all the essentials*, that they deliberately exaggerate the points of divergence. It is obviously true that human obstinacy and frailty had their heavy share in the tragedy of Christian disruption. In certain instances, Christian divisions were motivated manily by human passions. Yet, it would be a sore travesty of Christian history, if we ignore that in many other instances divisions were inspired by a faithful allegiance to the Truth, as men could apprehend it, or else by a conscientious resistance to what had been sincerely conceived as a dangerous error, even if this apprehension might have been, some times, exaggerated. In any case, an unqualified pleading for "unity," pure and simple, cannot appeal to those who find themselves separated from each other by the claims of Christian conscience and by the loyalty to the faith "which had been once delivered unto the saints." It is simply unfair to trace *all* divisions and disagreements back to various "non-theological factors," as they are usually styled now, or to certain social sources, as weighty and hypnotizing they might have been in certain cases. The very sting of Christian tragedy is in the fact that, in the concrete setting of history, many divisions had been imposed, as it were, precisely by the loyalty to Christ and by a sincere zeal for the true faith. It is precisely in the name of the true Apostolicity of the teaching and of the true Holiness of life that many Christian groups or churches persist in their mutual separation even now, even when they have rekindled the spirit of charity and willingly assumed the burdens of each other. Tragically enough, in many situations "separation" or "schism" seem to be the demand of Christian loyalty and conscience. In our ecumenical conversation we have reached a stage at which it is becoming increasingly difficult to speak with a common voice, or to make agreed statements, or to engage in a united action. All would agree that the Church's Unity is God's will and purpose, and all are aware of the impending duty to recover the lost unity. But, at this very point, the deepest difference of convictions reappears. All would agree that the Church of Christ *simply cannot be divided*, as Christ himself is never divided. But what is then the ultimate meaning of the Christian Division, because there is division?

For many Christians the present state of disruption, i.e. *our disunity as churches*, depends primarily upon the spirit of divisiveness, in which pretexts for a continuing separation are invented or discovered in things which should not prevent a *communio in sacris*, even if it is still impossible to exhibit a perfect agreement in doctrine. There is Unity, they would urge, and it must be manifested at once, and all should meet at the Lord's Table. For many Christians, in fact, by whatever name they may be described, all existing schisms are to such an extent and in

such a sense inside of the *Una Sancta*, that they can be overruled just by an increase in charity, or else by certain adjustments in policy, including possibly even a restoration of a "historical episcopate."

But there are many others, who are strongly convinced that the tragedy of Christian disruption goes much deeper and had affected the very basis of the Divine Institution. And surely, the question of numbers and percentage is absolutely out of place in the realm of Christian freedom and commitment of faith. They would contend that it is not only a lack of togetherness or the spirit of divisiveness, but above all some definite structural losses or distortions in the process of the Christian disintegration that constitute at the present the main predicament of the divided Christendom. Without any lack of charity, and with an earnest and brotherly affection for them with whom they are conscientiously compelled to disagree, those who are committed to the "High" or "Catholic" conception of the Church would insist that first of all these structural losses should be recovered or healed, and that, unless this had been done, any manifestation of the alleged "Oneness in Christ" is bound to be unreal and insincere. For them, of the "High" tradition, separation went to such a depth of Christian existence that they cannot, to use the Toronto phrase, regard many of the existing groups and denominations as "churches," in any proper or full sense of the word. They would not impose their own convictions upon those who are unable to share them, but they are compelled, in an ultimate obedience to the will of God, as they read it in the Scripture and in the graceful experience of the Church, to state their own convictions and to abstain from any action, be it an "action of faith," in which they cannot join, without betraying their deepest loyalty.

When the different groups of Christians are separated by their loyalties to the Truth, i.e. when they interpret divergently the ultimate loyalty to Christ, it would be both unfair and unwise to ask each other to make concessions and to disregard disagreement for the sake of an immediate unity. It would be, moreover, a sign of unhealthy impatience. *Charity should never be set against the Truth.* Obviously, it would be unreal to ask the "Catholics" not to regard the Apostolic Succession and the Ministerial Priesthood as being of the *essence* of the Church, or to suggest that they should not regard any doctrinal interpretation of Sacraments, including that of the Holy Eucharist, as binding. It would be equally unfair to ask the "Protestants" to abandon their distinctive teachings, such as, the doctrine of the Justification by Faith, or, the exclusive practice of the "Believer's baptism," or to expect that they would accept doctrines or institutions, which they conscientiously regard as erroneous. To do this, and to try, in the name of an abstract "unity" or "oneness," to make on the common behalf any statement which, in fact, can be but a "party-statement," to whichever "party" the preference may be given, would mean either to indulge in dreams, as glorious as they may seem to be, or to attempt a disguised conversion. It may be painful to acknowledge the cruciality of our

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deepest difference. But this pain is rather the pangs of growth. It must be plainly acknowledged that the present "schism" or "disunity as churches" is not only a stigma of sin, but also a *witness to a deep disagreement about the Truth*.

It can be objected at this point that all that had just been said amounts to a recognition that the Ecumenical Movement had reached a dead-end, and that no further discussion can be profitable and cannot lead anywhere. In fact, it only means that some new ways should be discovered, if only we earnestly believe that Unity is God's will and not just a human project. The tension, which had been described at Amsterdam as "our deepest difference," belongs to the very heart of the ecumenical problem. It is this *tension* that gives the true ecumenicity to the ecumenical quest. The main presupposition of any true ecumenical encounter is the mutual confidence and respect. The "divided Christians" must trust and respect each other's sincerity, each other's convictions. The first appeal of the Faith and Order Movement was addressed to "all Christian Communion throughout the world." It may make the task much easier if certain communions drop from the scene, but then the ecumenicity of the purpose will be seriously threatened. By its very nature, the Ecumenical endeavor is a paradoxical venture. It is, as it were, an attempt to redirect the course of Christian history, to redirect it towards unity, after the centuries of schisms and splits. This cannot be an easy task.

And this brings us to the final point. Perhaps, we can describe all ecumenical efforts of the last decades as an *Ecumenism in space*. The first task of the Faith and Order Conferences in the past was to discover and register the manifold "agreements" and disagreements between the various communions and denominations throughout the world. The balance was rather disheartening and confusing. The next step was to discover the "deepest difference." It seems that this *Ecumenism in space* must be now supplemented by an *Ecumenism in time*. No agreement which fails to do justice to the age-long process of Christian thinking and devotion can have a lasting value. The time itself must be redeemed and reintegrated. "Others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." It is but fair to say that we have not yet entered deeply enough into the labors of the preceding generations, of our fathers and forefathers in God. We are too much imprisoned in our own age. But all Christian convictions are subject to an ultimate test by *paradosis*, by tradition. It is in the process of our common return to that Tradition, which had been continuous, even in the midst of conflicts and splits, if often in a disguised and obscure manner, that we, the "divided Christians," will meet each other on a safer ground than ever before. This Tradition is the Holy Church herself, in which the Lord is ever present.

Of course, at the end, in the ultimate *consummation*, everything historical will be superseded by what no eye had ever seen and no imagination could ever have perceived. Yet, *the Historical*, i.e. that

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which has been done by men in history, in time and on this earth, has its own status in the story of Salvation. The final judgment on history, even on the history of Christendom, belongs solely to the Savior-Judge, to Whom all power had been given, and Who is coming to "shake the earth," and "to judge the quick and the dead." Yet, the Church on earth, i.e. in history, had been given authority to bind and to loose. It had been established as a "Pillar and Foundation of the Truth." The full knowledge and understanding, *the vision*, is reserved for the Day of Judgement. But, at least, a knowledge of *direction* is available for the Church already is her earthly Pilgrimage. To recover this *sense of direction* is the first task of the Ecumenical Movement at the present. The goal is distant, and the path is narrow. Yet, a sure and infallible guide is given to all who search with humility and devotion — the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth. He will lead the faithful into the Fulness of Truth.

ART TWO: THE "DOCTRINE" OF THE CHURCH SCHISM AND THE BRANCH THEORY

The basic difficulty of doctrine on Christian reunification is that of the limits or boundaries of the Church. This is the entire problematic of St. Cyprian of Carthage. [See the following article for an analysis of the inadequacy of St. Cyprian's thought]. The basic idea of St. Cyprian may be expressed as follows: the canonical boundary of the Church is inherently charismatic, so that any "schism" is a complete falling away from the Church. It is a departure from that holy land, from that holy and sacred City where the holy source pulses, the source of holy water, the mystical Jordan. This is why the schismatics have only "impure water," used for the further profanation of what is evil rather than for its ablation. Immediately beyond the canonical boundary, the world without grace, the natural world, begins. The practical conclusions of St. Cyprian were never accepted by the Church, and Church regulations on the reunification of schismatics and heretics tacitly suggest that the Spirit breathes even in the sons of the opposition. The recognition of "schismatic" sacraments cannot be explained by "economy" alone — here there can be no ambiguous "pragmatism," no "as if." Nonetheless, however, the reasoning of St. Cyprian can hardly be considered to have been refuted. Of course, its premises must be narrowed and made more precise. But the very consistency of thought remains undisturbed. And in his polemic with the Donatists, St. Augustine was essentially not that different from St. Cyprian. This is why there is unresolved tension between dogma and practice in this case — tension, not contradiction. The Church testifies that the sacraments are performed among schismatics and even heretics — even if it is not salvific, as St. Augustine explains, but they are at least performed in the Holy Spirit, which therefore remains alive even in schism. But this does not explain how it is possible. It is not so enigmatic that there is the hope of salvation "outside the Church," *extra Ecclesiam* — to such an extent is the very fact of the unity of the abiding, Life-giving Spirit present in the schism.

This is the basic antinomy in Church doctrine. And it is not suitable to misinterpret this antinomic and paradoxical fact in the spirit and sense of the well-known "*branch theory of the Church*." This would be an altogether exceptional extrapolation. The "branch theory of the Church" sees the schism of the Christian world too optimistically and happily. There are no "branches" with equal rights. It is truer to say: sick branches do not immediately wither away. Herein lies the basic fact. Canonical isolation, the loss of "ecumenism" — that is, of Catholic wholeness — the dulling and obscuring of dogmatic consciousness, even outright delusion — all of this human falseness and error still does not stop or obstruct the circulation of the Spirit. Nonetheless, this is no longer a canonical fact, and cannot be considered when building a "normal" structure for the Church. This is the fact of a

supra-canonical exception, thus far unknown in history. Khomiakov expressed this best of all: "Since the Church is earthly and visible and there is still no completion and perfection of the entire Church, which the Lord decreed shall exist until the final judgment of all of creation, it creates and knows only within its limits, not judging the remainder of mankind (in the words of Paul to the Corinthians), and only recognizes as lost — that is, as not belonging to her — those who left her of their own accord. The remainder of mankind, either outside of the Church or connected to her with knots which God will not allow her to unravel, She concedes to the judgment of the great day" (*The Church Is One*, §2).

Yes, there are invisible knots which cannot be severed by retreats and division and schism. But it is even less suitable to calm and comfort oneself about this invisible bond, to slight this merciful gift of unity. But one must try to accomplish, discover and execute this unity in the completeness of the Church, which triumphs in the Spirit and in truth on the earth and in historical testimony. From this point of view, every real "common cause" is more important than a direct posing of the question of reunification. For the very reality of unity and faithfulness, even if only to a slight extent, is most important of all. In this regard, doctrinal and theological collaboration and mutual ties are undoubtedly a real act of "union," since at least in striving towards the truth of Christ, solidarity is attained. The question of reunification is most expediently posed namely as a question of truth — seek the Truth, and it will not only liberate but unite, for Truth is one and is unity. For reunification in Christian empiricism, things must change — or to put it differently, they must be transformed. Reunification cannot be thought out like the union of today's empirical realities. And in the idea of unification there is more accuracy and clarity than in the idea of simple combination. Here it remains unclear who is uniting. And unification tends towards the Truth. Reunification is possible only in the Spirit and in strength, in inspiration and holiness. Therefore it will hardly come during theological conferences, at the meetings of hierarchs, hardly in Lausanne or Stockholm. And if reunification is fated to occur in history, then in any case this will be already in the eschatological twilight and on the eve of the Second Coming (*Parousia*), for this will already be a forewarning and anticipation of our fates from the other world. Here much is unclear, and will be explained to all in prayerful vigil and ordeal. This does not weaken the decisiveness of the commandment: "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no abiding City, but rather we seek the coming one" (*Hebrews* 13: 3).

*Translated from the Russian by
Linda Morris*

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CHURCH

It is very difficult to give an exact and firm definition of a "sect" or "schism" (I distinguish the "theological definition" from the simple canonical description"), since a *sect* in the Church is always something contradictory and unnatural, a paradox and an enigma. For the Church *is unity* and the whole of her being is in this unity and union, of Christ and in Christ. "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one Body" (*I Corinthians* 12:13), and the prototype of this unity is the consubstantial Trinity. The measure of this unity is *catholicity* or *communality* (*sobornost*), when the impenetrability of personal consciousness is softened and even removed in complete unity of thought and soul and the multitude of them that believe are of one heart and soul (*cf. Acts* 4:32). A sect on the other hand is separation, solitariness, the loss and denial of communality. The sectarian spirit is the direct opposite of the spirit of the Church.

The question of the nature and meaning of divisions and sects in the Church was put in all its sharpness as early as the ancient baptismal disputes of the third century. At that time St. Cyprian of Carthage developed with fearless consistency a doctrine of a complete absence of grace in *every* sect precisely *as* a sect. The whole meaning and the whole logical stress of his reasoning lay in the conviction that *the sacraments are established in the Church*. That is to say, they are effected and can be effected *only in the Church*, in communion and in communality. Therefore every violation of communality and unity in itself leads immediately beyond the last barrier into some decisive *outside*. To St. Cyprian every schism was a departure out of the Church, out of that sanctified and holy land, where alone rises the baptismal spring, the waters of salvation, *quia una est aqua in ecclesia sancta* (St. Cyprian, *Epist.* lxxi, 2). The teaching of St. Cyprian on the gracelessness of sects is related to his teaching on unity and communality. This is not the place or the moment to recollect and relate St. Cyprian's deductions and proofs. Each of us remembers and knows them, is bound to know them, is bound to remember them. They have not lost their force to this day. The historical influence of St. Cyprian was continuous and powerful. Strictly speaking, the theological premises of St. Cyprian's teaching have never been disproved. Even St. Augustine was not so very far from St. Cyprian. He argued with the Donatists, not with St. Cyprian himself, and he did not confute St. Cyprian; indeed, his argument was more about practical measures and conclusions. In his reasoning about the unity of the Church, about the unity of love, as the necessary and decisive condition of the saving power of the sacraments, St. Augustine really only repeats St. Cyprian in new words.

But the *practical* conclusions of St. Cyprian have not been accepted and supported by the consciousness of the Church. And one asks how this was possible, if his premises have been neither disputed nor set aside. There is no need to enter into the details of the Church's canonical relations with sectarians and heretics. It is sufficient to state that there are occasions when by the very form of her activity the Church brings one to understand that the sacraments of sectarians and even of heretics are valid, that the sacraments can be celebrated *outside the strict canonical limits of the Church*. The Church customarily receives adherents from sects and even from heresies *not by way of baptism*, obviously meaning or supposing that they have already been actually baptized in their sects and heresies. In many cases the Church receives adherents even *without chrism* and sometimes even clerics *in their existing orders*, which must all the more be understood and explained as recognizing the validity or reality of the corresponding rites performed over them "outside the Church." But, if sacraments are performed, it can only be by virtue of the Holy Spirit. Canonical rules establish or reveal a certain mystical paradox. In the form of her activity the Church bears witness to the extension of her mystical territory even beyond the canonical threshold; the "outside world" does not begin immediately. St. Cyprian was right: the sacraments are accomplished only *in* the Church. But he defined this *in* hastily and too narrowly. Must we not come rather to the opposite conclusion? *Where the sacraments are accomplished, there is the Church*. St. Cyprian started from the silent supposition that *the canonical and charismatic limits of the Church invariably coincide*. And it is this uproven identification that has not been confirmed by the communal consciousness. As a mystical organism, as the sacramental Body of Christ, the Church cannot be adequately described in canonical terms or categories alone. It is impossible to state or discern the true limits of the Church simply by canonical signs or marks. Very often the canonical boundary also determines the charismatic boundary; what is bound on earth is bound by an indissoluble knot in heaven. But not always. Still more often, not immediately. In her sacramental, mysterious existence the Church surpasses canonical measurements. For that reason a canonical cleavage does not immediately signify mystical impoverishment and desolation. All that St. Cyprian said about the unity of the Church and the sacraments can be and must be accepted. But it is not necessary, as he did, to draw the final boundary around the body of the Church by canonical points alone.

This raises a general questioning and doubt. Are these canonical rules and acts subject to theological generalization? Is it possible to impute to them theological or dogmatic motives and grounds? Or do they rather represent only pastoral discretion and forbearance? Must we not understand the canonical mode of action rather as a forbearing silence concerning gracelessness than as a recognition of the reality or validity

of schismatic rites? Is it then quite prudent to cite or introduce canonical facts into a theological argument?

This objection is connected to the theory of what is called "economy."¹ In general ecclesiastical usage *οικονομία* is a term of very many meanings. In its broadest sense "economy" embraces and signifies the whole work of salvation (cf. *Colossians* 1:25; *Ephesians* 1:10; 3, 2, 9). The Vulgate usually translates it by *dispensatio*.² In canonical language "economy" has not become a technical term. It is rather a descriptive word, a kind of general characteristic; *οικονομία* is opposed to *ἀκρίβεια* as a kind of relaxation of church discipline, an exemption or exception from the "strict rule (*ius strictum*) or from the general rule. The governing motive of "economy" is precisely "philanthropy," pastoral discretion, a pedagogical calculation — the deduction is always from working utility. "Economy" is a pedagogical rather than a canonical principle; it is the pastoral corrective of the canonical consciousness. "Economy" can be and should be employed by each individual pastor in his parish, still more by a bishop or council of bishops. For "economy" is pastorship and pastorship is "economy." In this is the whole strength and vitality of the "economical" principle — and also its limitation. Not every question can be put and answered in the form of "economy."

One must ask, therefore, whether it is possible to put the question concerning sectarians and heretics as a question only of "economy." Certainly, in so far as it is a question of winning lost souls for Catholic truth, of the way to bring them "to the reason of truth," every course of action *must* be "economical," that is, pastoral, compassionate, loving. The pastor must leave the ninety and nine and seek the lost sheep. But for that reason the greater is the need for complete sincerity and directness. Not only is this unequivocal accuracy, strictness and clarity; in fact, *ἀκρίβεια*, is required in the sphere of dogma. How otherwise can unity of mind be obtained? Accuracy and clarity are before all things necessary in mystical diagnosis, and precisely for this reason, the question of the rites of sectarians and heretics must be put and decided in the form of the strictest *ἀκρίβεια*. For here there is not so much a *quaestio iuris* as a *quaestio facti*. Further, it is a question of mystical fact, of sacramental reality. It is not a matter of "recognition" so much as of diagnosis; it is necessary to *identify* and to *discern*.

Least of all is "economy" in this question compatible with the radical standpoint of St. Cyprian. If beyond the canonical limits of the Church the wilderness without grace begins immediately, if in general schismatics have not been baptized and still abide in the darkness before baptism, perfect clarity, strictness and insistence are still more indispensable in the acts and judgments of the Church. Here no "forbearance" is appropriate or even possible; no concessions are permissible. Is it in fact conceivable that the Church should receive these or those sectarians or heretics into her own body not by way of

baptism simply in order thereby to make their decisive step easy? At all events this would be a very rash and dangerous complaisance. Rather, it would be a connivance with human weakness, self-love and lack of faith, a connivance all the more dangerous in that it creates every appearance of recognition by the Church that schismatic sacraments and rites are valid, and that, not only in the reception of schismatics or people from outside, but in the consciousness of the majority in the Church and even of the leaders of the Church. Moreover, this mode of action is applied because it creates this appearance. If in fact the Church were fully convinced that in the sects and heresies baptism is *not* accomplished, to what end would she reunite schismatics without baptism? Surely not simply in order to save them from false shame in the open confession that they have not been baptized. Can such a motive be considered honorable, convincing and of good repute? Can it benefit the newcomers to reunite them through ambiguity and suppression? To the just doubt whether it would be impossible by analogy to unite to the Church *without baptism* Jews and Moslems "by economy," Metropolitan Antony replied with complete candor: "Ah, but all such neophytes and even those baptized in the name of Montanus and Priscilla themselves would not claim to enter the Church without immersion and the utterance of the words, 'In the name of the Father,' etc. Such a claim could only be advanced through a confused understanding of the Church's grace by those sectarians and schismatics whose baptism, worship and hierarchical system differ in little externally from those of the Church. It would be very insulting to them on their turning to the Church to have to sit on the same seat with heathens and Jews. For that reason the Church, indulging their weakness, has not performed over them the external act of baptism but has given them this grace in the second sacrament" (*Faith and Reason*, 1916, 8-9, pp. 887-8). I transcribe this utterance in sorrowful perplexity. Common sense would draw precisely the opposite conclusion from Metropolitan Antony's argument. In order to lead weak and unreasoning "neophytes" to the "clear understanding of the Church's grace" which they lack, it would be all the more necessary and appropriate to *perform over them the external act of baptism*, instead of giving them and many others by a feigned accommodation to their "susceptibilities" not only an excuse but a ground to continue deceiving themselves with the equivocal fact that their "baptism, worship and hierarchical system *differ in little externally from those of the Church.*" One may ask who gave the Church this right not merely to change, but simply to abolish the *external act of baptism*, performing it in such cases only mentally, by implication or intention — at the celebration of the "second sacrament" — over the unbaptized. Admittedly, in special and exceptional cases the "external act," the "form," may be indeed abolished; such is the martyr's baptism in blood or even the so-called *baptisma flaminis*. But that is admissible only in *casu necessitatis*. Moreover, there can hardly be any analogy here with the

systematic connivance in another's sensitivity and self-deception. If "economy" is pastoral discretion conducive to the advantage and salvation of human souls, then in such a case one could only speak of "economy inside-out." It would be a deliberate retrogression into equivocation and obscurity, and for the sake of external success, since the internal enchurchment of "neophytes" cannot occur with such a concealment. It is scarcely possible to impute to the Church such a perverse and crafty intention. And, in any case, the practical result of this "economy" must be considered utterly unexpected. In the Church herself, the conviction has arisen among the majority that sacraments are performed even among schismatics, that even in the sects there is a valid, although forbidden, hierarchy. The true intention of the Church in her acts and rules appears to be too difficult to discern and discriminate. From this side the "economical" explanation of these rules cannot be regarded as plausible.

The "economical" explanation raises even greater difficulties in regard to its general theological premises. One can scarcely ascribe to the Church the power and the right, as it were, to convert the has-not-been into the has-been, "to change the meaningless into the valid," as Professor Diovuniotis expresses it (*Church Quarterly Review* No. 231, p. 97), "in order of economy." This would give a particular sharpness to the question whether it is possible to receive schismatic clergy "in their existing orders." In the Russian Church adherents from Roman Catholicism or from the Nestorians, etc. are received into communion "through recantation of heresy," that is, in the sacrament of penitence. Clergy are given absolution by a bishop and thereby the inhibition lying on a schismatic cleric is removed. One asks whether it is conceivable that in this delivery and absolution from sin there is also accomplished and acquired silently — and even secretly — baptism, confirmation, ordination as deacon or priest, sometimes consecration, and that *without any "form"* or clear and distinctive "external act," which might enable us to notice and consider precisely what sacraments are being performed. Here is a double equivocation, from the standpoint of motive and from the standpoint of the fact itself. Can one, in short, celebrate a sacrament by virtue of "intention" alone, without visible act? Of course not. Not because to the "form" belongs some self-sufficient or "magical" action, but precisely because in the celebration of a sacrament the "external act" and the pouring-forth of grace are in substance *indivisible and inseparable*. Certainly, the Church is the store of grace and to her is given power to preserve and teach these gifts of grace. The Church is *ὁ ταμιούχος τῆς χάριτος*, as the Greek theologians say. But the power of the Church does not extend to the very foundations of Christian existence. It is impossible to think that the Church has the right "in the order of economy" to admit to the priestly function *without ordination* the professed clergy of schismatic confessions, even of those that have not preserved the "apostolic succession," remedying not only defects but just complete gracelessness

only in the order of power, intention and recognition, and that unspoken. In such an interpretation the Church's whole sacramental system in general appears too soft and elastic. Neither was Khomiakov sufficiently careful, when in defending the new Greek practice of receiving reunited Latins through baptism he wrote to Palmer that

all sacraments are completed only in the bosom of the true Church and it matters not whether they be completed in one form or another. Reconciliation (with the Church) renovates the sacraments or completes them, giving a full and orthodox meaning to the rite that was before either insufficient or heterodox, and the repetition of the preceding sacraments is virtually contained in the rite or fact of reconciliation. Therefore, the visible repetition of Baptism or Confirmation, though unnecessary, cannot be considered as erroneous, and establishes only a ritual difference without any difference of opinion. (*Russia and the English Church*, ch. 6, p. 62.)

Here the thought divides. The "repetition" of a sacrament is not only superfluous but impermissible. If there was not a sacrament but there was previously performed an imperfect, heretical rite, then the sacrament must be *accomplished for the first time*, and moreover, with complete sincerity and clarity. In any case the Catholic sacraments are not merely rites and it is not possible to treat the "external" aspect of sacramental celebration with such disciplinary relativism. The "economical" interpretation of the canons might be convincing and probable only in the presence of direct and perfectly clear proofs, whereas it is customarily supported by indirect data and most of all by indirect intentions and conclusions. The "economical" interpretation is not the teaching of the Church. It is only a private "theological opinion," very recent and very controversial, having arisen in a period of theological confusion and decadence in a hasty endeavor to dissociate oneself as sharply as possible from Roman theology.

Roman theology admits and acknowledges that schismatics have a valid hierarchy and that in a sense even "apostolic succession" is retained, so that under certain conditions the sacraments can be and actually are accomplished among schismatics and even among heretics. The basic premises of this sacramental theology have already been established with sufficient definition by St. Augustine and the Orthodox theologian has every reason to take into account the theology of St. Augustine in his doctrinal synthesis. The first thing to attract attention in St. Augustine's work is the organic relation between the question of the validity of sacraments and the general doctrine concerning the Church. The validity of the sacraments celebrated by schismatics signifies for St. Augustine the continuance of their links with the Church. He directly affirms that in the sacraments of sectarians *the Church is active*; some she engenders of herself, others she engenders outside, of her maid-servant, and schismatic baptism is valid for this

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very reason, that it is performed by the Church (see St. Augustine, *De bapt.* I, 15, 23). What is valid in the sects is that in them which is from the Church, which in their hands remains as the portion and the sacred core of the Church, through which they are with the Church. *In quibusdam rebus nobiscum sunt.* The unity of the Church is based on a twofold bond — the "unity of the Spirit" and the "union of peace" (cf. *Ephesians* 4:3). In sects and divisions the "union of peace" is broken and torn apart, but in the sacraments the "unity of the Spirit" is not terminated. This is the unique paradox of sectarian existence; the sect remains united with the Church in the grace of the sacraments and this becomes a condemnation once love and communal mutuality have withered. To this is connected St. Augustine's second basic distinction, the distinction between the "validity" or "actuality," the reality, of the sacraments and their "efficacy." The sacraments of schismatics are *valid*, that is, they genuinely *are* sacraments. But they are *not efficacious* (*non-efficacia*) because of the schism or division itself. For in sects and divisions love withers and without love salvation is impossible. In salvation there are two sides: the objective action of grace and the subjective effort of fidelity. The Holy and sanctifying Spirit still breathes in the sects, but in the stubbornness and powerlessness of schism healing is not accomplished. It is untrue to say that in schismatic rites nothing generally is accomplished, for, if they must be considered only empty acts and words, deprived of grace, by the same token they are not only empty but also converted into a profanation, a sinister counterfeit. If the rites of schismatics are not sacraments, they are a blasphemous caricature. In that case neither "economical" suppression of facts nor "economical" glossing of sin is possible. The sacramental rite cannot be only a rite, empty but innocent. The sacrament is accomplished in reality. But it is impossible to say also that in the sects the sacraments *are of avail*. The sacraments are not "magical" acts; indeed the Eucharist may also be taken "unto judgment and condemnation." But this does not refute the reality or "validity" of the Eucharist itself. The same may be said of baptism; baptismal grace must be renewed in unceasing effort and service, otherwise it becomes "inefficacious." From this point of view St. Gregory of Nyssa attacked with great energy the practice of postponing baptism to the hour of death or to advanced years, in order to avoid pollution of the baptismal robes. He transfers the emphasis. Baptism is not only the end of sinful existence but rather the beginning of everything. Baptismal grace is not only remission of sins but a gift or surety of effort. The name is entered in the army list but the honor of the soldier is in his service, not in his calling alone. What does baptism mean without spiritual deeds? This is what St. Augustine meant to say in his distinction between "character" and "grace." In any case, a "sign" or "seal" remains on every person who receives baptism, even if he falls away and departs, and each will be tried concerning this "sign" or surety on the Day of Judgment. The baptized are distinguished from the unbaptized, even when baptismal

grace has not flowered in their works and deeds, even when they have corrupted and wasted their whole life. That is the ineffaceable consequence of the Divine touch. This clear distinction between the two inseparable factors of sacramental existence, Divine grace and human love, are characteristic of the whole sacramental theology of St. Augustine. But the sacrament is accomplished by grace and not by love. Yet man is saved in freedom and not in compulsion, and for that reason grace somehow does not burn with a life-giving flame outside Catholicity and love.

One thing remains obscure. How does the activity of the Spirit continue beyond the canonical border of the Church? What is the validity of sacraments without communion, of stolen sacraments, sacraments in the hands of usurpers? Recent Roman theology answers that question by the doctrine of the validity of sacraments *ex opere operato*, as distinct from validity *ex opere operantis* (sc. *ministri*). In St. Augustine this distinction does not exist. But he understood the validity of the sacraments outside canonical unity in the same sense. In fact *opus operatum* preeminantly signifies the independence of the sacrament from the personal action of the minister. The Church performs the sacrament and through her Christ, the High Priest, performs it. The sacraments are performed by the prayer and activity of the Church, *ex opere orantis et operantis ecclesiae*. In such a sense must the doctrine of validity *ex opere operato* be accepted? For St. Augustine it was not so important that the sacraments of schismatics are "unlawful" or "illicit" (*illicita*); much more important was the fact that the schism is a dissipation of love. But the love of God overlaps and surmounts the failure of love in man. In the sects themselves and even among heretics the Church continues to perform her saving and sanctifying work. It may not follow, perhaps, that we should say, the schismatics are *still in the Church*; at all events this would not be very precise. It would be more accurate to say that the Church continues to work in the schisms in expectation of the mysterious hour when the stubborn heart will be melted in the warmth of "preparatory grace," when the will and thirst for communality and unity will burst into flame and burn. The "validity" of the sacraments among schismatics is the mysterious guarantee of their return to Catholic plenitude and unity.

The sacramental theology of St. Augustine was generally not well known by the Eastern Church in antiquity. It also was not received by Byzantine theology, but not because they saw or suspected something alien or superfluous in it. In general, St. Augustine was not very well known in the East. In modern times the doctrine of the sacraments has been not infrequently expounded in the Orthodox East and in Russia on a Roman model and there is still no creative appropriation of St. Augustine's conception. Contemporary Orthodox theology must express and explain the traditional canonical practice of the Church in relation to heretics and schismatics on the basis of those general premises which have been established by St. Augustine.

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It is necessary to hold firmly in mind that in asserting the "validity" of the sacraments and of the hierarchy itself in the sects, St. Augustine in no way relaxed or removed the boundary dividing *sect* and *Catholicity*. This is not so much a canonical as a spiritual boundary, *communal love in the Church or separatism and alienation in the schisms*. This for Augustine was the boundary of salvation, since, indeed, grace operates but does not save outside communality. (It is appropriate to note that here too St. Augustine closely follows St. Cyprian who asserted that except in the Church even martyrdom for Christ does not avail.) For this reason despite all the "reality" and "validity" of the schismatic hierarchy it is impossible to speak in a strict sense of the retention of "apostolic succession" beyond the limits of canonical communality. This question has been investigated with exhaustive fullness and great insight in the remarkable article of the late C. G. Turner, "The Apostolic Succession" in *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, edited by H. B. Swete (1918). And from this it indubitably follows that the so-called "branch theory of the Church" cannot be accepted. This theory depicts the cleavage of the Christian world too complacently and comfortably. The onlooker perhaps will not immediately discern the "schismatic" branches from the "Catholic" trunk. In its substance, however, "schism" is not *only a branch*. It is also the *will for schism*. It is the mysterious and even enigmatic sphere beyond the canonical limits of the Church, where the sacraments still are celebrated, where hearts as often flame and burn in faith, in love, in works. It is necessary to admit this, but it is also necessary to remember that *the limit is real, that there is no union*. Khomiakov, it seems, was speaking of this when he said: "inasmuch as the earthly and visible Church is not the fullness and completeness of the whole Church which the Lord had appointed to appear at the final judgment of all creation, she acts and knows only within her own limits; and (according to the words of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, *I Corinthians* 5:12) does not judge the rest of mankind, and only looks upon those as excluded, that is to say, not belonging to her, who have excluded themselves. The rest of mankind, whether alien from the Church, or united to her by ties which God had not willed to reveal to her, she leaves to the judgment of the great day" (*Russia and the English Church*, ch. 23, p. 194). In the same sense Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow decided to speak of churches "not purely true."

Mark you, I do not presume to call false any church, believing that Jesus is the Christ. The Christian Church can only be either purely true, confessing the true and saving Divine teaching without the false admixtures and pernicious opinions of men, or not purely true, mixing with the true and saving teaching of faith in Christ the false and pernicious opinions of men. [Metropolitan Filaret then concluded.] You expect now that I should give judgment concerning the other half of present

Christianity, but I just simply look upon them; in part I see how the head and Lord of the Church heals the many deep wounds of the old serpent in all the parts and limbs of this body, applying now gentle, now strong remedies, even fire and iron, in order to soften hardness, to draw out poison, to clean the wounds, to separate out malignant growths, to restore spirit and life in the half-dead and numbed structures. In such wise I attest my faith that in the end the power of God patently will triumph over human weakness, good over evil, unity over division, life over death. (*Conversation between the Seeker and the Believer concerning the Orthodoxy of the Eastern Greco-Russian Church*, Moscow, 1833, pp. 27-9, 135.)

This is only a beginning, a general characteristic; not everything in it is clearly and fully said. But the question is correctly posed. There are many bonds still not broken, whereby the schisms are held together in a certain unity. Our whole attention and our whole will must be gathered together and directed to removing the stubbornness of dissention. "We seek not conquest," says St. Gregory of Nazianzus, "but the return of brethren, the separation from whom is tearing us."³

¹The doctrine of ecclesiastical "economy" is particularly developed in Greek theology. I mention only: Χρ. Ανδρουτσος, *Δογματική τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἀνατολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, ἐν ΛΘ. 1907, σελ 306 κτλ.; Κ. Ι. Δυοβουμιότης, *τὰ Μυστήρια τῆς Ἀνατολικῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας*, ἐν ΛΘ. 1913, σελ 162 κτλ.; *eiusdem*, "The Principle of Economy," *Church Quarterly Review*, No. 231, April 1933; cf. F. Gavin, *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought*, pp. 292ff.; I. Spacil, S.J., *Doctrina Theologiae Orientis separati de sacramento baptismi*, *Orientalia Christ*, VI, 4, Rome 1926. In Russian theology few have held such a point of view. Cf. the correspondence of Metropolitan Antony with R. Gardiner in the *Journal Faith and Reason*, 1915, 4, 17; 1916, 8-9, 12; and particularly the article of A. Ilarion, "The Unity of the Church and the World Conference of Christianity," *Theological Messenger*, Jan. 1917; also J. A. Douglas, "The Relations of the Anglican Church with the Eastern Orthodox," London 1921, op. 51ff.; "The Orthodox Principle of Economy and its Exercise," *Christian East*, XIII, 3-7, 1932; and Economic Intercommunion in the Report of the Committee to consider the findings of the Lausanne Conference, 1930.

²Cf. A. d'Alès, "Le mot *οικονομία* dans la langue théologique de St. Irénée," *Revue des études grecques*, XXXII, 1919, pp. 1-9.

³See also the collection of essays *Christian Reunion, The Oecumenical Problem in the Orthodox Consciousness*, Paris, 1933, and particularly the essay by Rev. Fr. Sergius Bulgakov, "At Jacob's Well, Concerning the Real Unity of the Divided Church in Faith, Prayer and Sacraments," See also my article, "The Problems of Christian Reunion," in the journal *Put*, No. 37, Feb. 1933. (Both in Russian).

THE EUCHARIST AND CATHOLICITY

Let no one grieve at his poverty, for the
universal Kingdom hath been revealed.
St. John Chrysostom's *Easter Sermon*

The Holy Eucharist is enacted in memory of Christ. And foremost, in memory of the Last Supper, when the Lord himself established and first performed the most Holy Sacrament of the New Covenant with his disciples and gave the commandment: "Do this in remembrance of Me." But this is not only a remembrance. One remembers the *quondam* and the past, remembers what happened at one time and what no longer is. But the Last Supper was not just performed once, but is mysteriously continuing in our time, continuing until he comes again. In stepping up to the Eucharistic cup, we confess this each time: "Receive me today, O Son of God, as a partaker of Thy Mystic Feast." It continues, it is not repeated. For the sacrifice is one, the offering is one, the High Priest, Christ, the Offerer and the Offered, is one. "And today the same Christ is at hand," writes St. John Chrysostom. "He who prepared that supper," he continues, "is the Same who now prepares this one." And he adds: "The supper by which the sacrament was established is no more complete than each one following it, because the One performing and serving it is he, even as it was then."

This is how the mystery of catholicity is revealed, the mystery of the Church. The apostle mysteriously spoke of the Church as the "completeness" or "fulfillment" of Christ — *ἡτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ, τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου* (*Ephesians* 1:23). And St. John Chrysostom explained that "completeness" means fulfillment — the Church is a kind of fulfillment of Christ, Who is precisely the Head of the Body. And this means: the Head will be fulfilled only when a perfect body is made." The Body of Christ, the Church, exists, performs, in time. In a similar way, each Eucharist is a kind of fulfillment of the Last Supper, its realization and discovery in the world and in time. Each Eucharistic service is a complete reflection of the single great Eucharist performed by our Savior on the eve of his voluntary sufferings at the Last Supper. As St. John Chrysostom says, each Eucharist is a whole sacrifice: "We offer it today, we offer that which was then offered and never weakens." Always and everywhere, Christ is one, "complete there and complete here."

And the Everlasting Pontiff, the Savior, "unceasingly performs for us this service," writes the penetrating Byzantine liturgist Nikolas Kabasilas. Not in such a way that he comes down to earth and incarnates or occupies the consecrated Gifts — "not in such a way that the ascended Body descends from heaven." In his Ascension Christ,

sitting "at the right hand" of the Father, is not separated from the earth and "unceasingly abides" in his Church. As St. John Chrysostom writes, "Christ not only left his Body to us, but ascended with it." In the sense of an awesome and mystical Eucharistic offering by the mysterious action of the Holy Spirit, sent into the world by the Son from the Father, the ever-pure Body of Christ is fulfilled." And here is the mystery. The sacrifice is not repeated, the stabbing is not repeated. The sacrifice, writes Kabasilas about the Eucharist, "is performed not through the stabbing of the Lamb as at that time, but through the offering of bread in place of the slaughtered lamb." The offered Eucharist is consecrated by the strength of the prayerful appeal of the Church through the descent of the Holy Spirit. It is exempted from the decaying cycle of nature by the power of grace. The Pure Eucharist is accepted onto the celestial altar and becomes the true flesh and blood of Christ. And through this the various manifestations of the Logos of God are perceived in unity. This is the body of the God-Man, born of a Virgin, who suffered, was resurrected, ascended into heaven, and was glorified. This is Christ himself in two distinct natures.

"He said in the beginning: let the earth bring forth vegetation," explains St. John of Damascus. "And even hitherto, the irrigation of rain bringing forth its vegetation, is stimulated and strengthened by divine command. So that here too God said: This is My Body, and this is My Blood; do this in remembrance of Me.' And because of his all-powerful command it is so, until he returns. And this command provides the rain for this new agriculture; it is the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit."

This "new agriculture," in the daring expression of St. John of Damascus, is a kind of cosmic mystery, the consecration of nature — a conception and a forewarning of the approaching great renewal, when God will be all in all. This is the beginning of a new heaven and a new earth. In the Holy Eucharist, the earth is becoming heaven even today: for "it is now possible to see on earth the body of the King of the Heavens," St. John Chrysostom notes. Nonetheless, this is not a self-contained, physical, natural miracle, not only the transformation of substance. For the Eucharistic miracle is performed for man, and performed through the human nature of the Logos Incarnate. The Eucharist is the "foe of death," the healing for immortality — *φαρμακον ἀθανασίας* — in the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch, the "Healing of Life, the "healing of the corruptible." This is incorruptible and immortal food for man. The Eucharist is performed in order to consume. It is first and foremost a supper. And in bodily taking the Eucharist, we most truly unite with Christ, with Christ the God-Man. For the flesh of the Lord, animated and alive, through the unity of the various manifestations of the Logos Incarnate, already divine, is the "body of the true Lord of all," in the words of St. John Chrysostom. Through the power of the unchangeable and indivisible unity of two natures in the person of the God-Man, through the Eucharist, "through

the infusion of flesh and blood," as St. John of Damascus expresses it, "we become parts of the Divinity of Christ." And for a creature of body and spirit, as man was created, there is no other way or means for union with God, as the Lord himself revealed: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" — *ἐὰν μὴ φάγητε τὴν σάρκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πίνετε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα, οὐκ ἔχετε ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* (John 6:53).

While creating his Church, in mysterious forewarning of his salvific sufferings, the Lord establishes at the Last Supper the most Holy Sacrament of the New Covenant, and reveals to his disciples that this is a sacrament of unity and love. Of love the Savior teaches and exhorts the apostles on that very night. And he speaks of love as the uniting power. He speaks of himself as a New and Second Adam. As the New Adam, the Lord is the Way for man, and in him and through him man comes to the Father. And the mysterious House of the Father, in which there are many rooms, is the Lord himself, in whose Body, in the Church, through the power of grace, those who believe in him are united with him and amongst themselves in mysterious unity. And they are united through the sacrament of the Flesh and Blood — in his own words: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him" — *ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα ἐν ἐμοὶ μένει καὶ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ* (John 6:56). Apostolic doctrine on the Church, as well on the Body of Christ, give primarily liturgical experience, and express Eucharistic activity: "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we all partake of that one bread" — *ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἐσμεν, οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν*. [I Corinthians 10:17]. St. John Chrysostom explains: "We are that very body. For what is bread: the Body of Christ. . . . What do partakers of communion become: the Body of Christ. . . . Not many bodies, but one body."

In the Holy Eucharist believers become the Body of Christ. And therefore the Eucharist is the sacrament of the Church, the sacrament of meeting," the "sacrament of participation" — *μυστήριον συνάξεως, μυστήριον χολνωίας*. Eucharistic participation is not only spiritual or moral unity, not only unity of experience, will, and feeling. It is a real and ontological unity, the realization of a single organic life in Christ. The very form of the Body points to the organic continuity of life. In believers, according to the strength and measure of their unity with Christ, a single life of the God-Man opens in sacramental participation, in the unity of the life-giving Spirit. The ancient fathers did not hesitate to speak of "natural" and "physical" union; they realistically explained the evangelical image of the Grapevine. St. Cyril called the Jerusalem partakers of the Eucharistic Supper "one-bodied and one-blooded in Christ." In its One Body, St. Cyril of Alexandria writes that by means of sacramental blessing, Christ makes believers truly one-bodied with him and amongst themselves "so that we meet and mix in unity with God and amongst ourselves in a unique personality,

although each is separated from the others by the way of spirits and bodies." "For this reason, he united himself with us and opened his Body in ours," writes St. John Chrysostom, "so that we constitute something real, like a body united with the head. And this is the sign of the most powerful love. . . . I came to desire to be the highest brother. For your sakes, I became flesh and blood. And this flesh and blood, through which I became of one blood with you, I now offer back to you." The Eucharist removes man's impenetrability and discrimination. Believers become of one body in Christ, and thereby — of one body in each other. A new, Catholic humanity is created — the Christian family. "All are really Christ, like one body made up of many members," writes Simeon.

The Eucharist is a Catholic sacrament, a sacrament of peace and love, and therefore unity — *mysterium pacis et unitatis nostrae*, in the words of St. Augustine. This is the vespers of Love, when the Lord revealed and showed to the disciples the "most perfect way" of perfect love in the image of his love: "that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" — *ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους, καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους* (John 13:34). Moreover, based on the model of the love of the Trinity: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" — *καθὼς ἠγάπησέν με ὁ πατήρ, κἀγὼ ὑμᾶς ἠγάπησα· μέννατε ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐμῇ* (John 15: 9). The Lord added the commandment of love to the mystery of the unity of the Trinity. For this mystery is love, "and this name is more fitting for God than any other name," remarks St. Gregory the Theologian. Concluding his farewell discussion with the Pontifical Prayer, our Savior prays for the union and unity of believers in him: "that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. . . . I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me" — *ἵνα πάντες ἐν ὧσιν, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ κἀγὼ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ὧσιν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεῦῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας. . . ἔγω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σύ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα ὧσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἓν, ἵνα γινώσκῃ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτοὺς καθὼς ἐμέ ἠγάπησας* (John 17: 21; 23). For us, separated and detached, this union and unity in the image of the Trinity, Consubstantial and Indivisible, is possible only in Christ, in his love, in the unity of his Body, in the sharing of his cup. In the unity of the Catholic Church, the consubstantiality of the Trinity is mysteriously reflected; and through the consubstantiality of the Trinity and the penetration of Divine Life with a multitude of believers, one soul and one heart is rendered one — *Τοῦ δὲ πλήθους τῶν πιστευσάντων ἦν καρδία καὶ ψυχή μία* (Acts 4:32). And the Church realizes this unity and catholicity primarily in the sacrament of the Eucharist. One may say that the Church is the image of the Holy

Trinity in creation. The revelation of the Trinity is therefore connected with the very establishment of the Church. In Eucharistic participation is the fulfillment and pinnacle of Church unity.

The sacrament of the Eucharist is first and foremost a communal and catholic prayer. *Publica et communis oratio*, writes St. Cyprian of Carthage, "and when we pray, we pray not for one but for the entire people because we, the entire people, are one." We pray for the entire people, and the entire people pray. This is seen in the exterior form of the prayer: "Prayers of thanksgiving for common concerns as well," remarks St. John Chrysostom. They are offered by the priest performing the sacrament, but he offers them on behalf of the entire people, of the Church, of the assembly of believers. From the Church, from the entire churchgoing population, he brings the sacred offering. And he prays not from himself but from the people, just as the Gifts on the altar are brought by the people. "Again we offer to Thee this reasonable [λογικῆν] and bloodless service, and we ask and pray and supplicate: send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these Gifts here presented." And the people strengthen this mystical, sacramental prayer and supplicate through their assent: "We hymn Thee, we Bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, and we entreat Thee, O our God." This is not passive assent, not prayerful accompaniment; this is testimony of the indivisible unity of spirit and identity in prayer. The Church speaks through the voice of the priest. But only a priest dares to offer a prayer on behalf of the people because only he, through divine grace, is empowered with the right and boldness to speak for all. He has and receives this right and this gift not from the people but from the Holy Spirit, through the succession of Church authority. But he receives it for the sake of the people, as a sort of coryphaeus of the Church choir; he has it as a gift of service, as one of the gifts in the multiplicity of Church gifts.

The prayerful "we" signifies not only the plural. But first and foremost it signifies the spiritual unity of the Church at hand, the indivisible catholicity of prayerful participation. In one of the Eucharistic prayers the Church asserts: "Do Thou therefore, O Master, administer these Offerings to all of us for good, according to the special need of each of us." For the prayer of believers should be a "symphonic" prayer, it should be brought with a "single voice and single heart" and not in such a way that it is made up of single, separate prayers. But precisely so each prayer is freed from personal restrictions and ceases to be only personal, and instead transcends and becomes communal and Catholic. That is, so that each person prays not in and of himself, but precisely as a member of the Church, sensing and being conscious of himself as a member of the Church body. This is possible in peace and love. A prayer of offering with the call for love and the prayer for the holy kiss is therefore anticipated in the Church. We will love one another. And along with it, of course, not feeble and fickle, purely human love, but that new love about which the Savior taught,

the love of Christ and in Christ, and love for the sake of Christ. Not natural inclination, but the power of grace, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (*Romans* 5:5). In the Church love is transformed, it receives ontological completeness and reality. It therefore becomes possible to "love one's neighbor as oneself." Loving this way is possible only in Christ, who opens the believer's gaze in each neighbor, in "one of these little ones," and only by the power of the sacrificial love of Christ. This love does not tolerate restrictions and limits, it cannot and does not want to be closed in, does not want to be lonely. Any and all personal good ceases to be desired and sweet. And this is the likeness of Christ's love, which excludes no one from its fullness. St. John Chrysostom speaks of this in powerful words, explaining the Lord's Prayer. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven! This means: "as in Heaven, we say, there is not one sinner, so on the earth let there be none; but in everyone, we say, implant Your fear and make all people angels, although they may be our enemies and foes." With such love must one come to the awesome sacrament of the Eucharist. "For the cleansing sacrifice common for the entire world is offered up," St. John Chrysostom remarks. And the universal kingdom is revealed, is opened.

There is a Catholic sweep and boldness in the liturgical prayer. "Further, we offer to Thee this reasonable [*λογικῆν*] service for the World, for the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." The liturgical petitions encompass the entire world as having already received God's blessing. In prayer the Church strives for the named enumeration of its entire membership, renowned and infirm, living and dead. And in this naming of all for whom churchgoers should and can pray, the beginnings of the personality are consecrated and affirmed. The Eucharistic naming of the living and dead signifies the affirmation of each individual in the common and Catholic body of the Church. "And give them a place and repose in Thy Kingdom," in the expression of the ancient Alexandrian liturgy. And we ask God to fill in the weakness and gaps in our memory: "and those whom we did not mention out of ignorance or forgetfulness, or out of the multitude of names, recall them Yourself, Lord, know the age and name of each, knowing each from the womb of the mother." And through the general prayer for "all Christian souls" and for all who died in the hope of resurrection in everlasting life we testify and strengthen our will for the all-encompassing, incomparable prayer. Moreover, the Eucharistic prayer encompasses with loving attention the entire fullness and complexity of life's situations and fortunes, the entire complexity of earth's fate. God's blessing and kindness are called on for one's entire life, for everything is encompassed and enveloped by Christ's love: "be all for everyone, know each, his petition, his house and his needs." All of life is contemplated in Christ. And the Church prays: "Remember, Lord, those who brought Thee these gifts, and those about whom and through whom and for whom these gifts were brought. Remember, Lord, the doers of good in

Your Holy Church and those who remember the poor. . . . Remember, Lord, those in the deserts, and mountains, and caves, and canyons of the earth. . . . Remember, Lord, the pious and reverent rulers. . . . Remember all authority and power. . . . Remember the people before Thee and those not present for excusable reasons, and have mercy on them and us through your great goodness: fill their store houses with goodness, preserve their marriages in peace and unity of thought, raise the young, lengthen youth, comfort the meek, gather the dissipated, find the lost, free those tortured by unclean spirits. Accompany those who sail, travel with those who travel, support the widows, defend the orphans, free the imprisoned, heal the sick. Remember, God, those in trial, exile, and in the mines, and in all kinds of grief and need and catastrophe and all those in need of Thy great mercy; those who love and those who hate us, and those who command us. We pray for the unworthy. Remember, O Lord our God, all Thy people and pour Thy rich mercy on all." This prayer is offered upon the consecration of the Gifts, before the face of Christ himself. And this prayer of love for the dead or sick is performed as a petition for unity of thought and peace, peace for the whole world: "End the discord of the churches, stop the confusion of the peoples, destroy the uprising of heresies with the power of the Holy Spirit. Accept us all in Thy Kingdom, and having displayed us as sons of light and sons of the day, give us Thy peace and love. . . . Allow us to celebrate and glorify with a common voice and common heart Thy all-honored and great Name." Thus does the entire people pray, and one prays for them.

This is not only unity of prayer. In the Eucharist the fullness of the Church invisibly but truly reveals itself. Each liturgy is performed in connection with the entire Church and somehow on its behalf, not only on behalf of the people at hand. And this is done by the authority vested in the priest to perform the sacraments, an authority the priest has from apostolic succession, from the apostles themselves, from the entire Church, and from Christ himself. For each "little Church" is not only a part, but also a microcosm of the whole Church, inseparable from its unity and completeness. The entire Church therefore attends and participates in every liturgy, mystically, mysteriously, but truly. Liturgical sacramental participation is a kind of restorative Epiphany. And in it we contemplate the God-Man Christ, as the Founder and Head of the Church, and with him the entire Church. In the Eucharistic prayer, the Church contemplates and recognizes itself as the common and whole Body of Christ. The exterior sign of the contemplated unity are the particles, placed during the *proskomidia* into the sacred paten around the sacred Lamb, particles prepared for consecration. "In this divine way and activity of the sacred *proskomidia*," explains Simeon Solunskii, "to a certain extent we see Christ himself and contemplate his entire united Church. In contemplating the totality, we see him, the true light, everlasting life. . . . For he himself attends here, represented as the midsection of the bread. The region on the right side represents

his Mother, and that on the left, the saints and angels. And on the bottom is represented the pious assembly of all who believe in him. Here is the great mystery. . . . God among people and God among theosized persons who have received deification from the truth, through God's substance, through him who became incarnate for our sakes. Here is the future kingdom and the revelation of everlasting life."

This is not only an image, not only sacred symbolism. The liturgical prayer for the dead and the sick has sacramental power. It is therefore performed only for believers, members of the Church (although the Church prays also for "outsiders," for those who left the Church and those who are not searching for God, but not in the sacred Offering). For Simeon Solunskii continues, "a particle, offered for someone, laying close to the divine bread at the time that it is in the divine rites and is placed into the Body of Christ, itself immediately becomes a part of the consecration. And upon being placed in the chalice, it unites with the blood. Grace is therefore sent down into the soul for which it is offered. Here a kind of meditative joining is effected. And if a person is pious, or if he is sinful but repentant, then he invisibly accepts the Holy Spirit with his soul." In this manner, in the Eucharistic prayer for the dead or the sick, the ontological infusion of the believers in Christ is strengthened. This is not a magical action; this is the action of the saving grace of the Cross, accepted and assimilated by each according to his purity and worthiness. For there can also be communion of the Holy Sacraments in censure. Only the love of man earns the love of a lenient God. And Christ gives himself not only to those who physically join his Body and Blood from the hands of the priesthood. Through the sacrament of the Eucharist he gives himself to those who are absent as well, "as only he himself knows." This is a spiritual or "meditative" joining. For the sense of joining in union with the God-Man through his Body is not only physical union but also union of the soul and spirit. In reverse, any union with Christ is a kind of joining, and therefore a touching, of his pure and glorified Body. "Any peace of soul and any reward for virtue, great and small," says Kabasilas, "is nothing but the bread and the cup with which the living and dead partake in communion as equals, each in the manner pertinent to themselves." Thus the boundaries of death are erased in the Eucharist, the boundary of mortal separation — the deceased are united with the living in Eucharistic unity, in the unity of the supper of Christ. The Eucharistic prayer for the sick or dead is not only a remembrance but a vision, a contemplation of apostolic participation in Christ. Therefore the prayer is offered for all. "With the sacred sacrifice everyone together, angels and saints, united with Christ and consecrated in him and through him, unite with us," writes Simeon Solunskii. And each time, contemplating the Eucharistic service, we contemplate and experience this perfect unity and pray on behalf of all of mankind, which has been summoned or saved. We pray as the Church prays; the entire Church prays.

The Eucharist is a kind of ontological revelation about Christ and about the Church, about Christ in the Church. "The sacraments signify and are the Church," Kabasilas writes, "since you are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (*I Corinthians* 12:27). And he continues: "The Church indicates the Sacraments not as symbols but as the heart indicates limbs or members, and as the roots are to the branches of a tree. In the words of the Lord, as the grapevine is to the branches. For here there is identity not only of names, and identity of not image but cause. If one could see the Church of Christ in the same way, as it is united with Christ and participates in his Body, then they would see it namely as the Body of the Lord. For, through this blood, believers are already living their life in Christ, a life which is truly united with that Head and equipped with that Body."

The Eucharist is sooner a hymn than a prayer, and this is precisely the meaning of its name — thanksgiving. Of course, this is Golgotha, and on the throne is the slaughtered Lamb, the broken Body and the shed Blood. But Golgotha is a sacrament of joy not fear, a sacrament of love and glory. Now is the Son of Man glorified — Ἐγήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα ἵνα δοξασθῇ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (*John* 12:23). And if out of unworthiness we are anxious before the Cross, then it is trepidation from reverence, astonishment before the untold fullness of Divine love. For the "beginning, middle, and end of Christ's Cross is all God's love," as Metropolitan Filaret wrote. This is why through the Cross there is joy for the entire world. And in our sins we are anxious, but rejoice and hymn his praises and offer up a triumphant song, a song of praise and thanks "for everything we know and for that which we do not know, for the visible and the invisible good deeds, which are performed for us." In all liturgical sacramental activity, in all prayers, there is a triumphant and thankful tone. This is entry into the Kingdom of Glory. We contemplate and remember not only Golgotha, but "all that happened for our sakes — the cross, the tomb, the resurrection after three days, the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and also the second and glorious return." We contemplate not only the crucified and suffering Christ, but also Christ resurrected and coming into universal glory — the Master of Life, the Conqueror of Death. The Eucharist is the banner of victory, the banner of salvation, salvation from decomposition, the victory over death. This sacrament is a conciliation of love, not sorrow or amnesty, and not judgment. Christ suffered, but was resurrected. And through his death, he destroyed death. He was resurrected after voluntary suffering, after his voluntary passion, and on the glorious Body of the Lord remained the "wounds of the nails," which St. Thomas touched. His death became for us a resurrection. We are thankful and rejoice in this. "We give thanks to Thee for this service, which Thou hast deemed worthy to accept from our hands." For through this awesome service we unite with Christ and accept his life and his victory of the cross.

In the words of Kabasilas, "introduction to the mysteries is as to a kind of 'body of history', a "united image of the united kingdom of the Savior." The Eucharist is the image of all that is Divine. Grateful remembrance therefore encompasses the entire fullness of creation, the entire fullness of the deeds of Divine Wisdom and Love. Liturgical contemplation is filled with cosmic pathos, for in Christ, in the Incarnation of the Logos and the Resurrection of the God-Man, the everlasting will of God for the world is fulfilled and completed.

In the Incarnation of the Logos the consecration of matter was performed, and we bring elements of matter, from grains and fruits of the vine, for Eucharistic consecration. In it the image and likeness of God is restored in man, and we contemplate in pious men and saints the promised, hoped for "deification" of man as something accomplished, and we are joyful and grateful for it. In the saints the Church contemplates its fulfillment, it sees the Kingdom of God come to fruition. And it is joyful about them, as the greatest of the gifts of God to man. There are its members, who through their good deeds merited the peace of Christ and the joyful rising of their Lord. "We are all one body, although some members are more radiant than others," St. John Chrysostom remarks. It is especially the Church which remembers the Mother of God, "the source of that divinity of sacrifice" — of humankind. In the Eucharist we take communion of the Body borne of her — and in a certain sense, of her body as well. And through this we mysteriously become her sons and she, the Mother of the Church and the Mother of Christ, becomes the head of the Church. "This word is true," St. Simeon the New Theologian audaciously writes, for the Body of the Lord is the body of the Mother of God." In the Incarnation of the Logos, the earthly, human world united with the celestial, angelic world. In the liturgy we pray and glorify in song together with heavenly powers, "for the Cherubim gather in secret," the human choir together with the angelic assembly. We offer and repeat unceasingly the song of the Seraphim, "because through Christ the Church of angels and man was made one," Simeon Solunskii explains. Angelic powers serve earthly sacramental activity, "desire to penetrate the sacraments of the Church." Thus in the Eucharist all forms of essence are assembled and intersect: cosmic, human, seraphimic. In it the world is revealed as a genuine cosmos, single and united, assembled and universal. Thought reaches back to the beginning of the world and follows its destiny. "Thou hast brought us from nothingness into being, and when we fell away didst raise us up again, and Thou ceaseth not until Thou hast done everything to bring us to Heaven, and confer on us Thy Kingdom to come," the Church prays. And in Christ, the way for everyone "to the completeness of the Kingdom" is revealed.

In the Eucharist beginning and end are united, as well as evangelical memory and apocalyptic prophecy — the Eucharist unites the entirety and totality of the New Testament. In the Apocalypse there is much liturgical content — the Vespers of the Lamb. And in liturgical rank,

the colors of the future age already burn. This begins the transformation of the world, its beginning resurrection in eternal life; and in reverse, one may say that the universal Eucharist will be the Resurrection of life, the supper, the food, the ingestion of life. "Because the Lord named with enjoyment the saints in the future age by means of the supper," Kabasilas explains, "in order to show that there is nothing greater than this meal." "And Jesus, the most perfect sacrifice," writes Simeon Solunskii, "will be among all his saints, and will be peace and unity for all, both the High Priest and he who is acted upon in the Holy Sacrament, uniting all and united with all." In the Eucharist the fulfillment or completeness of the Church is anticipated, that perfect unity of man for which we hope and wait in the life of the future age, although then it will not be belittled and restricted by an ill-willed opposition of creatures. The Eucharist is the anticipation and basis of resurrection, according to the promise of the Savior: "Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" — *ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ γὰρ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν τῆ ἑσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ* (*John 6:54*). This is the hope and pledge of resurrection, "the engagement of future life and the future kingdom." In the Eucharist we touch the transformed world, go into heaven, touch the future life. "Those who join this blood," writes St. John Chrysostom, "stand together with the angels, archangels and celestial powers, dressed in the royal clothes of Christ and having spiritual weapons. But with this I still have not said the greatest thing, for they will be clothed and adorned in the King himself." This happens within the empirical world, in history; and moreover, this is the end and abolition of history, the victory over dividing and fleeing time. According to the explanation of St. Maximos, everything in the liturgy is an image of the future age and signifies the "end of this world." With particular force and audacity Kabasilas spoke of this. "The bread of life is itself alive, and thanks to it, those to whom it is served are alive. . . . When Christ pours himself into us and unites with us, he changes and transforms us into himself, just like a small drop of water poured into a boundless sea of myrrh. . . . When Christ leads us to the supper and lets us partake of his body, he completely changes the sacrament and transforms it into his own essence. And the finger, having assumed a kingly appearance, is no longer a finger but the body of the King, more blessed than which it is impossible to imagine." The best gains a foothold over the weakest, and the divine takes possession of human and, as St. Paul says about the resurrection: that mortality might be swallowed up by life." (*II Corinthians 5:4*). This is the last mystery. It is impossible to reach further, it is impossible to add more.

And with even greater power do we feel the boundary between the transformed and the non-transformed, between the holy and the worldly, the sharp conflict between the quiet of the great sacrament and the discord of the surrounding world. In the Church the tranquility of eternal

love reigns. And around the Church the worldly ocean rages. The Church still remains but an island in the created everyday world. This is a shining, radiant island; and over it the Divine Sun of Love, *sol salutis*, shines and burns. But the world remains without love and outside of love; and it seemingly does not want and or accept true love. And in the Christian soul a bitter dichotomy opens up. In liturgical experience there is a pathos of silence, a thirst for quiet, and for contemplation in solitude. We now lay aside all earthly cares. And in this secret there is immutable truth. The way to the Eucharistic cup leads through severe tests of oneself, through locking oneself up with one's conscience in the face of God. And piety strives to protect holy things from the cares of this world — "for I will not speak of the Mystery to Thine enemies." As on the peak of Transfiguration, in liturgical experience there is so much Divine light that one does not want to return, does not want to go back to the cares of the world. In addition, love does not tolerate inactivity. And the pathos of unity and union, gathered together in liturgical vigil, cannot help entering into actions. Acts of love are a continuation of divine service, of service and praise to God — Love. Therefore, from the Eucharist the way opens to everyday action, to the seaching of the world for the world — "Preserve the fullness of Thy Church, grant peace to Thy world." With the petition "in the world" we leave the church, as we should go in peace into the world, with the will that the entire world would become God's world, the shining fulfillment of the all-blessed will of all-powerful God. And serving the world becomes the task of the partakers of the Cup of Peace. The discord of the world cannot but alarm and break the Christian heart — and especially the discord of the world over Christ, the decay of the Christian world, and the division in the Eucharistic supper. In this discord and division there is a grievous mystery, a mystery of human betrayal and opposition. This is a frightful mystery, for it tears asunder nothing other than the tunic of the Lord, his Body. Only love will conquer this dissension, the love of Christ, acting in us through the Spirit of peace. It is true that no matter how much we do for the "union of all," it always turns out to be too little. And the way to the Church is scattered in many paths, and it ends beyond the boundaries of the historical horizon, in the vespers of the kingdom of the future age. The wandering will end when the King will come and initiate the celebration.

Until then, the prayer of the Church for fulfillment will sound melancholy, as it has sounded right from the start. "As this bread, at one time scattered on the hills, was collected and became one, gather Thy Church from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom!"

Thy Kingdom come! Thy Will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven!

THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER

In the teachings about the Church "a great pious mystery" is revealed to the believer's consciousness in all its unexplored fullness. The Church relates to Christ on earth, and is the objective result of his redemptive feat, the image of his dwelling in grace in the world, "every single day, until the end of time." It is in the Church that the divine *oikonomia* culminates and is fulfilled. It is to the Church that the Holy Spirit descended in the "terrible and inscrutable mysterious act" of Pentecost; and it is in the Church, as "the house of God," that the salvation, sanctification and "deification" of creation have been accomplished, and continue by the strength, action and grace of the All-Holy Spirit. The Church is the single "door of life," as St. Irenaeus of Lyons wrote, and moreover — is a rich "treasure house" of everything relating to truth. And that is why only in the Church, from the Church and through the Church is the real path of Christian knowledge and piety revealed. For Christianity is not a teaching which could have been apprehended through external teaching, but *life*, which must essentially *be gained*, which can be received only through real birth from the source of life. It is insufficient to *know* Christianity, "to have a Christian image of thought"; it is necessary to *be* a Christian, *to live* "in Christ," and this is possible only through life in the Church. Christianity is *experience*. And all Christian dogma by its origin is namely *Church dogma*, the description of Church experience, the witness of the Church about the "guarantee of faith" entrusted to it. Only through this charismatic Church confirmation of the definition of faith do the forces and significance take on fullness, receiving them from the Church not as from power and authority but as the voice of the Holy Spirit and the Lord himself, "never becoming remote, but existing continuously." "Allow the Holy Spirit to us," this solemn prayer of the regulations of the councils raises all the testimony of the Church to its real "life-bearing source." Not only mystically but also historically, the Church is the single source of Christian life and Christian teaching. For Christianity appeared to the world only in the aspect of the Church. On the other hand, even by its content, Christian theology in the final account is reduced namely to teachings about the Church, as the eternal New Testament, as the "Body of Christ"; and any harm to the teachings about the Church, any destruction of the fullness of Church self-consciousness inevitably drags behind it dogmatic and theological imprecision, error and distortion. This is why, in essence, there cannot be particular, individual, complete dogmatic teachings about the Church, set forth in generally accessible dogmatic formulations. For the Church is the focus of all Christianity and is known only from within, through experience and the accomplishment of a life of grace — not in individual dogmatic definitions but in the entire fullness of the doctrine

of the faith. And, as one contemporary Russian theologian correctly noted, "there is no *understanding* of churchness, but there is the Church *herself*, and for any living member of the Church, Church life is the most definite and tangible thing he knows."

Christianity is not exhausted by teachings or morals, nor by the totality of theoretical knowledge, nor the canon of moral prescriptions and rules; and they are not central to it. Christianity *is* the Church. It is *in the Church* that the teachings, the "Divine dogma," is contained and delivered, and the "rule of the faith," the rules and regulations of piety are suggested. But the Church itself is something immeasurably greater. Christianity is *not only teachings about salvation but salvation itself*, the once and for all perfect Godmanhood; "and it is his death, and not his teachings and not the severe life of human beings that compose the means of reconciliation," in the clear and firm expression of the Russian theologian, Filaret, Archbishop of Chernigov. In the Orthodox consciousness, Christ is above all the Savior, not only the "teacher of blessings" and not only the Prophet but above all — the King and High Priest, the "King of the World and Savior of our souls." And salvation is based not so much on the heralding of the heavenly Kingdom so much as in the Godmanhood image of the Lord himself and in his deeds, in his "saving passion" and "life-creating Cross," in his death and resurrection. For "if Christ has not risen, then our faith would be vain." Christianity is Eternal Life, having been revealed to the world and human beings in the inscrutable Incarnation of the Son of God, and having been revealed to the faithful through the holy Sacraments by the grace of the Holy Spirit. "For life appeared, and we saw and we witness and proclaim to you this eternal life which the Father possessed and which appeared to us." As the remarkable Russian ascetic of the recent past, Bishop Feofan (the Hermit) said: "in the consciousness of the Christian first is seen the Figure of Christ the Lord, Son of God Incarnate, and behind the curtain of his flesh is seen the Trihypostatic God." In the Orthodox consciousness the Lord Jesus Christ above all is the Son of God, the Logos Incarnate, "One of the Holy Trinity," the Lamb of God, having taken on the sins of the world. And Orthodox faith is totally inseparable from the Image of Godmanhood, impossible outside of a living contact with him through the sacraments of the Church.

Given the totality of symbolic expressions, the entirety of the life of prayer, the liturgical life, and the Creed, the Orthodox Church confirms the *mystery of Godmanhood* in the spirit and meaning of the Chalcedonian dogma. It professes the mysterious unmixed "fullness of Divinity" and the fullness of humanity in the entire earthly life of the Saviour, in his mysterious birth from the Ever-Virgin Mary by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in his temptations, humiliation and sufferings — "even until death, and death on the Cross," in his resurrection and "in the heavens with the Divine Ascension of his pure flesh." All these are real and historical events, having been

accomplished in *this* world, and in this way having enlightened this world. "The Logos became flesh, and dwelt among us" — this was accomplished in Judaic Bethlehem in the days of King Herod. And this *historical event* stands as the focus of the Christian faith. The Christian faith is essentially historical, historically concrete, for it takes its essence namely from historical events. Apostolic preaching was historical in character — from the very day of Pentecost, when the Apostle Peter testified, *as a witness*, about the completed salvation, about the wonders, miracles, and signs which God did through Christ, about his sufferings, Resurrection, and Ascension, and about the descent of the Holy Spirit. In the apostolic preaching the empirical experience grew together with mystical experience, for in the empirical itself, in the invisibility of the creation, appeared the supra-empirical, the Divine — the mystery of Godmanhood. And this mystery is contained in and manifested by the Holy Church, the "Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Confirmation of Truth". The entire Christian faith is the clarification and revelation of the mystery of the Hypostatic Godmanhood; and only in connection with this *event* — "the Son of God is the Son of the Virgin" — is the essence and nature of the Church understood as the real "Body of Christ." It is namely this image of the Apostle Paul which is the most precise and fundamental definition of the Holy Church, making possible all other and later definitions.

The Savior testified about himself that he "conquered the world." And his victory, his redemptive achievement is included in the fact that he created his Church, the beginning of the "new creation." Beginning with the holy apostles, ancient Christians called themselves the "people of God," a new nation, the "chosen people," "a holy people." And in truth the Holy Church is the "House of God," the City of God, "of which the artist and builder is God," the "Kingdom of God," "the New Jerusalem from above." Already in the name itself — *ekklesia* — the idea of the Church is contained and is carried on, as a City or Kingdom of God. *Ekklesia* is like a never-dispersing national convocation of new people born in grace, the "summoned" citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. And it is namely this concept which is disclosed even now by the Orthodox Church, when before Holy Baptism it demands from the "enlightened" to confess faith in Christ, "as *King* and God"; and in baptismal prayers it prays for them, "and they will honor the higher calling and be numbered among the first born written in the heavens." In holy baptism man leaves "this guilty world," leaves "hostile work" as if entering or being released from the natural order of things, from the order of "flesh and blood," and passes to the order of grace — and, according to the mysterious and solemn words of the Apostle Paul, "approaches Mt. Zion and the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the host of angels, and the solemn council, and Church of the First Born, written in the heavens, and the Courts of all — God, and the souls of the righteous, having achieved perfection." The entire meaning and strength of the sacrament of Holy Baptism is that the

baptized enters into the *one* Church, "the one Church of angels and men," taking root and growing into the one Body of Christ," and becomes a "fellow citizen of the saints and friends of God," for "we are all one Spirit baptized in one body." Holy Baptism is like a mysterious initiation into the Church, as into the kingdom of grace. Therefore, the Holy Church prays for the baptized: "Write him in Your book of life; unite him to the flock of Your legacy and make him a sheep of the holy flock of Your Christ, Your honored Church, son and heir of Your Kingdom. Plant his planting of truth within Your holy apostolic Church." The Church is the new people in grace, not coinciding with any natural or earthly people, neither with the Hellenes nor with Jews, nor with barbarians and with Scythians, *tertium genus* — a people having been formed according to another principle entirely — not through the necessity of natural birth, but through the "mystery of water," through the mysterious union with Christ in the "mysterious font," "through freedom, deed and gift of adoption by God." And in this is included the basis of all those features of the Church which we confess in words of the Creed — the unity, sanctity, catholicism and apostolic origin — all these definitions are not only connected but quite inseparable from each other.

We confirm the very act of *faith* "in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church" by its "other-worldly" nature, its being not from this world: for "faith is the exposure of *invisible* things." And by this, among the objects of faith we put the Church as a reality *along with* the Lord God himself; we witness the divinity and sanctity of the Church. We believe in the Church and can only believe in it, because it is the "Body of Christ" — "the fullness of the Fulfilling of everybody in everything." "On the basis of God's Word," wrote the famous Russian theologian, Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, "I imagine the Universal Church as a "single" great "body." Jesus Christ is for him like the "heart" or principle of "life," the "Head" or ruling wisdom. There is known to him only the full measure and inner composition of this body. We know the various parts of it and the external image as it is extended in time and space. In this visible "image" or "visible Church" is found the "invisible Body of Christ" or the "invisible Church." "The Church, glorious and indigent in vileness or vice, but "with all glory within" and which, therefore, I do not see clearly and distinctly, but in which, following the Creed, I 'believe in'. Disclosing the invisible, the visible Church frequently reveals the purity of the invisible, so that everyone could find it and unite with it, and partly conceals its glory." Calling the Church the "Body of Christ" connects its existence with the mystery of the Incarnation; and the living and immutable basis of the visibility of the Church is namely in the mystery: "The Logos became flesh." The teachings about the Church as visible and invisible at one and the same time, about the greatness and historically given, and sacred, i.e. divine, is a direct continuation and revelation of the Christological dogma in the spirit and meaning of the Chalcedonian

dogma. Only in the Church and from the depths of Church experience is the Chalcedonian dogma understood in its unexpressed fullness — otherwise it breaks down into a series of contradictions not subject to any rational unity. And in turn, only through the Chalcedonian dogma is it possible to recognize the Godmanhood nature of the Church. In the Church, as the body of Christ, two natures are also combined, and they are combined precisely as "unfused, unchanging, indivisible, inseparable." "The quality and essence of each nature is preserved. And in the Church divine grace and visible images of its manifestation are only *discernible* but not *divisible*. The Church, in the existence of the unity of these two natures, gives them not only in symbolic but namely in essential and real indissoluble unity, and, therefore, the visible itself loses the accidental nature typical of creation, is transformed by grace and becomes *not only sacred but also holy*. The Church has a human, creative essence, has historical flesh, for the Church is the transformed world, and in this development of creation in grace is included the entire meaning and genuine content of history, of existence in time. The Church is the beginning of the universal charismatic transformation of creation, replaced by the mysterious image of the Burning Bush. But the Church has also a divine essence, for in it dwells in real flesh the Lord himself, Jesus Christ, and the never diminishing divine grace and the gifts of the life-giving Spirit act within it and are communicated in it. "Light already shines in the darkness, and in the night and in the day, and in our hearts and in our minds," says St. Simeon the New Theologian — "and illuminates us inextinguishably, indestructibly, unchangeably, unconcealedly — speaks, acts, lives, invigorates, and makes a light of those who are illuminated by him." There is no break between God and creation. The world, this sad life full of vanity, temptations and suffering, was not left behind by God. And namely "in helplessness," in the vanity and languor of empirical existence, is the force of God accomplished. Growing and being transformed by the strength of the vivifying Spirit, the "visible" historical Church becomes and will become the Eternal House of the Glory of the Lord. "You — are our kin in the flesh, and we — Yours, by Your Divinity," exclaimed St. Simeon in prayer, "for having taken on flesh, You gave us the divine Spirit, and we all together became one house of David according to Your flesh and in kinship to You. Having become united, we will become a single house, i.e. we all are kin, we all are Your brothers. And how awesome the miracle and how one might shudder when one ponders this and weighs the fact that You will dwell among us now and forever and will make each a dwelling and will dwell in everyone, and You Yourself will appear as a dwelling for everyone, and we will dwell within You." And, in truth, "awe-inspiring is this place: not this, but the House of God, and these heavenly gates."

The Church is a theophany, the mysterious manifestation of God, and the concealed strength of God becomes clear and tangible under the visible images of saints and salutary mysteries. The Holy Sacraments

are not only symbolic acts or recollections, but genuine mysteries, images of a real and unchanging presence of God, "tools which necessarily act by grace on those moving toward him." The Orthodox Church decisively denies as "alien to Christian teaching," the opinion that "if not used, that which is sanctified in the sacraments by sanctification remains a mere thing." (*Epistle to the Eastern Patriarchs.*) Therefore, neither the matter (material) of the sacrament nor the form of the sanctifying words are in any way inseparable, for according to the will of God it is *namely such* matter that is sanctified, and *namely in such* a way. In addition, having become a sacred object, the thing sanctified by prayer does not change its physical form and image; invisible grace is communicated always through physical means, under a specific, external aspect. For, "since we are dual, composed of soul and body, and our soul is not bared, but seems to be covered with a curtain," writes St. John of Damascus, "then for us it is impossible, apart from corporeal means, to achieve the conceptual. Since man has body and soul, then, therefore, Christ also took on body and soul. That is the reason for the dual baptism: by water and spirit; and communion, and prayer and the singing of hymns — all are dual, corporeal and spiritual — like the lamps and incense." And "our entire service is a *handmade sacred object*, leading us through matter to God." The created and final *remains* created and final, but through sanctification inscrutably it *unites* with Divine grace, becomes a "vessel of grace." And now, again not separating [them], it is necessary strictly to distinguish the sanctified object and the sanctifying grace: between them there always remains a difference in nature, difference in essence, but this does not prevent the full reality of the Divine presence — through union and communion. In all the sacraments forming the real core of Church life, God is present in creation, really and effectively — by the special presence of grace, distinct from the providential presence everywhere. "The special presence of God, which is mysterious, is reverentially known and perceived by the faithful, and is manifested sometimes in special signs." The Orthodox Church speaks with great eloquence about this, in numerous rituals: the founding and sanctification of the churches, the holy ikons and sacred objects, holy water, myrrh, anointing oil, etc. They all merge into a great, single ritual of theology, a sanctification of the world. Any docetism or phenomenism is totally alien to the consciousness of the Church. Creation is real, and has not been eliminated; what stands ahead of it is not a passing over, not a falling into nonbeing, but a "changing," being transformed, uniting with God. "Human essence is changing and false; and only the Divine essence is non-false and unchanging," writes St. Simeon the New Theologian. "But the Christian, being made a communicant of the divine essence in Jesus Christ our Lord through acceptance of the grace of the Holy Spirit, is transformed and changed by his force into a God-resembling state." Through all of Church life passes a vivid and strained feeling of the beneficial closeness of God,

not a burning and not a destructive closeness, but a healing and fortifying creation, through the elimination of corruption and sin. This sanctification of the visible and physical world in the consciousness of the Church is definitely connected again with the Incarnation of the Divine Logos. "I will not bow down to matter," St. John of Damascus audaciously exclaimed, "but I will bow down to the matter of the Trinity, having become matter for my sake, and dwelling in matter, and through matter accomplishing my salvation; and I will not stop respecting matter, through which my salvation has been accomplished." Through the Incarnation of the Son of God "our essence was glorified and passed into noncorruption," writes that same holy father: "we essentially were sanctified from the time when God the Logos became flesh, resembling us in everything except sin and, without fusing, joined with our nature and immutably deified the flesh through the nonmerging interpenetration of that same Divinity and that same flesh. We essentially were adopted and were made heirs to God from the time of the birth of the Water and the Spirit." And through Christ "the essence arose from the lowly of the earth higher than any authority and in him mounted the Father's Throne." In the words of St. John Chrysostom, the Lord "raised the Church to a great height and set It on the *very same* Throne because where the head is, there is the body; *there is no break between the head and the body*, and if the connection between them had been interrupted, then it would not have been a body or a head." That is namely why the Holy Church is the "Body of Christ," and in It — by grace — "the fullness of the Divine" is present bodily. But the created essence remains created. The fruit of redemption and the Resurrection of the Savior is included not in the elimination of the essence, but in the victory over corruption and death. Divinity became accessible. And the Church is *holy* and is an eternal sign of this victory and an indestructible "receptacle of Divine action." It is namely the Church in the direct and proper sense that is "God bearing." And that is why it is holy, for it is "the House of God," "the Dwelling of God." God lives in the Church, is present by grace in the holy churches, sends down his heavenly blessing, communicated in the holy sacraments and imagined in the faithful, and glorifies them. In the sacraments, the faithful, in the words of St. Gregory of Nyssa, become not only "spectators" but also "communicants" of Divine Energy — become with God "soul in soul," "unite and grow together with the Spirit Comforter, through inexpressible communion with him," as St. Macarius the Egyptian said. "Attainment of the Holy Spirit," according to the patristic words, is the essence and task of Christian accomplishment. And, therefore, in the Church, through grace and communion, as if for the second time the invisible God becomes visible — of course, not for the unseeing eyes of natural understanding, but for the enlightened believing gaze. Indeed, in the Godmanhood of Christ the children of his age did not see and did not recognize the Son of God, did not accept and did not understand the mystery of the

Incarnation. For those living in the Church even now, "the awe-inspiring and glorified sacrament is viewed as energizing," the sacrament of salvation, sanctification and transformation of the world. "Oh, wondrous miracle, seen twice, by double eyes, corporeal and spiritual"— St. Simeon the New Theologian exclaims. The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist historically was a concentration of ancient Christian piety, and mystically was always a vivid focus of the Church's life. The fullness of the presence of God here achieves the greatest force. According to the unchanging creed of the Orthodox faith, precisely expressed by St. John Chrysostom, in the Holy Eucharist "we are transformed in body in no way differently from that body which rose higher, to which angels bow — it is namely this body of which we partake." The unity of the Church is mysteriously grounded in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, for everyone receives communion of the One Body. And in every Eucharist there is present the *entire* Christ, "the Lamb of God is broken and distributed; broken but not sundered, always fed upon but never consumed but sanctifying those who partake." Every Eucharistic sacrifice is a "complete" sacrifice. "We constantly bring one and the same Lamb, and not one today, another tomorrow, but always one and the same," says St. John Chrysostom. "Thus, this sacrifice is one. Although it is brought in many places, can there be many Christs? No, one Christ is everywhere, and here it is full, and there it is full. His Body is one. And it can be brought in many places — one body, and not many bodies, just like one sacrifice." There is a direct and self-evident connection between the full life of the Church, the precision of Christological dogma and the dogma about the Holy Eucharist, for these are the supplementary aspects of a single dogma, about a single fact of Godmanhood. It is also necessary to follow exactly the Chalcedonian definition of faith in the confession of the faith in the perfect reality and immutability of the presence of Christ the Savior in the Holy Eucharist. "We believe," speaking in the words of the *Epistle to the Eastern Patriarchs*, "that in this religious rite our Lord Jesus Christ is present, not symbolically, not figuratively, not only by inspiration, as was said by several of the Fathers about baptism, and not through permeation of the bread, so that the Divine Word essentially entered into the bread designated for the Eucharist — but really and truly, so that by sanctification of the bread and wine, the bread is transformed into the most pure body of the Lord, which was born in Bethlehem from the Virgin, christened in the Jordan, suffered, was buried, was resurrected, ascended, sits at the right of God the Father, and appears in heaven; and the wine is turned into the real blood of the Lord, which, during his suffering on the cross, poured out for the life of the world." Every time that the Divine Liturgy is accomplished, the mysterious unity of the Church is realized and revealed, and through acceptance of the holy Mysteries really and actually, and not only symbolically or intellectually, the faithful merge into one single and catholic body.

The Church is one in its nature of Godmanhood, and *by its nature* it is the universal Church. One and the same, the identical Church is visible and invisible — visible as a "well-organized composition of helpless and strong members," as a "society of persons," and invisible as the grace of the Holy Spirit, reviving every believing soul and being revealed in particular grandeur in the Divine saints, in the "friends of Christ"; and it is namely the grace of God that is "actually the object of faith in the Church." But the grace of God is manifest and acts in the sacraments, not so that every time gifts of the Holy Spirit descend especially and anew from above, but through communion from a single treasurehouse, once and for all given in the Descent of the Holy Spirit into the Church. The Sending-down of the Comforter was a singular and unrepeatable act, and since that time the Holy Spirit "*dwells* within the world": "everywhere fulfilling all." Therefore, only through the apostolic succession of the laying on of hands, through a God-established clerical hierarchy, the gifts of the Holy Spirit were communicated and are communicated until now to the faithful. Only through the sacraments accomplished by the hand of the pastor, set in order of apostolic succession, are those again coming to God numbered among the mysterious Body of Christ. Apostolic succession, "succession of the clerical hierarchy," is preserved and continued in the archbishopry and parish, and is the only door to the Church, the only basis of a community of life in grace. Only through communion with the once and for all given source of life can man be revived. In the apostolic succession of consecration is included the single basis of the unity of the Church, proceeding from the unity of grace, the single body, for the Spirit is one. The One Church is the apostolic Church, and *only* the apostolic Church can be one and universal, as *only* it can be sacred — for *only* onto the apostles did "the Holy Spirit descend in flaming tongues," and *through them* "into a union of everyone summoned." Thus the canonical structure of the Church, "visible" and "historic," receives mystical meaning and a charismatic basis. Through the Church hierarchy, through servants of the sacraments and spiritual fathers, every believer is accepted into the universal body of the Godmanhood of the Church, communes with Its treasure house of beneficial gifts. And the "spiritual family," the brotherhood of the holy temple" being united around its pastor, hierchically unified with the archbishopry of the Church, with the "entire bishopry," is the real cell or unit of the body of the Church. In the bishop, who is the image of the Heavenly Bishop, of Christ, a multitude of such families unite. Thus the many-in-one earthly body of the Church is formed. The universal Church empirically and historically is and lives *in the multitude* of co-subjects of local Churches. This is defined not only by historical, temporal, and temporary conditions. According to the image of Christ, every bishop "is betrothed" directly to his flock, is inseverably connected with it by a charismatic bond. Only through this bond is there realized for each son of the Church his contact with the

entire Church. That is why any canonical wilfulness and disobedience is so strictly and severely examined by the Church consciousness. Destroying empirical canonical ties, the Christian in this way harms his ties of grace and sacrament with the entire body of the Church, and is torn away from it. Once wilfully torn away from the concrete body, it is difficult wilfully to be grafted onto the Church "in general." The unity of the Church, the unity of the Church hierarchy, the unity of grace, the unity of the Spirit — all these are connected inseparably from each other. Deviation from the legal Church hierarchy is a deviation from the Holy Spirit, from Christ himself.

The unity of spirit is the real basis of the *catholic nature* of the Church. And that is why the Holy Church is, nevertheless, a Universal Church. The universal character of the Church is not an external, quantitative, spatial or geographical property, and certainly does not depend on spreading the faithful everywhere. The universality of the Church is the *result*, but not the basis of its catholicism — the Church embraces and can embrace the faithful of any nation and any place because it *is* a catholic church. Spatial "universality" is a productive and empirical sign, lacking in the first days of Christianity, and not absolutely necessary. Indeed, at the end, when the mystery of deviation is revealed, burning down to a "small flock," the Church will not stop being Universal, just as it was Universal even when the Christian communities, like rare islands, were scattered in the dense sea of disbelief and opposition. "If the city or province falls away from the Universal church," notes Metropolitan Filaret, "The universal Church always remains a whole, uncorrupted body." The Church has a catholic *nature*. Therefore, the universal Church appears not only in the totality of all its members, or all the locations of the Church, but indeed in any local Church, in any temple, for the Lord himself is present everywhere, and the heavenly forces serve him. And if one seeks external definitions, then the universal character of the Church is expressed much more by the sign of *universal temporality*, to the extent that the faithful of all periods equally belong to the body of Christ — some are called in the first hour; some at the eleventh. As St. John Chrysostom said, the Church is a single body, for to It belong all the faithful, "living, having lived and who will live," and also "pleasing God until the coming of Christ," for they have prophesied about him, they await him and probably knew him, and "without doubt, revered him." The entire liturgical sacrament is based on this mystical-metaphysical essential-identity and unity. In him "the heavenly forces invisibly serve us;" they accompany the liturgicizing priest: "create with our entrance the entrance of holy angels, serving us and serving Your joy" (prayer on entrance in the liturgy). And the "spirits of the righteous having died," and the righteous, "having achieved love" on earth, and martyrs, suffering well with honor and crowned," and confessors, and all "holy persons" having died, we, sinners and unworthy — all compose a *single* body, belong to a *single* Church and

merge into one in the prayer of grace by the one Throne of the Lord of Glory. "What is the Church if not the cathedral of all the saints?" asked a bishop of the fourth century. "From the beginning of the ages the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets and apostles and martyrs and other righteous people who were, are and will be, composed a single body. And I will say more. The angels and rulers and heavenly authorities join together in that same single church."

The experience of this universal and temporal unity has been revealed and fortified in every liturgical Church custom. And it can be said that in the Church *time is mysteriously overcome*. And it is as if that apocalyptic moment is anticipated, when "there will be no time." The touch of grace seems to have stopped time, the alternation and change of minutes, removes showing favor from the order of sequence and in a certain mysterious "simultaneity" overcomes the separateness of different times. This is a certain mysterious image of eternity, under which only we can understand and imagine eternity, eternal life. And in this approximate image we can comprehend how people of different generations really become living contemporaries in grace. The Church is a living image of eternity, and in Church experience this beneficial "simultaneity of different times" is truly given and is realized in its fullness. Eternal life is being revealed in contact with the Eternal King, Christ. The Church is the eternal kingdom, for it has an Eternal King. In the Church, dwelling now in historical wandering, time is already weak. The Church, as the Body of Christ, is the mysterious predecessor of the universal Resurrection. For *Christ*, the God-Man, is the "life, resurrection and peace" of *his* deceased slaves. Earthly death, the separation of the soul from the body, does not destroy the tie of the faithful with the Church, does not bring it beyond its borders and composition, does not distinguish it from its fellow members in Christ. In memorial prayers and in the funeral ceremony we pray "Christ, *immortal King* and our God" "commit" the souls of the dead "in holy dwellings," in the bosom of Abraham, "and here the righteous will find peace." "And therefore with special feeling in these parting and farewell prayers we call upon the Holy Theotokos, angelic powers, holy martyrs and all saints as our heavenly fellow citizens according to the Church." In the funeral ceremony the universal and all-temporal self-consciousness of the Church is revealed with exceptional strength. The prayer for the dead is a very necessary moment of faith in the Church, as the Body of Christ. Achieving the true contact with Christ himself in the salvatory sacraments, the faithful cannot be separated from him even in death: "Blessed are the righteous dying for the Lord — their soul is established in blessing." The Church harkens with reverence to those signs and testimonies of grace which attest and almost engrave the earthly achievement of the dead. Reverence and prayerful summoning of the saints, and above all — the Theotokos, "Beneficial," "Heavenly Queen," — is closely connected with the full Christological creed, and by this with the fullness of Church *self-consciousness*. Holy

saints, said St. John of Damascus, "resembled God." "God is revered;" they "became treasure houses and pure dwellings of God;" they "are in themselves the Venerated by essence." "I call them Gods, kings and lords not by essence but because they reigned and ruled over passions and preserved unharmed the likeness to the image of God, by which they were created, and also because they by their own free disposition united with God, accepted him in the dwelling of their heart and, joining him, became by grace that which he himself is in essence. That is why the death of saints are celebrated and churches erected to them and ikons painted." "For the saints even in life were filled with the Holy Spirit; when they died, the grace of the Holy Spirit always was co-present with the souls and with their bodies in the tombs, and with their holy ikons — not in essence, but by grace and activity. The saints are alive and with daring stand before God; the saints are not dead — the death of saints is more like a dream than death," for they dwell in the "hand of God," i.e. in life and in light. And "after the One Who is life itself and the Source of Life was lamented for dead, we already do not call dead those who have passed on in the hope of resurrection and with belief in it." To the saints are given "permission to intercede for the world," according to the testimony of the fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. And not only for the sake of gaining aid and intercession does the Holy Church teach every believer to summon by prayer the illustrious saints, but also because in this summoning, through prayerful contact, the Church self-consciousness, its catholic self-consciousness deepens. In prayerful address to the saints there is expressed the measure of Christian love, Christian living sympathy of unanimity, the strength of Church unity. On the other hand, doubt or insensitivity of the representative of grace and the petitioning of saints witnessed before God testifies not only to the impoverishment of love and the weakening of fraternal, collective ties and strength, but also to the impoverishment of the fullness of faith in the eternal significance and strength of the Incarnation and Resurrection. Besides our address and summoning, the saints intercede for the world; one might say that the entire existence of the saints beyond the grave is one incessant prayer, one constant intercession, for, according to the apostolic expression, love is the "totality of perfection." One of the most mysterious insights of the Orthodox church is the insight of the "Intercession of the Holy Theotokos," her constant prayerful intercession in the midst of the saints to God for the world. "The Virgin Today stands in Church and invisibly prays for them to God; angels from the hierarchy bow, apostles with the prophets rejoice: for our sake does the Theotokos, Herald of God, pray." Teaching us the prayerful summons of the saints, the Church summons us to listen and feel this voice of love. The great Eastern ascetic, St. Isaac the Syrian, with incomparable daring testified about that all-embracing prayer which crowns the Christian feat. This deed receives fullness and completion according to his words — in purity, and purity is "a heart showing mercy to any created nature."

"And what is a forgiving heart? — and he said: "The burning of the heart for all creation, people, birds, animals, demons and all of creation. And from recalling them and contemplation of them his eyes shed tears. From the great and powerful sympathy enveloping the heart and from great self-control his heart is moved, and he cannot bear hearing or seeing harm or the least sorrow occurring in creation. And as result, he says a prayer about this and about the mute and about enemies of Truth, and about those harming him —always with tears in his eyes, so that they be preserved and so that they be shown mercy; he prays equally about the nature belonging to those groveling — from his great pity, aroused in his heart immeasurably in likeness with God" (*Sermon 48*, in Russian translation). And if on earth the ascetic's prayer is so ardent, then its burns even more there "in the embrace of the Father," in the bosom of Divine Love. Multiple and varied was this prayerful intercession of the saints, but only the fullness of Church self-consciousness allows one to perceive and understand it. The Church does not essentially know solitary and isolated prayer, for it is not typical for the Christian to feel himself solitary and isolated. He is saved only in the collectivity of the Church. Of course, every prayer is a personal deed and is raised from the depths of one's personal heart; but the real strength of prayer is taken on namely in unanimous love. Every personal prayerful deed is defined and must be defined by collective self-consciousness, unanimity of love, embracing even those whose name is known only to God. And the crown of the prayer is that flaring up of love which was expressed in the prayer of Moses: "Forgive them their sins. And, if not, then remove me also from Your book in which You have written me down." The culmination of prayer is the Eucharistic prayer. And here the *entire* Church is joined together, here the sacrifice is brought and a prayer is raised "about everyone and for everything," here there "is mentioned" the *entire* Church, visible and invisible — incorporeal forces and the Holy Theotokos, and all the saints. The ancient Church custom and rule preserved until now, arms the churches in sacred power. This very entrance of the Lord of Glory is frequently depicted in ikon style on the walls of the Holy Altar — not in terms of symbolism, but namely in pointing to the invisible, in what actually has been accomplished. In general the entire ikonic mural of the Church speaks about the mysterious unity of the Church, about the co-presence of the saints. "We depict Christ, the King and Lord, without leaving out his army," says St. John of Damascus. "The army of the Lord are the saints."

The Church is the unity of the life in grace, and in this is the basis of the unity and immutability of Church faith. "Having accepted this teaching and this faith," writes St. Irenaeus of Lyons about the apostolic preaching, "the Church, although dispersed throughout the entire world, carefully preserves them, as if dwelling in one house; however, it believes this, as if having one soul and one heart; accordingly it preaches this, teaches and conveys it, as if it had one

mouth. For although the languages are different in the world, the strength of tradition is one and the same. . . . And one must not seek truth from others but must learn it from the Church, into which, as a rich man into a treasure house, the apostles with abundance put everything that relates to the Truth, so that everyone desiring to, can take from it the nourishment of life. It is this which is the door of life. And one must love that which proceeds from the Church, and accept from it the *tradition of truth*." It is a question here not only of external, historical, and formal succession and transmission, a question not only of the legacy and community of faith and teaching, but above all — of the fullness, unity, and continuity of the life of grace, of the unity of spirit-bearing experience. St. Irenaeus compares faith with the breath of life, which was entrusted to the Church "so that all members, having accepted it, will be revived, and in which there is included contact with Christ." Therefore, "where the Church is, that is where the Divine Spirit is also, and where the Divine Spirit is, there is the Church and all grace." *Sacred tradition* is based in and receives meaning from this unity of a life in grace, and it is comprehensible only as it is tightly and inseparably linked with the succession of the priesthood, as with the charisma and "service of the sacraments." In this sense the priesthood is a necessary support of theology. The "anointing of truth," *charisma veritatis* is connected with the priesthood. According to the fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, "the essence of our hierarchy is composed of God-transmitted words, i.e. the true knowledge of Divine Scriptures." With categorical specificity the Orthodox Church confesses that "without the bishop, the Church is not a Church, nor is a Christian a Christian; they cannot be called one. The bishop, as the apostolic successor, by the laying on of hands and by the calling of the Holy Spirit, received the power given by God by succession to loose and bind. The bishop is the living image of God on earth, and by the holy-operative power of the Holy Spirit is an abundant source of all sacraments of the universal Church, by which salvation is acquired. The bishop is as necessary for the Church as breathing is for man, and the sun for the world." (*Epistle to the Eastern Patriarchs*).

As the unity of the life of grace, the Church is mystically more primary than the Gospels, than the Holy Scriptures in general; just as historically the Church is more primary than the written Gospels, more primary than the New Testament canon which was only established by and within the Church. It is not the Church which is confirmed in the Gospel, but the Gospel is shown favor and is witnessed in the Church, and by this testimony is confirmed in its divine and spiritual genuineness. The entire New Testament is the voice of the Church, written for Christians, addressed to the enlightened. Outside of the Church there are simply no Holy Scriptures as the Word of God. For "no one can speak of the Lord Jesus, except through the Holy Spirit." *The Holy Scriptures are the basis and main part of the Church tradition*, therefore, this is precisely what is inseparable from Church life. "We

believe, according to what has been expressed in the Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs, that the divine and Sacred Scriptures are inspired by God; that is why we must believe it implicitly, and, moreover, not somehow in itself but precisely as explained and handed down by the catholic Church. To the extent that the source of both is one and the same Holy Spirit, whether it be taught from the Scriptures or from the Universal Church is all the same." Faithfulness to tradition is not faithfulness to antiquity or external authority, but an immutable and living tie with the fullness of Church life. Tradition is not something external, accessible from the side; it is not only historical testimony. The Church is the living carrier of tradition, only from inside and within the Church, for a person living in the Church tradition is completely realized and self-verified. Tradition is the image and manifestation of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church, its continual herald and revelation. Tradition is the life itself of the Church and therefore, the religious fullness of Church life, and the indestructible faithfulness to patristic traditions are inseparably connected. Reference to tradition is reference to eternal and universal Church consciousness and suggests communion with this consciousness. Tradition is the image of the universal and all-temporal nature of the Church; for living members of the Church body it is not an historical authority, but an eternal and immutable, all-present beneficial voice of God. Faith is founded not by example or testament from the past, but by the grace of the Holy Spirit testifying always, even now, eternally, forever and ever. Accepting the Church teachings, we "follow" tradition namely as "God-spoken teaching." As Khomiakov so successfully put it, "not a person and not a multitude of persons in the Church preserve the tradition and write, but the Spirit of God, living in the totality of the Church." "Agreement with the past" is already secondary, arbitrary, though a very necessary result of the unity of spirit-bearing experience in the entire course of Church history. For always and immutably "one and the same Christ" is revealed in the communion of the sacraments, and one and the same Divine grace illuminates the believing soul. Both understanding and acceptance of the tradition is closely connected with the faith and the physicality of the immutable beneficial presence of the Lord in the Church. "Whoever speaks," taught the remarkable Orthodox ascetic and contemplator, St. Simeon the New Theologian:

that now there are no people who would love God and would be considered worthy to accept the Holy Spirit and be baptized from him, i.e. be reborn by the grace of the Holy Spirit and become Sons of God, with consciousness, experience, participation and insight — that one debases the entire Incarnate *oikonomia* of the Lord and God and our Savior Jesus Christ, and clearly denies the renewal of the Image of God. I think that such a vain person says: vainly the Holy Gospel has now been proclaimed, vainly are the works of our Holy Fathers read or even written. Is it not evident that those speaking thus

lock up the heavens, which Christ the Lord opened for us by his descent to earth, and they bar the ascent to heaven, which renewed for us that same Christ the Lord.

Denial of the significance of tradition is in essence a denial of the Church as the Body of Christ, is insensitivity, denigration and nonacceptance of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Behind the denial of holy tradition seems to stand the thought that the faithful have been abandoned by Christ and must again seek him; and by this the adoption of the redemptive act of Christ yields to the will of subjective chance and whim. On the contrary, the acceptance of Church tradition is nothing other than faith in the continual presence of the Lord in the world, the perception and confirmation of the continuance of a sanctifying life in grace. Always and immutably, according to the belief of the Orthodox Church — "the Church teaches the Holy Spirit through the holy fathers and teaches of the Catholic Church. The Church learns from the life-giving Spirit, but in no other way than through the mediation of the holy fathers and teachers. The Catholic Church cannot sin or err and express falsehood instead of truth: for the Holy Spirit, always acting through the faithfully serving fathers and teachers of the Church, preserves it from any error." (*Epistle to the Eastern Patriarchs*). The more deeply that the faithful grows into the fullness of the Church, the broader and more loving his Church experience becomes, and the more distinct and tangible the spiritual tradition becomes for him.

Dogmatic truth is contained in the Church and, therefore, living in the Church it is given, and not set. No matter how immeasurably far present knowledge is "partial" from the promised knowledge "face to face," now, as always, full and complete truth is revealed in Church experience, Truth one and immutable — for Christ himself has been revealed. The full truth — and there is only one unalloyed truth — was revealed in the resolutions on dogma at the Ecumenical Councils; and nothing falls away from the dogmas of the Orthodox faith, nothing changes, and there are no new definitions changing the meaning of old; nothing is added. There cannot be any dogmatic development, for dogmas are not theoretical axioms from which gradually and subsequently there unfold some kind of "theorems of the faith." Dogmas are "God given" testimony of the human spirit about what has been seen and experienced, about the sending down and revelation in the catholic experience of faith, about the mysteries of eternal life revealed by the Holy Spirit. They all in strict clarity are revealed in the catholic experience of faith, in the real touching of "things invisible"; therefore in the Church it is impossible to doubt and "allow" other dogmas — in other dogmas another life would have been revealed and concealed, another experience, touching something else. Reflected and imprinted in dogmatic definitions of the faith is "life in Christ," the dwelling of the Lord in the faithful. According to the words of the Savior, eternal life consists in the perfect knowledge of God — and although not to all, but

only to the pure heart is the Lord visible, but is visible always — without difference in time and period — identical, although varied. In the Church no "new discoveries" are possible, and any expectation of "new prophecies" and new "testaments" once and for all have been repudiated and condemned by the Church. There cannot be any new revelations in Christianity except the Second Coming, when history will end and "there will be no time," when the Last Judgment will be accomplished and the Kingdom of Glory will be revealed. Through the Incarnation and Resurrection of the Son of God everything "has been accomplished." After the Ascension of the Lord, the Holy Spirit *dwells* in the world and is continually revealed in the saints of God. This glorification, enriching the world by grace, does not change the nature of the historical life which remains completely uniform over the entire duration, from Pentecost to the "Great Day of Judgment." There was no dogmatic development even in the past. Dogmatic controversies in the ancient church were *not* carried on *concerning the content of* faith. In face of the teachings outside of the Church, the philosophical pastors and teachers of the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, searched and minted the "God-appropriate" expressions for integral and identical experience still not consolidated in verbal garments; "dogma was composed by the word of reason, for fishermen earlier expounded simple words, in reason by strength of the Spirit." In this direct fullness and self-verified experienced knowledge of God is included in the basis and support of that daring definitiveness with which the Apostle Paul anathematized those who would not teach what he had proclaimed. For the Gospel of the kingdom preserved by the Church is not a human proclamation, and taken not from human beings — "but through the revelation of Jesus Christ," and in it is contained "perfect understanding, knowledge of the Mystery of God and of the Father and Christ." *Faith is experience*, and therefore with daring we confirm — "this is true faith." Dogmatic apodictism is essentially characteristic of faith, "for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was not "yes" and "no," but in him was "yes," as the Apostle Paul has said. Of course, with great care and fear of God one must take into account the weakness of our understanding, the incommensurability of our utterances in face of the inscrutable Mystery. With the greatest of care one must read the gnostic temptations of "proven faith" and distinguish the historical from the immutable, distinguish God-inspired dogma fortified by charismatic testimony and by the approval of the Ecumenical Councils from theological opinions, even those of the holy fathers. And here we encounter another understanding of dogmatic development, exactly reverse to what has been pointed out. Under the possibility of dogmatic development sometimes is understood the possibility of further consolidation of the once and for all experience given by grace in a generally significant definition and formula, the possibility of new obligatory and infallible formulas on still unresolved questions of dogma — in other words, the possibility of a logical crystallization of

Church experience, but still within the limits of anticipation of an apparently full and adequate expression of the mystery of piety in an unchanging theological system. Of course, one need not deny or even only call into question the possibility of a new Ecumenical Council which, inspired by the Holy Spirit, would define and express with new God-given expressions of the immutable faith and, like the seven Ecumenical Councils of the past, by their testimony, would delimit the Orthodox faith from false and deceptive conjectures and opinions. And, in addition, there is a certain refined temptation already in this very need for further definitions and restrictions by which the living Church experience is schematized and subject to the danger of turning into logical theologizing about the faith. According to the correct remarks of one Orthodox theologian, a heretic is one who not only really and directly opposes the dogmatic teaching but also who appropriates to himself obligatory and dogmatic meaning without having knowledge of it. For the erring Christian consciousness, what is characteristic is precisely this striving for a logical exhaustion of faith, as if striving for a substitution of the living communication with God by religious and philosophical speculations about the Divine, of life — by teaching. Error and heresy are always born from a certain waning of Church fullness; an extinguishing Church self-consciousness is the result of egotistical self-assurance and isolation. And in the final account any separation from the Church, any schism is — in rudimentary form — already a heresy, a heresy against the dogma about the Church; history testifies that in the associations breaking away, sooner or later, but quite inevitably, dogma undergoes profound distortion and perversion, and in the final account may completely fall apart. For as St. Cyprian of Carthage said so vehemently: "Anyone separating from the Church associates himself with an illegal wife."

The knowledge of the Church is not exhausted by dogmatic definitions of the faith — Church experience is broader and fuller than definitions. Divine Revelation, witnessed and expressed by the Holy Scriptures, certainly has not been fully revealed and clarified. It *lives* in the Church, only guarded and protected by symbols, creeds and definitions of the faith. The personal experience of the sons of the Church, which namely makes possible the blessed existence of "theological opinions," is not concealed by dogmatic creed. Within the limits of Church experience there are many mysterious truths. Freedom remains for the believing consciousness of these truths — freedom limited and guided only by a categorical renunciation of paths and opinions deliberately falsely defined. Freedom also remains in the revelation and understanding of those truths which are testified to by infallible experience and the voice of the Church. Of course, there is no place here for subjective, speculative, arbitrariness. Theologizing in its roots must be intuitive, defined as the *experience of faith, vision*, and not as a self-satisfying dialectic movement of inert abstract concepts. For in general, dogmas of faith are the truths of experience, the truths of life, and they can and

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must be revealed not through logical synthesis or analysis, but only through spiritual life, through the presence of testified dogmatic definitions of experience. At the basis of Orthodox "theological opinions" and judgments there must lie not a [logical] conclusion but direct vision, contemplation. It is accessible only through the feat of prayer, through the spiritual development of the believing personality, through living communion with the eternal experience of the Church. "What is contained in these words," said St. Simeon the New Theologian, "must not be called thoughts, but *contemplation* of the true essence: for we are speaking about what is gained through contemplation. That is why what has been said must be called narration about what has been contemplated, and not what has been thought. For it has been ascertained that our words are not about essence and phenomena but are about what has already taken place." Theologizing is defined and guided by *tradition*, witnessed and expressed by the wise fathers and teachers of the Church, whom in recognizing as "saintly figures," the Church declares reliable witnesses about the firm pledge of faith entrusted to the Church. However, the patristic "theologumena" are also not equivalent to Church dogma in the strict sense, and do not have statutory force equal to it. Their meaning and significance is in the experience of grace, which they reveal and which surpasses them. In its clarification the holy fathers frequently take different positions among themselves, which in no way shakes and destroys the unity and identity of their faith, consciousness, and experience. In this variety there is no contradiction to the apodictic existence of faith. In the words of St. Irenaeus of Lyons, "since faith is one and the same, then the one who can say a lot about it does not add anything, and the one who says little — does not diminish it. More or less knowledge of some understanding consists not in a change of the content itself, but in carefully tracing the thought of what has been said in parables and in agreeing with the content of the faith." "Theological opinion" is advanced judgment about the unspoken fullness of life being revealed in the experience of prayerful communion in the Church. Even their contradictory nature, their antinomic conflict between themselves, testifies only to the inexpressibility, to the logical incommensurability of the mystery of faith, comprehended in the experience of faith — and, along with this a certain prematureness of their legal and dogmatic revelation and expression. It is not accidental that the catholic consciousness of the Church abstained from consolidation and conciliation of the theologumena, being limited only by the cutting off of the tempting paths of blessing. It is not accidental, for example, that the knowledge of the Church about the final fate of the world and man was not invested in dogmatic armor, although the historic conditions of the ancient Church also apparently gave sufficient cause for this — but only direct false doctrine and error were denounced, renounced, and repudiated. Much that is seen clearly and contained in Church consciousness is not confirmed directly. It is necessary to view this as

testimony about the fact that according to the apostolic word, now we will always know only *partially*, and that there is much concealed until the "bright and clear day" of the Lord Jesus, the future glory. According to the explanation of St. Maximos the Confessor, in this world, man also, having achieved the greatest "perfection according to activity and contemplation," has only a certain part of the knowledge of the prophecy and testament of the Holy Spirit, and not the fullness of the rest," and only "some time, at the end of time, he will enter into that state of perfection, which he has merited, will begin to contemplate the distinctive Truth, face to face" and receive in measure accessible to him "all the fullness of grace." In the Church fullness of knowledge and understanding is given, but it will be absorbed and revealed in part, and therefore, it is necessary to oppose not different epochs of Church *history* but the entire earthly wandering of the Church as a whole and that inexpressible state of glory according to the Second Coming, in which "there has not appeared what will be." The partial and inexpressible nature of present knowledge does not destroy its originality, and St. Basil the Great clarified it with an analogy: "if the eyes are turned to knowledge of the visible, then it does not follow from this that everything visible is subject to view; the heavenly vault cannot be viewed for one moment . . . the same thing can be said about God." The Church treasury of total truth is revealed to each in the measure of his spiritual growth. And, in general, perhaps it is permissible to connect the concealed nature of the fullness of Church Creed with the dynamic essence of the Church, as the Redemption *being accomplished*, as a living process of salvation, sanctification, and transformation of the world. It is not accidental that what was not consolidated in definitions of the faith was namely those truths which relate either to the actual formation of a "new creation" or to its final fate, i.e. to the fact that it has still not culminated and has not been completed in time, that it still "is seen as being affected" and that, therefore, it is the formation of a creation not yet fully known. And in the already revealed dogma of the faith there remains hidden that which is directed in them toward a future age. The Holy Church did not express categorical judgment about the image of the action and dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the world nor about the fate after death of the righteous and sinners, nor about much else which still remains to be accomplished. It testified only about the fact that either eternal being is not at all connected with *oikonomia* in time (the dogma of the Trinitarian Unity of God), or has already been clearly and basically revealed (the dogma about the Image of the Savior). And in Christological dogma what was consolidated was mainly what is connected with what has occurred in time past (the Incarnation, the reality of suffering, the Crucifixion and Resurrection, the Ascension) or what from the future has been revealed by the Savior himself (the Second Coming, the general resurrection, etc.). The Church testifies about many things not so much dogmatically as liturgically —

including the circle of great annual holidays — the days of Ascension and Transfiguration, the Dormition of the Theotokos, and the Exaltation of the Living Cross. It testifies about much that has not been designated completely and dogmatically, and which is connected with the realization of the world which is in the process of being realized, but has not yet been realized. The mystery of the Ascension of the Lord can be completely revealed only in the Second Coming — "by his image you will see him in the heavens." For only then and through the general resurrection will appear the fullness of the restoration of created corruption into noncorruption. And related to this is the secret of the Transfiguration of the Lord, easily revealed in the catholic testimony about the light of Tabor. And there is dogmatically revealed about the Theotokos only that which has been fortified by the name of the "Mother of God" and "Virgin" and the liturgical celebration of her Dormition reveals more. Many things are irrefutably given only in anticipation. And Christological knowledge of fullness and finality is achieved only when the deed of Christ will be fulfilled, "when he will hand over the Kingdom to God and the Father." The mystery of Godmanhood is being fulfilled, acts in the world, and, therefore, is still unknown to developing humanity. This mysterious dogmatic inexpressibility uniquely testifies about the mystical *reality of time* — of that historical time in which the sanctifying grace of God operates, in which mysteriously the Church of Christ lives and develops unchanged, but growing, to the extent that "everyone will come to unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect man, in measure of the complete growth of Christ," when, according to the apostle, "everyone from small to great will know the Lord," and "every knee of the heavenly, earthly and the underworld will bend before the name of Jesus," and "the kingdom of the world will become the Kingdom of Our Lord and his Christ." On the contrary, in the need to fetter all the fullness of Church experience and hope into an infallible system of final dogmatic definitions, there is expressed a certain historical docetism, a derogation of the reality of time, a derogation of the mystery of the Church, derogation of the future Coming in glory — one might say, a bad remnant of time, in which the real "deification" of creation and development in grace is replaced by the logical unfolding of timeless and abstract logical concepts. Not everything visible and proclaimed in the Church is professed dogmatically, although *everything* is given in the growing *experience* of the Church which is being realized, immutably and inseparably dwelling with its Head, Christ. Our hope leads us beyond the limits of history, as the oppressive change and sequence of natural births and deaths — to Resurrection. The Scripture has not yet been realized and fulfilled, and not what has been but what is hoped for, according to promise, will be revealed in the "last days."

In historical wandering and in the Church there will be realized the bitter word of the Gospel — "He came to his own, and his own knew

him not." And the world hated the Church as it did Christ — for it is not of the world, just as the Lord is not of the world. In this was revealed the terrible mystery of apostasy and opposition, frightening and unknowable even for the believing spirit. And the heart is troubled with the thought that in Church history the chasuble of the Lord has again been torn apart. The divine precept "unity of spirit in the union of the world" remains scorned and unfulfilled. This seduction will only be overcome and this temptation in the fullness and strength of the teaching of the Chalcedonian Creed, also in the Church, as the Body of Christ, to distinguish the inseparable essences — Divine and human, so that the weakness and opposition of creation will not weaken grace. But the weary and declining consciousness of cowardly and wavering Christians seeks another and easier way out of their confusion — this will not take on the tragic mystery of freedom, expressed equally in obedience. The thirst for agreement and reconciliation burns, an inclination to underestimate the discord and division has been expressed, so that by means of connivance and concession "union" will be achieved on a certain "minimum" level. Relativity is introduced into the realm of faith, and even "adogmatism." The "creeds" seem to have been equalized, interpreted as historically equal and even to be providentially agreed forms of the human knowledge of Divine truth. A flexible tolerance toward difference in thought is preached — in the hope that at some time in a limited synthesis there will be elicited a healthy kernel of all opinions, but the human husk will be rejected in each one. Behind such a representation is hidden a unique church-historic docetism, an insensitivity toward reality and the fullness of Divine revelation in the world, an insensitivity to the mystery of the Church, a misunderstanding of its profoundly natural nature. Indeed, not only mystically, but also historically, division in faith always appeared through schism and falling away, through *separation* from the Church. The single path of their redefinition is the path of *reunification* or return, and not union. One might say that the discordant "creeds" in general are not unified, for each is a self-enclosed whole. In the Church a mosaic of different parts is impossible. There stand opposite each other not "creeds" with equal rights, but the Church and the schism, united in spirit of opposition. It can be whole only through elimination, through a return to the Church. There is no and can be no "partial" Christianity — "can it be Christ was divided?" There is only One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church — a single Father's House; and the believers, as St. Cyprian of Carthage said, "do not have any other home than the one Church."

The entire creation is headed and united in Christ, and through his Incarnation and humanity the Son of God, according to the remarkable expression of St. Irenaeus "again began the long series of human existences." The Church is the spiritual posterity of the Second Adam, and in its history is fulfilled his redemptive act, his love blossoms and burns. And through the course of the ages of the Church, the ideal aim

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of creation shone through in prophecy. The Church is the "fulfillment" of Christ; and in the words of St. John Chrysostom, "only then will the head be fulfilled when a perfect body will be established." There is a certain mysterious movement from the terrible day of Pentecost, when all of creation seemed to take on the fiery baptism by the Spirit, and in it was confirmed the inviolable treasure house of grace — to that final limit, when there will appear the holy city of the New Jerusalem, descending from heaven, where there will no longer be a temple, for the Lord God the Pantokrator will be the temple and the Lamb. The maximum fulfillment will be reached by the Church in the Resurrection of the dead and in the life of the future age. The Revelation of the Apostle John mysteriously testified about this — "the tabernacle of God with man, and he will dwell with them; they will be his people, and God himself with them will be their God." In the experience of the Church the glorification of creation has been foretold and anticipated. And that is why, among the languor and vanity of the world, our heart is not disturbed and not frightened. For we have a promise: "I am with you in everything until the end of time."

*Translated from the Russian by
Dr. Roberta Reeder*

THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Christianity is the Church

The very name *Ecclesia* suggests the corporate nature of Christianity. Christianity is not a doctrine or a law. Christianity is the Church. To be Christian does not mean merely to hold particular dogmatic convictions or to obey particular precepts. To be Christian means primarily to be in the Church, to really and truly belong to this sacred community of Christ. One cannot be Christian alone, but only as a member of the Body. *Unus Christianus, nullus Christianus*: the old Latin expression is fully true. And the Christening of any individual is just his incorporation into the Body. "For by One Spirit were we all baptized into one body . . . and we all were given to drink in one Spirit." — *καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν . . . καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν.* (*I Corinthians 12:13.*)

Community in Sanctity

The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints. These two articles in the Apostles' Creed come together. Indeed, they refer to the same reality. For the Church is precisely the sacred community, a community of the sacred. We find this identification in one of the earliest commentaries on the Apostles' Creed, by Niceta, Bishop of Remesiana in the fourth century. "What is the Church but the congregation of all saints? From the beginning of the world patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and all other righteous men who have lived, are now alive or have yet to live in time to come, are one Church, since they have been sanctified by one faith and manner of life and sealed by one Spirit and so made one Body, of which Christ is the Head."

The Church is a Community

One Body, the excellent analogy so emphatically used by St. Paul when describing the mystery of the Christian existence, is the best witness to the intimate experience of the early Church. There is no special theory here. The analogy is born of a living experience. It grew in the Christian mind from the sacramental experience of Baptism as an incorporation, and of the Eucharist as a mystery of community. "For we being many are one bread and one body: for we all partake — *μετέχομεν* — of that one bread" (*I Corinthians 10:17.*) The Christian mind is through and through a corporate mind. Christians are the *new* and *true* Israel, the new Chosen People of God, the Christian race, "a

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (*I Peter* 2:9) And the Church is a "universal assembly" of this peculiar and sacred people, an assembly "which never adjourns," as one Russian theologian has said, which can never be dissolved, for it is assembled in Christ, in the unity of everlasting life. The Church is an organism, not just a corporation or a congregation. Many members and one Body, and the one life of that body.

The Community is One in Christ

The Church is the Body of Christ and his "fullness." *Body* and *fullness*, *soma* and *pleroma*, these two terms are closely connected once again in St. Paul's conception. (See *Ephesians* 1:23 — *ἡτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ, τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου.*) The Church is the Body of Christ *because* it is his complement, this would be the most adequate rendering of the force of the word *pleroma*. St. John Chrysostom comments on the Pauline idea in this sense. "The Church is the complement of Christ in the same way that the head completes the body and the body is completed by the head." Again, the analogy of the living organism. Christ is not alone. "His Body is formed of all the members. This means that the Head will only be fullgrown when the Body shall have been rendered perfect, when we all shall be together, united and knit into one." In St. Augustine we find an elaboration of the same analogy: "For Christ is not simply in the head or in the body, but is entire in head and body both — *Christus totus in capite et in corpore*. This term *totus Christus* is a favorite with St. Augustine. It reappears again and again, especially in his sermons, which are intended for simple believers, and not for theologians alone "When I speak of Christians in the plural, I understand one in the One Christ. Thus you are many, and yet one; we are many, and we are one." Or again, "Our Lord Jesus Christ is as one perfect man, both Head and Body, *totus perfectus vir, et caput, et corpus*. The Body of this Head is the Church, not only of this country only, but of the whole world; not of this age only but from Abel himself down to those who shall to the end be born and believe in Christ, the whole assembly of Saints; belonging to one city: which is Christ's Body, of which Christ is the Head." The whole conception is both primitive and Scriptural (see *I Corinthians* 12:12 and *Hebrews* 12:22-23), not a philosophical speculation but an experience of life. The Church is a community, a communion of many in one Christ, in one Spirit, and in the words of St. Athanasius, "being given to drink of the Holy Spirit, we drink Christ."

"One Only is Holy . . ."

Several points must be particularly emphasized. First, *the unity is given from above*. It is *given*. For we are united in Christ and by him.

We are united as branches of one vine, rooted in and incorporated into him. We, being many, are made into unity, for the Spirit in his many gifts is one. Christian unity is not merely human unity. It is not a unity of commonly shared convictions or ideas, nor a unity of commonly maintained discipline. This unity is not made by our human agreements. We do not create or constitute it. We are taken into it. Grace is given, we have to receive and accept it. It is given *from above*, as a perfect and Divine gift. We are gathered together in a unity of eternal and spiritual life.

"Holy Things Unto the Holy People"

It is a unity of our sanctification or consecration. Above all, it is a unity of a sacramental character, *communio in sacris*. Such, perhaps, was the original meaning of the phrase *communio sanctorum*, "fellowship in holy things" (*sanctorum* being taken as neuter rather than masculine.) This is, of course, only a conjecture. But in any case, something of the kind is obviously implied in the very name "saint," *sanctus*. For the same word refers not to any human achievement, but to consecration or sanctification, to a gift. And in this sense every Christian is a saint, by virtue of his baptismal consecration. Holiness comes only from God, who alone is Holy. To be holy means to share the Divine Life. And the aim of the Christian life was very properly defined by St. Seraphim of Sarov as an "acquiring of Holy Spirit." It is truly remarkable that in the New Testament the name "saint" is almost exclusively used in the plural, saintliness being social in its inherent meaning. Again, St. Paul obviously uses the terms "Church" and "saints" as synonymous. Holiness is available to individuals only in the community, in the "fellowship of the Holy Spirit." The "communion of saints" is a pleonasm. One can be a "saint" only in communion — no one can do so alone, by himself.

The Inseparability of the Living and the Dead in the Church

The fellowship of believers in the Church is not severed by death. Living and departed are members of the same body, they forever live together in the Living Christ. And their unity is a unity of prayer and intercession. The Church triumphant is the praying Church. And the Church militant is always praying for the departed, for the *whole body*. Prayer for the departed is a mark of catholicity. At the Eucharist not only are the departed commemorated, but the Eucharist is offered "on behalf of them, all those 'perfected in faith'" (that is the strict meaning of the Greek *ὑπὲρ*, not merely "for" them.) It is significant that in the Early Church the burial service was included among *sacramental* rites, and catechumens were not allowed to be present. It was a corporate act of the Church as of a fellowship of the new-born in the Lord, an intimate act of the sacramental Body (see the respective chapter in

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De hierarchia ecclesiastica.) There is a deep connection between baptism and burial (or death) the death of a Christian being also the day of his mystical birth (see death of martyrs as their *dies natalis*.)

Death is a mystery, one of the most mystical and significant events in human life, and the death of any individual member of the body is spiritually reflected in the whole corporate life. It is strongly emphasized in all burial rites and prayers. The departed one is, of course, still in the Church. And the prayer of the Church militant is "that the Lord our God will establish his soul in a place of brightness, a place of verdure, a place of rest, where all the Righteous dwell; that he may be numbered with those who are in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." *Rest with the Saints*, that is communion with the saints, a place among the saints, in heavenly places — again the "communion of saints."

The "Communion of Saints" implies our *communion with the saints*. And the "invocation of saints" is the new mark of catholicity. Our fellowship in prayer with the glorified saints is but an extension of what is only normal in our common life, because the saints are those who had been with us here, on the earth, *in via*, or with our forefathers, and who were then in the fellowship of intercession. The case is very simple. A brother who used to pray for me in the days past, when we were both still the Lord's pilgrims on the earth, who in his love and devotion was possibly a great help and even a guide for me, does not cease to intercede for me now, as a member of the glorious company of saints in his rest with the Lord. His love is not broken, his love rather is wider now, illuminated by the light eternal of the Love Divine "in the embraces of the Father." And we have only to respond to this continuous intercession for us, to share in the intercession of the glorified and triumphant Church. This sharing is just what our invocation means, and in the glorious army of saints we recognize the personalities of our brethren and fathers in our beloved Lord. In him they are alive, in him we are still united with them. Although separated by death, we are reunited in him Who is the Resurrection and the Life immortal. The invocation of saints can by no means interfere with belief in only one Mediator and Advocate. The saints do intercede before him. And the proper object of our veneration in the saints is namely the Grace Divine given to them, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, not their human achievements so much as the mercy and glory of God revealed in them. And we do thank God for the saints, for his mercy to them. But they are in him and with him. The Head of the Church is never alone, but with his saints, with his "friends," whom he glorifies. And we are united with the saints most of all in the Holy Eucharist, in the celebration of that one and only Sacrifice.

One last remark must be added to this brief outline. The whole setting of our prayers is intended for the brotherhood, for the universal fellowship of believers. The same offices are supposed to be said

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publicly and privately, in the church or at home, or by a hermit on the mountains or in the woods, since in his worship no Christian is ever alone. He is to worship as a member of a body, as one of Christ's brotherhood, and never for himself alone. Even our private devotion is to be rather our sharing in the catholic worship of the whole Church, and we have to include our devotion in the rhythm and chorus of that universal adoration of our Lord. We join that chorus, we join the "praying Church," we find ourselves in it, in a rhythm of the Church's worship. And if we fail so often to do so, or even to recognize the supreme reality of the "praying Church," or if we sometimes somehow prefer to say our prayers by ourselves, it only shows the extent of our Christian imperfection. Because our Lord came namely to gather the scattered sheep into one fold, into one Body, into the "communion of saints."

THE ELEMENTS OF LITURGY: AN ORTHODOX VIEW

Introduction

Christianity is a liturgical religion. The Church is first of all a worshipping community. Worship comes first, doctrine and discipline second. The *lex orandi* has a privileged priority in the life of the Christian Church. The *lex credendi* depends upon the devotional experience and vision of the Church. On the other hand, Christian worship is itself to a large extent dogmatic — a worshipping witness to the truth of Revelation. The lyrical element in the worship has a subordinate place. This liturgical emphasis of Christianity is especially conspicuous in the Eastern Orthodox tradition. In this respect the Eastern Church is, however, but a faithful heir of Christian antiquity. In fact, most of the liturgical structures and devotional habits of the Christian East were stabilized at an early date, and have been loyally preserved and continually handed down through generations. It is a plausible hypothesis that the word "Orthodoxy" in the Eastern use means primarily not "right opinion" (as it is usually interpreted in the West), but rather "right glory," i.e. namely, right worship. In any case, in Eastern tradition, the unity of doctrine and worship is strongly stressed. The doctrine itself is here not so much a doctrine taught in the class as a doctrine proclaimed in the temple — theology speaks more from the pulpit than from the desk. It therefore assumes a more existential character. Worship, on the other hand, is free from emotionalism. Sobriety of the heart is its first requirement. The fullness of the theological thought of the Church is thrown into the worship. This is possibly the most notable distinctive characteristic of the Eastern tradition.

Public and Private Worship

Personal prayer itself should be "catholic," i.e. inclusive and universal. The praying heart is to be enlarged in order to embrace the needs and sorrows of all of suffering humanity. And only in this spirit can individuals truly meet each other as "brethren," i.e. as living members of the Church, and truly "agree" concerning things they are about to ask in common from the Lord. On the other hand, it can be said that corporate worship is also a personal obligation, a personal responsibility of everyone who shares in the common treasury of redemption.

Accordingly, in the Orthodox Church there are definite ordered forms of morning and evening prayers which every member of the community is supposed to use regularly. They are collected in a book called *Kanonikon*: it is a book of rules and patterns. Of course, it is only an

elementary guide, to be supplemented by spontaneous expansion. The main emphasis is, however, not on the recitation of ordered formularies as such, but on the spiritual concentration of the believer. "When you awake, before you begin the day, stand with reverence before the all-seeing God. Make the sign of the Cross and say: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Having invoked the Holy Trinity, keep silence for a little, so that your thoughts and feelings may be freed from worldly cares. Then recite the following prayers without haste, and with your whole heart." This is the preamble of the morning rule. Two features may immediately be observed. First, spiritual detachment and concentration. Second, a definite dogmatic emphasis from the outset: Invocation of the Trinity, the sign of the Cross, pointing to the mystery of redemption. On the whole, no rapture or emotion. Rather, stand still. Prayers which follow are selected in order to remind one of the topics which should naturally be considered at every action of devotion or at least are not to be neglected in daily meditation. The rule may be abridged if necessary. The rubric at the close of the morning rule reads as follows: "It is preferable to say only a few of the suggested prayers with attention and zeal than to recite them all in haste and without due concentration." One can select a rule suitable to one's particular conditions, even a very short one, but then this rule should be kept rigidly, and should never be abolished or abridged by license. It is a point of obedience and self-discipline. Spontaneous prayer comes only after training. This training is a safeguard against subjectivism in devotion.

Prayer is not just a recitation of established formulas, but is first and foremost a conversation with the living God. It may even be silent. Here is some typical advice concerning prayer, formulated by a saintly Russian bishop, Theophanes (1815-1894), who is regarded as a competent and expert writer on the problems of spiritual and devotional life. From the outset he suggests that in order to pray to God truly and efficiently, one should prepare or *rehearse* the prayers in advance. One has to study the text of the prayer book and to be sure that one "understands" and "feels" every word and every turn of phrase, to meditate over every word and to grasp their full meaning. And only then should one begin to pray. The problem of prayer is how to focus one's attention, i.e. to realize the presence of God and not be distracted by external impressions and worldly cares. For prayer is essentially contemplation. The words of the prayer must be recited so that they may speak to the soul. It may happen that a particular word catches attention, and then one has to stop and listen, and not rush ahead through the rest of the text. Yet all this is but a first step. Prayer books are indispensable in the early stages, but they are meant only for beginners; they are just primers of devotion. No progress can ever be made if the first step is taken in a wrong direction; but one should not be satisfied with the first step. We begin to learn language by memorizing phrases and responses, often from the language by

memorizing phrases and responses, often from a book. Yet sooner or later, we begin to simply speak. The same applies to prayer also. We first learn some pattern of formulas, some phrases and turns. But sooner or later we have to begin to speak to God spontaneously. The purpose of training is to enable a person to enter into a conversation with God. Prayer therefore cannot be restricted to certain hours or some particular occasions. It should become a habit or an attitude. In other words, the Christian has to feel that he is permanently in the presence of God. This is the goal of devotional training. The goal of prayer is precisely to always be with God. Then the Spirit starts speaking in the heart, joyful and burning. How far all this is from the dead formalism and "ritualism" which are so often imputed to the Eastern tradition. Yet there is no room for arbitrary "improvisation." It is the Spirit that improvises. But this only occurs in the soul which has been prepared and trained by long and steady devotional exercise. As St. Seraphim of Sarov (1759-1833) puts it: "We must pray only until God the Holy Spirit descends . . . when he comes to visit us, we must cease to pray."

There is no "quietism" in this devotional practice. The "search for the Spirit" is to be combined with hard work. Prayer is to be a spiritual formation of the new man within the old Adam. Spiritual detachment from "this world" does not necessarily presuppose physical separation or withdrawal. "This world" is rather "the world of passion." And the purpose of devotional training is precisely to overcome one's dependence upon impersonal "passions" and to secure freedom of the "spiritual" personality. Idleness is an ultimate vice and sin. Nor is there any taint of Pelagianism: "good works" are not a means of salvation, they are rather the fruits of obedience; they are a duty, not a merit. Prayer itself is a "work," it requires all of man's activity. Yet the goal is to disappear from one's selfish human personality and to be reborn as a vehicle of the Spirit. Prayer means that one is dedicated to God alone. In the Eastern tradition the term "prayer" is given a very large and inclusive meaning. "Teach me how to pray. Pray Thou Thyself in me" (from the private devotions of Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, 1782-1867).

Prayer should not be identified with petition or supplication. To pray does not mean "to ask," although it always means "to seek." There are levels and degrees. One begins with supplication and intercession, by articulating one's needs and deficiencies before God. Again, this is the prayer of beginners. Thanksgiving comes next. It is a higher level, but not the highest. It ultimately leads to the disinterested praise and adoration of God. When one comes face to face with his unfathomable splendor and glory and praises him for his majesty, without even mentioning the benefits he bestows upon the world — then the chorus of men joins that of the angels, who do not even ask or thank at all, but continually praise him: "Holy, Holy, Holy." Thus, in the Eastern tradition, prayer is ultimately theocentric. The Eastern tradition admits no ultimate discrimination: it assumes the ultimate equality of all

believers, clerical and lay; there is but one identical goal for all — personal communion with God, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The rule of prayers is the same for all. In fact, the *Kanonikon* was originally a monastic book. The only difference is the difference in stages of spiritual ascent. Prayer itself belongs to the process of salvation: the main benefit of our redemption is assessed and appropriated precisely in a praying communion with God. The forms may vary, but the purpose is ever the same.

Sacraments and Corporate Worship

Personal prayer is an initiation into the mystery of the Church. This mystery is disclosed in the corporate and sacramental worship of the Church. The center of corporate worship is the Eucharist. It is *the* Sacrament, or (to use the authentic Eastern term) *the Holy Mystery*. It is a double mystery, or a mystery of the "Whole Christ," the Head and the Body — the mystery of the Lord and the mystery of the congregation (the term is used, for example, by Nikolas Kabasilas in his remarkable "commentary" on the Holy Rite). The early custom of daily celebration (attested e.g. by St. Basil the Great) has still been kept in many parish churches and monasteries, even in the period of temporary spiritual decay (in the age of Enlightenment during the eighteenth century until the later decades of the nineteenth). Yet Communion was rather infrequent, possibly not more than three times a year. Nevertheless, Sunday attendance was regarded as almost obligatory. Of course, the non-communicating attendance does not allow for adequate comprehension of the meaning of the Sacrament. It would not be an exaggeration to state that in the personal practice of believers the Eucharist lost its central place to some extent. This was a result of an increasing secularization of the laity. "Personal" was degenerating into "private." The corporate approach to public worship was lost or replaced by a sort of pietistic and even aesthetic individualism. Of course, the clergy was also guilty of neglect. Too often it simply complied with the changed attitude and did not, as it should, enforce a more adequate conception of sacramental worship. There was an obvious divorce between dogmatic teaching and devotional practice, a kind of devotional "psychologism." Yet already over the course of the nineteenth century (at least in Russia), a new move began towards a restoration of the centrality of the Eucharist, not only in the practice of the Church but also in personal practice. This is to say that Communion was gradually becoming more frequent. In Russia it was connected with the vigorous teaching and practice of Father John Sergiev, known as Father John of Kronstadt (1829-1908). Later on in this century, a similar movement was initiated in Greece (usually connected with the "Zoe Movement," a brotherhood of lay theologians). Both movements were connected with a more adequate and accentuated teaching of the Eucharist and the Church. True "sacramentalism" in the

Church ultimately depends upon a "doctrinal" orientation of devotional life. "Sacraments" lose their appeal when "piety" is dissociated from "dogma." In fact, sacraments are a part and an article of dogma. The growth of emotionalism ("pietism" or psychologism) is always detrimental to a true sacramental balance in the Church.

The Eucharist is a true revelation of Christ, an "image" of his redeeming life and work. It sets before the congregation in symbolic utterances and gestures the whole life of the Lord, from the Bethlehem manger to the Mount of Olives and Calvary, including his Resurrection and Ascension and "pre-figuring" or anticipating his second and glorious coming. This "symbolic" representation is not merely an impressionistic reminder of remote events, but a true "*re-presentation*" — a "making present" again. This has been a traditional teaching in the East, at least since St. John Chrysostom. There is no repetition, for no repetition of the Last Supper and Calvary is possible. But the Eucharist of Christ is more comprehensive than the "historic" Last Supper. Mystically it still continues, and is open to new generations of believers in the unbroken unity of the one Body of Christ which is the Church. The sacrifice of Christ was universal and all-inclusive. At every celebration believers are, as it were, taken back to the Upper Room precisely at the moment of the Last Supper. This is to say that essentially every celebration is the Last Supper itself. The mystery (i.e. the "sacrament") is one and ever the same, even as the sacrifice is one and the table is ever one. Christ Jesus is *present*, both as the Minister of the Sacrament, and as the Victim — "who offers and is offered." He is the ultimate and perennial Minister of the Church, the true High Priest of the New Testament, "in his blood." "Sacramental realism" explains the august place given to the Sacrament in the life of the Church. It is the spring and the root of her spiritual existence.

The complementary aspect of the mystery must, however, be recognized at the same time. The Eucharist is also the great Christian witness, a witness of the Church to the new fellowship in the redeemed community and in the Redeemer. The Church is not passive even while receiving the gift of redemption. The mystery of the Church is precisely in that Christ dwells and abides in the faithful and that they, by faith, dwell and abide in him. The Church carries on and continues the ministry of redemption, or rather Christ is carrying on and continuing it through and in the Church. To "follow Christ" is not only an ethical commandment. It implies a mystical identification of the members with the Head. As the mystery of the Church, the Eucharist is, in a sense, the realization of the Church. The Church is the growing "fullness" of Christ. It grows precisely through the sacraments. The unity of the Church is constituted by the unity of the Spirit, and faith is but a recipient of grace. The Church's unity is the gift of God, not a human achievement — yet it also implies an active response of the redeemed. As a sacred rite, the Eucharist is an act of "common worship," a true "agreement" of many to stay and to pray "together." The name "liturgy"

(which in the Eastern use is restricted to the eucharistic service) itself suggests precisely a *common action*. It is an "action" and not just a word. It is most significant that all eucharistic prayers are composed in the plural, including the prayer of consecration (*anaphora*), which is recited by the celebrant alone, but obviously in the name and on behalf of the faithful. For indeed, the whole congregation is supposed to "con-celebrate" with its pastor (or with the bishop). This fact is considerably obscured in contemporary practice by the secret recitation of the *anaphora*. This practice is of comparatively late origin (in any case after the age of Justinian, under whom it was formally prohibited, by both canon and secular law, as definitely impious). It does not conform with the rite itself, because the congregation (or the choir) still sings aloud certain parts of the continuous prayer which are incomprehensible out of context. Even the exclamations (*ekphonesteis*) of the celebrants are obscured by this manner of recitation. Yet the rite itself is still unchanged, and it clearly implies the corporate character of the prayer. It is in the name of the whole Church that the celebrant says persistently: *We pray*. This *we* in the liturgical use has a double meaning: (1) It betokens the unity of the assembled Church, the undivided fellowship of all those who pray. "Thou who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto Thee." And this "accord" is not a mere mixture of many private and separate prayers. The true accord presupposed a certain mutual identification of those who join and "agree." One is expected to pray not as a self-centered individual, but as a member of the Body, of the mystical fellowship in Christ. (2) The liturgical plural has another and deeper significance and connotation: it points to the universal fullness and unity of the Church. For every liturgy is celebrated in communion with the whole Church. And spiritually, in every celebration the whole Church takes an invisible yet very real part — "the whole company of heaven." This unity extends not only to all space, but to all time as well, i.e. it includes all generations and ages. The departed are therefore commemorated at every celebration. It is not only a remembrance, not merely a witness of our human sympathy and love, but rather an insight into the mystical fellowship of all believers, living and departed, in Christ, the common Risen Lord. In this sense the Eucharist is the mystery of the Church or, to be quite accurate, the mystery of the whole Christ. The Eucharist is an expression of not only human brotherhood, but above all of the divine mystery of redemption. It is primarily an image of the divine deed. The Eucharist is thus essentially a doctrinal witness, and therefore an acknowledgment of the grace of God. The whole rite is oriented towards God.

All sacraments and sacramental actions in the Church are ultimately related to the eucharistic office. Originally, all of them were performed within the framework of the divine liturgy. All of them are concerned with membership in the Church. It is strongly emphasized in the undivided rite of Baptism and Chrismation. The mystery of marriage is

related to the mystery of the Church ("in Christ and the Church"). The sacrament of penance is of special importance in the devotional rule of the Church. It implies two different features. On one hand, there is continuous spiritual guidance given by a Father Confessor to his "spiritual children." On the other hand, there is a special rite of confession (and spiritual examination of particular cases) and absolution. In present practice, when Communion is very infrequent, absolution (at least in the Russian Church) is regarded as an indispensable prerequisite for communion. But in principle the sacrament of penance is not directly connected with the Eucharist. Yet it is concerned directly with membership in the Body, and this is clearly stated in the concluding prayer of the Russian rite: "Reconcile and unite him unto thy Holy Church, through Jesus Christ, our Lord." It is presumed that a disorderly life and any violation of the Christian rule of life does somehow compromise and reduce the spiritual status of believers, and therefore should be remedied by a solemn action of the Church. Both elements in the rites are of importance: *confession* itself, i.e. self-examination of the penitent, his repentance and contrition, or his "change of mind" (*metanoia*), and *absolution* by the minister. The penitent must be inwardly "prepared" for absolution, "lest, having come to a physician, he departs unhealed." For the sacramental absolution is not only a declaration of forgiveness but primarily a spiritual cure.

Christian Instruction and the Preaching of the Word

The Orthodox Church is commonly supposed to be over-liturgical, as it were, and to have underestimated the importance of the preaching of the Word. This is an obvious misunderstanding. First, the rite itself is basically the preaching of the Word, an emphatic proclamation of the Good News. The main emphasis is on divine action. The Eucharist is the center of corporate or community worship. It is framed in a set of "offices" which are supposed to be said regularly by all members of the Church, although the order itself originally grew in monastic communities. In earlier times these offices were very often said daily by devout laymen as well, since they do not necessarily require the participation of a priest. In actual practice all of them belong, however, to the order of public worship, conducted openly in the Church by ordained ministers. Yet in principle they can be said by lay people too, and usually are said privately by monks (who are not in holy orders). There is a special book which regulates daily offices throughout the liturgical year. It is called *Typikon*, i.e. literally a "book of patterns." The *Typikon* used in the Russian Church goes back to the rule of the monastery of St. Sabbas in Palestine (and is called therefore the Jerusalem *Typikon*). In actual practice this order has been abridged and adapted to local conditions in various ways, and only in monasteries has it been kept in its complete form. The principle seems to be the same as with "private devotions" — it is better to say parts of the office with

zeal and attention than to go through the entire rite negligently. What is of primary importance is that all offices are primarily a proclamation of the Good News. They have an emphatically didactic and doctrinal character. The skeleton of the order is scriptural, and most of the hymns and collects are biblical in their inspiration and content. Biblical events are frequently quoted or referred to. On the whole, there is much more of a solemn epic than of subjective lyricism, in spite of definite poetical exaltation. The text of the hymns and collects and the symbolism of the ritual gestures and actions concurrently point to the biblical story of salvation — creation and fall, the Old Testament training and preparation, prophetic typologies, the Incarnation and the whole life of Christ, and Pentecost. The amount of instruction is possibly excessive. Prayers, in the strict sense of the word, are not the most conspicuous element of the rite. The main emphasis is on the mighty acts of God.

Secondly, readings from the Scripture are incorporated into all offices. The Psalter is naturally regularly recited. It is to be read in full during the week (twice in Lent, the readings being longer). The New Testament is given more space than the Old. In the *Typikon* it is ordered that every day after Vespers a portion of the New Testament should be read to the congregation, and the whole of the New Testament is to be covered in the course of the liturgical year. This is obviously a kind of preaching. At Matins an exegetical sermon of St. John Chrysostom or one of the other Fathers is to be read. All this is in addition to the regular lessons at the Liturgy. Unfortunately these rubrics are very seldom followed, except in the monasteries. But the mind and intention of the Church are expressed in the rule and not in the fact of its neglect. The reading of Patristic writings belongs to the structure of the offices. It is a kind of preaching, "preaching from the book." In earlier times the rubrics were more rigidly kept and the amount of instruction was very considerable. There is a growing tendency to restore this ancient practice and to combine it with oral preaching.

The sermon, in the technical sense of the word, is regarded as an integral part of corporate worship, especially on Sundays or on special occasions. In the medieval churches the pulpit (or the *cathedra*) was one of the most conspicuous parts of the church building (it still is the same in modern churches in Greece and in the Balkans). Yet in modern times preaching has lost something of its former importance. There was no doctrinal reason behind the change. The chief reason was rather negligence on the part of the congregation. There was an obvious revival of preaching in Russia in the nineteenth century, and many prominent preachers can be mentioned by name. At the present time, there is a vigorous revival of preaching in Greece where the laity seem to take more interest in preaching. Unfortunately there is a tendency to develop preaching along non-liturgical lines. Sermons very often have little connection with the rite itself, and this is usually done deliberately in order to make the sermon more contingent on contemporary topics

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and interests. At the Liturgy the sermon is, most unfortunately, shifted towards the end of the services, and becomes an addition to the service, rather than being its integral part, closely related to the scriptural lessons. Still, there is a notable improvement in this matter also. In many churches the sermon has been restored to its normal and traditional place, immediately following the lessons, and has become more exegetical. There is also extra-liturgical preaching.

On the whole, corporate worship in the Eastern Church is meant to be above all a faithful witness to the mighty acts of God, and not an expression or exhibition of pious emotions. There is much serenity and solemnity about the whole rite and order. The ultimate purpose is to put man before God and to impress upon him all that God had done for him. In a sense, worship itself is included in the continuous story of salvation.

Summary

The main distinctive mark of Eastern Orthodox worship is its traditional character. Devotional forms and manners of the Early Church are preserved, or rather have been continuously used for centuries, without any major changes. For an outsider they may seem obsolete and archaic, and the whole system of worship can be mistaken for a lifeless piece of antiquity. Nonetheless, in the process of its continuous use the rite has been kept alive, and is still a natural means of the spontaneous expression of religious life. Within the tradition it is felt to be the most adequate vehicle of spiritual experience.

The whole rite is basically scriptural. Biblical idiom was persistently used in the liturgical creation. Most of the hymns and collects are simply variations on biblical *motifs* (e.g. the *Canon* at Matins). Everything is oriented towards the redeeming events of the past, in which the reality of the Church is existentially rooted. Again, the whole structure of worship is corporate in its inspiration and objective. "Private devotions" are used to prepare the individual to share in the fellowship of the whole fellowship of believers, the Church.

The ultimate aim of the whole worship is to establish and perpetuate intimate communion with God, in Christ Jesus, and in the community of his Church. The ultimate emphasis is spiritual: the aim of Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, by whom believers are established in the fellowship of the Church. There is no tension between the rite and the "spirit," the rite itself being inspired.

WORSHIP AND EVERY-DAY LIFE: AN EASTERN ORTHODOX VIEW

An Ecclesiological Presupposition

The basic antinomy of Christian existence is conspicuously reflected in the realm of worship. Christianity stands by personal faith and commitment, and yet Christian existence is essentially corporate: to be Christian means to be in the community, in the Church. On the other hand, personality should never be simply submerged in any collective, not even a Christian one. The Body of Christ consists of responsible persons. The first followers of Jesus, in the "days of his flesh," were not isolated individuals engaged in their private quest for truth. They were Israelites — regular members of an established and instituted Community, that of the "Chosen People" of God. They were "waiting for the consolation of Israel." Indeed, a "Church" already existed when Jesus began his ministry. It was Israel, the People of the Covenant. The preaching of Jesus was first addressed precisely to the members of this "Church," to "the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Jesus never addressed individuals as individuals. The existing Covenant was the constant background of his preaching. The Sermon on the Mount was addressed not to an occasional crowd of accidental listeners, but rather to an "inner circle" of those who were already following Jesus with anticipation that he was "the One who should come." It was the pattern of the Kingdom. "The Little Flock," the community which Jesus had gathered around himself, was in fact the faithful "Remnant" of Israel, a reconstituted People of God. It was reconstituted by the Call of God, by the "Good News" of Salvation. But to this call each person had to respond individually, by an act of personal faith. This personal commitment of faith, however, incorporated the believer into the Community. And this remained forever the pattern of Christian existence: one should believe and confess, and then he is baptized, baptized into the Body. The "faith of the Church" must be personally appropriated. Moreover, only through this baptismal incorporation is the personal act of faith completed and fulfilled. Those baptized are born "from above," born again.

Accordingly, Christian worship is intrinsically a personal act and engagement, and yet it comes to completeness only within the Community, in the context of common and corporate life. Personal devotion and Community worship belong intimately together, and each of them is genuine, authentic and truly Christian only through the other.

There are, in the Gospel, two passages concerning prayer, and they seem to lead us in opposite directions. On the one hand, in the Sermon on the Mount Christ taught the multitudes to pray "in secret." It had to

be solitary prayer — "when thou hast shut thy door" — man alone with his Heavenly Father. Yet on the other hand, on another occasion Christ stressed the strength of joint and corporate prayer: "if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask."

Now, is there any contradiction or conflict between these two different praying attitudes? Or rather, do they belong together, and are they possible only together? Paradoxically, they simply presuppose each other. Indeed, one has to learn to pray "in secret," alone, bringing all his infirmities and adoration before *his* Father in intimate and personal intercourse. And only those who are trained in the practice of this "solitary" prayer can meet each other spiritually and join together in what they are going to ask corporately from their common Father in heaven. Common prayer presupposes and requires personal training. Yet personal prayer itself is possible only in the context of the Community, since no person is Christian except as a member of the body. Even in solitude, "in the chamber," a Christian prays as a member of the redeemed community of the Church. And it is in the Church that he learns his devotional practice. Thus, the two manners of prayer are more than complementary, they are organically bound together as two inseparable aspects of the same devotional act. Each without the other may even be dangerous and disruptive: "solitary" prayer may degenerate into individualistic pietism: ecstatic, selfish, and disruptive. When those without any previous personal training attempt to join with others the result may turn out to be not true community prayer, but rather "crowd prayer" — not the true corporate prayer of a community of persons, but rather that of an impersonal multitude — or else a mere formality and exhibition. It is therefore the rule of the Church that the faithful should prepare themselves for corporate prayer by their personal devotions in the chamber.

One begins to pray at home, and then goes to the church. There praying persons meet and discover each other, and can join spontaneously in the act of common adoration or humble petition. Strictly speaking, the phrase "private devotion" is a misleading and unfortunate term — it may give the impression that it is, as it were, a private affair left to the human individual's discretion. On the contrary, it is an obligatory preparation, imposed upon the individuals by the strict law of ecclesiastical discipline. There are definite rules for this "private devotion," and very little room is left for improvisation. Again, it is obviously much more than mere preparation.

Even "in the chamber" a Christian must not pray only for himself: he is never alone on his knees before the Father, and the Father is not *only his* Father, but the Father of all and everyone. As Christians, we are taught to call on "*our* Father," our common Father who is also "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," who died for and has saved all men. Personal prayer itself must be "catholic," i.e., comprehensive and universal. The praying heart must be large enough to embrace the needs and sorrows of all of suffering and redeemed humanity. On all levels,

private and corporate, Christian worship must be common worship, worship within the Community. And on all levels, private and corporate, personal engagement and commitment are indispensable. Prayer "in common" is still personal engagement. Joint prayer is still then prayer of persons. The very act of "joining" is a personal act.

A Theological Presupposition

Christian worship is the response of men to the Divine call, to the "mighty deeds" of God, culminating in the redemptive act of Christ, the Crucified and Risen Lord. Consequently, it is and must be determined in form and content by certain "credal" assumptions. Christian worship is primarily a "remembrance," an *anamnesis*, and is possible only in the context and the perspective of "Sacred History," *Heilsgeschichte*. Christian faith itself is a "response" — an obedient and grateful recognition of the saving deeds of God, sovereign, ultimate and unique. God has acted. Man has to acknowledge his gracious action. We pray because the initiative has been taken by God. We call on God because he called us first. The structure of Biblical worship was essentially and intrinsically "historic" even in the Old Testament. It was guided and determined by memory and remembrance: the Call of Abraham, the Exodus, the Covenant of Mount Sinai. This "historic" character of worship is enhanced and reinforced in the Christian Church by the absolute decisiveness of the Messianic accomplishment. Christians are inwardly compelled "to look back" — to Christ Jesus, to his Cross and his glorious Resurrection. The ever-shifting present can be assessed in the Christian manner only in relation and reference to the unique Past. But *anamnesis* in the Church is much more than simply a "reminiscence." It is rather a "representation" — this Messianic Past is ever present in all ages. Christ Jesus, a historic person, is the living Lord, ever alive, ever acting and ever the same — yesterday, today and tomorrow, and indeed unto the ages of ages. The Church is more than just a "body of believers," of those who believe and acknowledge the mighty deeds of God "in ages past." It is above all the Body of Christ, a body of those who dwell in him and in whom Christ dwells and abides. There is a certain "continuity between Christ and the Church, in whatever manner we may try to describe and "to explain" this mystery of our own Christian existence. Indeed, there is a mystery in Christian existence. Worship of the Church, and worship in the Church reflect this basic mystery. There is an intimate and reciprocal relationship, and mutual interdependence, between what is described as *lex supplicandi* and *lex credendi*. Worship is, and is to be, determined by Faith, by believing insight and comprehension. But Faith itself is grounded precisely in the great vision of accomplished Redemption, of the new intimacy of the redeemed man with the Redeemer, which is disclosed and ever reenacted in the devotional encounter of the "members" with the "Head." It is significant that Creeds were first formulated and used in

liturgical context, in the context of the sacramental rite of Christian initiation. Christians worship on the basis of their Creed, and it is in light of devotional experience and evidence that the Creed itself assumes its full existential validity and significance, as a committed witness of faith.

The Basic Act of Worship

As a response to God's benevolent and discriminating Providence and to his decisive act of Redemption, in Jesus Christ and through him, Christian Worship is primarily and essentially an act of praise and adoration, which also implies a thankful acknowledgment of God's embracing Love and redemptive loving kindness. Moreover, Christian gratitude must be "disinterested," as it were. On the Christian scale of devotion, petition and intercession are but secondary and subordinate, if indispensable, aspects of Christian worship, which should culminate in praise, in doxology. The climax and the ultimate goal of Christian worship are contemplation, that is — encounter with the Living Lord and the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. Worship culminates in commending personal life into the hands of the Lord. On the other hand, God is active in worship no less than the worshipping Community. Worship is never just a monologue, if it is genuine Christian worship, but is intrinsically dialogue and "conversation."

Indeed, prayer is not just a recitation of established formulas, but — at least in intention — intercourse or conversation with God. This is conspicuous in the classical book of devotion, which links together the Old Dispensation and the New, the *Psalter*. It is apparent in the traditional formularies of devotion, which have accumulated over the course of Christian history. Of course, there are stages of the devotional ascent, a kind of "ladder" of elevation, which must be climbed up gradually.

The first act of worship is to realize the Presence of God and everything implied thereby — awe and trembling, but love and adoration too. The basic problem here is that of attention. It is not a psychological problem, but a deep spiritual and existential one. The aim is "encounter." God is ever present, but one must be aware and cognizant of this "presence." God *is* listening. The aim is to enter into conversation with him and to await his answer. The goal of prayer is precisely to be *with* God, and *before* him always. And for this reason prayer must be permanent and unceasing. In actuality, the core of prayer is precisely a permanent orientation toward God. One starts with the recitation of ordered prayers and tries to recite them before God, or rather to speak to God in the words of established prayers, or in spontaneous words too. But on a certain level of devotion, the Spirit may stop the worshippers and begin to pray *in them* "with the groanings that cannot be uttered." At this stage one has to keep silent and to listen, and to be led. The purpose of personal worship is to disappear from one's selfish

human personality and become a vehicle of the Spirit. There is no quietism in this devotional practice: the search for the Spirit is hard work. On the other hand, personality is not destroyed when one becomes a bearer of the Spirit — it is rather enhanced and sublimated, raised to a higher level through its communion with the perfect personality of God.

One begins with supplication and intercession, by articulating one's needs and deficiencies before God. It is a prayer of the neophytes. In fact, God sees and knows our needs and sorrows much better than we do ourselves, and he is always ready to intervene and help, even "before we ask." Thanksgiving for this Love Divine comes next. It is a higher level. But it is not the climax, nor the goal. One ultimately climbs to the disinterested praise and adoration of God, when one comes face to face with his splendor and glory and praises him for his unutterable majesty, the majesty of love which passes all knowledge and understanding. It is the level of the Angelic hosts who do not ask or even thank, but are continuously praising God for his eternal glory and majesty and splendor. Here there is a normative ascent from human petition to contemplation and adoration.

One may quote in this regard an admirable prayer, composed by Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow (1782-1867).

O Lord, I know not what to ask of Thee. Thou alone knowest what are my true needs. Thou lovest me more than I myself know how to love. Help me to see my real needs which are concealed from me. I dare not ask either a cross or consolation. I can only wait on Thee. My heart is open to Thee. Visit and help me, for Thy great mercy's sake. Strike me and heal me, cast me down and raise me up. I worship in silence Thy holy will and Thine inscrutable ways. I offer myself as a sacrifice to Thee. I put all my trust in Thee. I have no other desire than to fulfill Thy will. Teach me how to pray. Pray Thou Thyself in me.

Sacraments and Devotion

Christian devotion is possible only on the basis and in the context of the crucial mystery of Redemption, or in other words, only in the Church, which is both the Body of Christ and his *pleroma*. One may quote St. Augustine at this point: Christ is not only in himself but also in his Body — *totus Christus, caput et corpus*. This is both the ground and the actuality of Church's sacramental life, which is the essential framework of Christian worship. The basic mystery of the "Whole Christ" — *totus Christus* — continues, as it were, and is continuously present and represented in the "mysteries" or sacraments of the Church. There is a kind of continuous *Epiphany* of the Lord in the sacramental life of the Church. Christian worship is essentially rooted in and centered around the Dominical Sacraments of the Eucharist and Baptism. Christians always worship, and only dare to do so, as "members of Christ," baptized and communicants, that is — as those

who are "in Christ" in an ineffable but real manner — and consequently, as worshippers they are never "outside" of him, as long as they are committed to him in and by faith, however estranged and alienated from him they may be and actually are, on account of their failures.

It is significant that the greatest mystery of the Lord's Presence has been denoted from early Christian times as *Eucharist*, that is — Thanksgiving. Indeed, the major prayer in the rite is precisely a more or less elaborate *anamnesis* of the *Magnalia Dei*, up to the Last Supper and Christ's injunction "to do this in his remembrance." An *anamnesis* in the form of thanksgiving.

The Communion service is eminently an act of corporate worship. All prayers are composed in the plural, including the *anaphora* or prayer of consecration. And this impressive "liturgical plural" — the "liturgical we" — emphasizes the corporate character of Christian existence. And yet every one has "to pray his Liturgy" to concelebrate personally in the corporate act of worship, and not only "to pray at the Liturgy," as an outsider who is attending the rite but not intrinsically involved in it. Here again, the dual character of Christian existence is brought to the fore: intrinsic membership in the Community and personal engagement.

The Dedication

Worship is the norm of Christian existence. It is more than a series of particular and occasional acts of devotion. It is not enough for a Christian to worship from time to time, or at regular times and hours. Worship must be continuous, a *habitus* more than an *actus*. Indeed, to worship God means to dwell and to walk continuously in his presence, "before him," in his sight. And this is the measure of Christian stature. To never be outside the Divine Presence. A Christian must be a worshipper in the totality of his existence, in all walks and situations of his life. For he is, by the virtue of his baptismal oath and promise and by the power of baptismal grace, "in Christ" and not only "before" him. Accordingly, the Church herself is ultimately "real" precisely as a worshipping community, a community or congregation of worshipping members — persons. She grows to her fullness through the process of worship. The process begins in the act of initial dedication, in the act of gratitude and faith, and continues in the sphere of sanctification, that is — the acquisition of the Spirit. The process is essentially bifocal: it implies both a transformation of persons ("sanctification") and the growth of the Body in its comprehensiveness and unity.

Daily Life

What is the function of worship in the "daily life" of believers, or rather of the living members of Christ's Body? The real problem is not

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about "daily life" as such, that is — as a complex of various "objective" situations or occurrences in which persons are involved. The real problem is that of the persons themselves. Christians, united in the fellowship with each other in Christ, in his Body, are called to live day by day in all these manifold and changing situations, and to witness and service in this "daily life." Their understanding and interpretation of this life, in the variety and confusion of its actual course, depends upon their basic orientation, or even more than that — upon their "being in Christ." Conduct and behavior, service and action, are conditioned by "being" Christians, that is, once again, by being "in Christ."

The true purpose and goal of Worship is to form a Christian man. Christian man, being "in Christ," will find his Christian way in the perplexity of daily tasks, or daily temptation. Because he is not alone: he is "in Christ."

PART THREE: REFORMATION THEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

REFORMATION THEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

Reflections on the Theology of the Reformation

If the monastic ideal is union with God through prayer, through humility, through obedience, through constant recognition of one's sins, voluntary or involuntary, through a renunciation of the values of this world, through poverty, through chastity, through love for mankind and love for God, then is such an ideal Christian? For some the very raising of such a question may appear strange and foreign. But the history of Christianity, especially the new theological attitude that obtained as a result of the Reformation, forces such a question and demands a serious answer. If the monastic ideal is to attain a creative spiritual freedom, if the monastic ideal realizes that freedom is attainable only in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and if the monastic ideal asserts that to become a slave to God is ontologically and existentially the path to becoming free, the path in which humanity fully becomes human precisely because the created existence of humanity is contingent upon God, is by itself bordered on both sides by non-existence, then is such an ideal Christian? Is such an ideal Biblical — New Testamental? Or is this monastic ideal, as its opponents have claimed, a distortion of authentic Christianity, a slavery to mechanical "monkish" "works righteousness"?

The Significance of the Desert

When our Lord was about to begin his ministry, he went into the desert — *εἰς τὴν ἔρημον*. Our Lord had options but he selected — or rather, "was lead by the Spirit," into the desert. It is obviously not a meaningless action, not a selection of type of place without significance. And there — in the desert — our Lord engages in spiritual combat, for he "fasted forty days and forty nights." The *Gospel of St. Mark* adds that our Lord "was with the *wild beasts*." Our Lord, the God-Man, was truly God and truly man. Exclusive of our Lord's redemptive work, unique to our Lord alone, he calls us *to follow him*. "Following" our Lord is not exclusionary; it is not selecting certain psychologically pleasing aspects of our Lord's life and teachings to follow. Rather it is all-embracing. We are to follow our Lord in every way possible. "To go into the desert" is "to follow" our Lord. It is interesting that our Lord returns to the desert after the death of St. John the Baptist. There is an obvious reason for this. "And hearing [of John the Baptist's death] Jesus departed from there in a ship to a *desert place* privately." When St. Antony goes to the desert, he is "following" the example of our Lord — indeed, he is "following" our Lord. This in no way diminishes the

unique, salvific work of our Lord, this in no way makes of our Lord God, the God-Man, a mere example. But in addition to his redemptive work, which could be accomplished only by our Lord as God and as Man, our Lord taught and set examples. And by "following" our Lord into the desert, St. Antony was entering a terrain already targeted and stamped by our Lord as a specific place for spiritual warfare. There is both specificity and "type" in the "desert." In those geographical regions where there are no deserts, there are places which are similar to or approach that type of place symbolized by the "desert." It is that type of place which allows the human heart solace, isolation. It is the type of place which puts the human heart in a state of aloneness, a state in which to meditate, to pray, to fast, to reflect upon one's inner existence and one's relationship to ultimate reality — God. And more. It is a place where spiritual reality is intensified, a place where spiritual life can intensify and simultaneously where the opposing forces to spiritual life can become more dominant. It is the terrain of a battlefield but a spiritual one. And it is our Lord, not St. Antony, who has set the precedent. Our Lord says that "as for what is sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceit of riches choke(s) the word, and it becomes unfruitful." The desert, or a place similar, precisely cuts off the cares or anxieties of the world and the deception, the deceit of earthly riches. It cuts one off precisely from "this-worldliness" and precisely as such it contains within itself a powerful spiritual reason for existing within the spiritual paths of the Church. Not as the only path, not as the path for everyone, but as one, fully authentic path of Christian life.

The Gospel of St. Matthew

In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (5:16) it is our Lord who uses the terminology of "good works." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your *good works* and may glorify your Father who is in heaven" — τὰ καλὰ ἔργα. Contextually these "good works" are defined in the preceding text of the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "Blessed are they who are hungering and are thirsting for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Is it not an integral part of the monastic goal to become meek, to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and to become pure in heart? This, of course, must be the goal of all Christians but monasticism, which makes it an integral part of its ascetical life, can in no way be excluded. Are not the Beatitudes more than just rhetorical expressions? Are not the Beatitudes a part of the commandments of our Lord? In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (5:19) our Lord expresses a deeply meaningful thought — rather a warning. "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." And it is in this context that our Lord continues

to deepen the meaning of the old law with a new, spiritual significance, a penetrating interiorization of the "law." He does not nullify or abrogate the law but rather extends it to its most logical and ontological limit, for he drives the spiritual meaning of the law into the very depth of the inner existence of mankind.

"You heard that it was said to those of old . . . but I say to you." Now, with the deepening of the spiritual dimension of the law, the old remains, it is the base, but its spiritual reality is pointed to its source. "You shall not kill" becomes inextricably connected to "anger." "But I say to you that everyone being angry with his brother shall be liable to the judgment." No longer is the external act the only focal point. Rather the source, the intent, the motive is now to be considered as the soil from which the external act springs forth. Mankind must now guard, protect, control, and purify the inner emotion or attitude of "anger" and, in so doing, consider it in the same light as the external act of killing or murder. Our Lord has reached into the innermost depth of the human heart and has targeted the source of the external act. "You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that everyone who is seeing a woman lustfully, has already committed adultery with her in his heart." From a spiritual perspective the person who does not act externally but lusts within is equally liable to the reality of "adultery." "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and you shall hate your enemy'. But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those persecuting you so that you may become sons of your Father in heaven."

The Inadequacy of the Critique by Anders Nygren

The Christian idea of love is indeed something new. But it is not something so radically odd that the human soul cannot understand it. It is not such a "transvaluation of all ancient values," as Anders Nygren has claimed in his lengthy study *Agape and Eros* (originally published in Swedish in 1947 as *Den kristna kärlekstanken genom tiderna. Eros och Agape*; published in two volumes in 1938 and 1939; two volumes published in one paperback edition by Harper and Row in 1969). Although there are certain aspects of truth in some of Nygren's statements, his very premise is incorrect. Nygren reads back into the New Testament and the early Church the basic position of Luther rather than dealing with early Christian thought from within its own milieu. Such an approach bears little ultimate fruit and often, as in the case of his position in *Agape and Eros*, distorts the original sources with presuppositions that entered the history of Christian thought 1500 years after our Lord altered the very nature of humanity by entering human existence as God and Man. There is much in Luther that is interesting, perceptive, and true. However, there is also much that does not speak the same language as early Christianity. *And herein lies the great divide in the ecumenical dialogue.* For the ecumenical dialogue to bear fruit,

the very controversies that separate the churches must not be hushed up. Rather they must be brought into the open and discussed frankly, respectfully, and thoroughly. There is much in Luther with which Eastern Orthodox theologians especially can relate. Monasticism, however, is one area in which there is profound disagreement. Even Luther at first did not reject monasticism. Luther's Reformation was the result of his understanding of the New Testament, an understanding which Luther himself calls "new." His theological position had already been formed before the issue of indulgences and his posting of his *Ninety-Five Theses*. Nygren, loyal to Luther's theological vision, has a theological reason for his position in *Agape and Eros*. Nygren identifies his interpretation of *Agape* with the monoenergetic concept of God, a concept of God that would be correct in and of itself, for God is the source of everything. But once we confront the mystery of creation, the mystery of that "other" existence, that created existence which includes mankind, we face a totally different situation. The existential and ontological meaning of man's created existence is precisely that God did not have to create, that it was a free act of Divine freedom. But — and here is the great difficulty created by an unbalanced western Christianity or the doctrine of grace and freedom — in freely creating man God willed to give man an inner spiritual freedom. In no sense is this a Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian position. The balanced synergistic doctrine of the early and Eastern Church, a doctrine misunderstood and undermined by Latin Christianity in general from St. Augustine on — although there was always opposition to this in the Latin Church — always understood that God initiates, accompanies, and completes everything in the process of salvation. What it always rejected — both spontaneously and intellectually — is the idea of irresistible grace, the idea that man has no participating role in his salvation. Nygren identifies any participation of man in his salvation, any movement of human will and soul toward God, as a pagan distortion of *Agape*, as "*Eros*." And this attitude, this theological perspective will in essence be the determining point for the rejection of monasticism and other forms of asceticism and spirituality so familiar to the Christian Church from its inception.

If Nygren's position on *Agape* is correct, then the words of our Lord, quoted above, would have had no basis in the hearts of the listeners for understanding. Moreover, our Lord, in using the verbal form of *Agape* — *ἀγαπάτε* — uses the "old" commandment as the basis for the giving of the new, inner dimension of the spiritual extension of that commandment of *agape*, of love. If Nygren is correct, the "old" context of *agape* would have been meaningless, especially as the foundation upon which our Lord builds the new spiritual and ontological character of *agape*. Nygren's point is that "the Commandment of Love" occurs in the Old Testament and that it is "introduced in the Gospels, not as something new, but as quotations from the Old Testament." He is both correct and wrong. Correct in that it is a reference taken from the Old

Testament. Where else was our Lord to turn in addressing "his people"? He is wrong in claiming that it is nothing but a quotation from the Old Testament, precisely because our Lord uses the Old Testament reference as a basis upon which to build. Hence, the foundation had to be secure else the building would have been flawed and the teaching erroneous. Indeed, Nygren himself claims that "Agape can never be 'self-evident'." In making such a claim, Nygren has undercut any possibility for the hearers of our Lord to understand any discourse in which our Lord uses the term "Agape." And yet Nygren writes that "it can be shown that the Agape motif forms the principal theme of a whole series of Parables." What is meant by this statement is that Nygren's specific interpretation of Agape forms the principal theme of a whole series of Parables. If this is the case, then those hearing the parables could not have understood them, for they certainly did not comprehend *agape* in the specificity defined by Nygren, and hence the parables — according to the inner logic of Nygren's position — were meaningless to the contemporaries of our Lord, to his hearers.

To be filled by the love of and for God is the monastic ideal. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (22:34-40) our Lord is asked which is the greatest commandment. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind [understanding]. This the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. In these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." The monastic and ascetic ideal is to cultivate the love of the heart, the soul, and the mind for God. Anders Nygren's commentary on this text in his *Agape and Eros* is characteristic of his general position.

It has long been recognized that the idea of Agape represents a distinctive and original feature of Christianity. But in what precisely does its originality and distinctiveness consist? This question has often been answered by reference to the *Commandment of Love*. The double commandment, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself', has been taken as the natural starting-point for the exposition of the meaning of Christian love. Yet the fact is that if we start with the commandment, with Agape as something demanded, we bar our own way to the understanding of the idea of Agape. . . . If the Commandment of Love can be said to be specifically Christian, as undoubtedly it can, the reason is to be found, not in the commandment as such, but in the quite new meaning that Christianity has given it To reach an understanding of the Christian idea of love simply by reference to the Commandment of Love is therefore impossible; to attempt it is to move in a circle. We could never discover the nature of Agape, love in the Christian sense, if we had nothing to guide us but the double command It is not the commandment that explains the idea of Agape, but insight into the Christian conception of Agape that enables us to grasp

the Christian meaning of the commandment. We must therefore seek another starting-point" (pp. 61-63).

This is indeed an odd position for one who comes from the tradition of *sola Scriptura*, for the essence of his position is not *sola Scriptura* but precisely that Scripture must be interpreted — and here the interpretation comes not from within the matrix of early Christianity but from afar, from an interpretation that to a great extent depends on an interpretation of Christianity that came into the history of Christian thought approximately 1500 years after the beginning of Christian teaching, and that is with the assumption that Nygren is following the general position of Luther. In his analysis of certain interpretations of what constitutes the uniqueness of Christian love and in his rejection of these interpretations as that which determines the uniqueness of Christian love Nygren is in part correct. "This, in fact, is the root-fault of all the interpretations we have so far considered; they fail to recognize that Christian love rests on a quite definite, positive basis of its own. What, then, is this basis?" Nygren approaches the essence of the issue but neglects the important aspect of human ontology, a human ontology created by God.

The answer to this question may be found in the text . . . 'Love your enemies'. It is true that love for one's enemies is at variance with our immediate natural feelings, and may therefore seem to display the negative character suggested above; but if we consider the motive underlying it we shall see that it is entirely positive. The Christian is commanded to love his enemies, not because the other side teaches hatred of them, but because there is a basis and motive for such love in the concrete, positive fact of God's own love for evil men. 'He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good'. *That* is why we are told: 'Love your enemies . . . that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven'.

What Nygren writes here is accurate. But it neglects the significance of human ontology; that is, that we are commanded to love our enemies because there is a spiritual value within the very fabric of human nature created by God, even fallen nature, and that that spiritual value is to be found in each and every man, however dimly we may perceive it. If we begin to love our enemy, we will begin to perceive in that enemy characteristics, aspects that were veiled, that were dimmed by the blindness of our hatred. We are commanded to love our enemy not only because God loves mankind, not only because God "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good" but God loves mankind because there is a value in mankind. Nygren writes (p.79) that "the suggestion that man is by nature possessed of such an inalienable value easily gives rise to the thought that it is this matchless value on which God's love is set." It is perhaps inaccurate to assert that Nygren misses the central issue

that that which is of value in man is God-created, God-given. It is more accurate to assert that Nygren rejects completely the issue, and he does so because of his theological doctrine of God and man. *This again is part of that great divide which separates certain churches within the ecumenical dialogue.* There is a basic and fundamental difference of vision on the nature of God and man. One view claims its position is consistent with apostolic Christianity, consistent with the apostolic deposit, and consistent with the teaching and life of the early Church and of the Church in all ages. Another view begins with the Reformation. Both views claim the support of the New Testament. Luther's writings on the Divine nature of love are not only interesting but valuable, not only penetrating but in *one emphasis* accurate. Indeed, if one considers Luther's doctrine of Divine love by itself, exclusive of his other doctrines, especially those on the nature of man, the nature of salvation, the nature of justification, the doctrine of predestination and grace, one encounters a view not dissimilar from that of ancient Orthodox Christianity. At times Luther can even appear to be somewhat mystically inclined. Luther's well-known description of Christian love as "*eine quellende Liebe*" [a welling or ever-flowing love] is by itself an Orthodox view. For Luther, as for the Fathers of the Church, this love has no need of anything, it is not caused, it does not come into existence because of a desired object, it is not aroused by desirable qualities of an object. It is the nature of God. But, at the same time, it is God who created mankind and hence the love of God for mankind, though in need of nothing and attracted by nothing, loves mankind not because of a value in man but because there is value in man because man is created by God. Herein lies the difference and it is indeed a great divide when one considers the differing views on the other subjects closely related to the nature of Divine love.

Perfection, Almsgiving, Prayer, Fasting, and Chastity

In monastic and ascetical literature from the earliest Christian times the word and idea of "perfect" are often confronted. The monk seeks perfection, the monk wants to begin to become established on the path that may lead to perfection. But is this the result of monasticism? Is it the monastic and ascetical tendencies in early Christianity which bring forth the idea of perfection, which bring forth the idea of spiritual struggle and striving? It is our Lord, not the monks, who injects the goal of perfection into the very fabric of early Christian thought. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (5:48) our Lord commands: "Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Traditional monastic and ascetical life has included among its activities almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. Were these practices imposed upon an authentic Christianity by monasticism or were they incorporated into monastic and ascetical life from original Christianity? In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* it is once again our Lord and Redeemer

who has initiated almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. Our Lord could very easily have abolished such practices. But rather than abolish them, our Lord purifies them, gives them their correct status within the spiritual life which is *to do them* but to attach no show, no hypocrisy, no glory to the *doing* of them. It is proper spiritual perspective that our Lord commands. "Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward with your Father in heaven." "Therefore, when you do alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be glorified by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you are doing alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who is seeing in secret will reward you" (6:2-4). And prayer is commanded to be done in a similar manner to ensure its spiritual nature. At this juncture our Lord instructs his followers to use the "Lord's Prayer," a prayer that is so simple yet so profound, a prayer that contains within it the glorification of the name of God, a prayer that contains within it the invoking of the coming of the kingdom of God, a prayer that acknowledges that the will of God initiates everything and that without the will of God man is lost — *γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημα σου*. It is a prayer of humility in that it asks for nothing beyond daily sustenance. It is a prayer of human solidarity in forgiveness, for it asks God to forgive us only as we forgive others, and in this a profound reality of spiritual life is portrayed, a life that unites man with God only as man is also united with other persons, with mankind, in forgiveness. And then there is the prayer to be protected from temptation and, if one falls into temptation, the prayer to be delivered from it. So short, so simple, yet so profound both personally and cosmically. Is monasticism a distortion of authentic Christianity because the monks recite the Lord's Prayer at the instruction of and command of our Lord? If monasticism used free, spontaneous prayer, then it could be faulted for not having "followed" our Lord's command. But that is not the case. Is monasticism a deviation because of the frequent use of the Lord's Prayer? Our Lord was specific: when praying, pray this. It does not preclude other prayers but prominence and priority is to be given to the Lord's Prayer. Indeed, it is certainly foreign to our Lord to restrict the frequency of prayer. The "vain repetitions," or more accurately in the Greek, the prohibition of "do not utter empty words as the gentiles, for they think that in their much speaking they will be heard" — this is in essence different than our Lord's intention. And our Lord says more on this subject, a subject considered of importance to him. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (9:15) our Lord makes the point that when he is taken away, then his disciples will fast — *καὶ τότε νηστεύσουσιν*. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (17:21) our Lord explains to his disciples that they were unable to cast out the devil because "this kind goes out only by prayer and fasting." This verse, it is true, is not in all the ancient manuscripts. It is, however, in

sufficient ancient manuscripts and, moreover, it is contained in the *Gospel of St. Mark* (9:29). It is obvious that our Lord assigns a special spiritual efficacy to prayer and fasting.

Chastity is a monastic and ascetic goal. Not only an external celibacy but an inner chastity of thought. Is this too something imposed upon authentic, original Christianity by a Hellenistic type of thinking or is it contained within the original deposit of apostolic and Biblical Christianity? Again it is our Lord who lays down the path of celibacy and chastity. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (19:10-12) the disciples ask our Lord whether it is expedient to marry. "Not all men can receive this saying but those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to grasp it, let him grasp it." The monastic and ascetical goal merely "follows" the teaching of our Lord. Original, authentic Christianity never imposed celibacy. It was, precisely as our Lord has stated, only for those to whom it was given, only to those who might be able to accept such a path. But the path was an authentically Christian path of spirituality laid down by our Lord. In early Christianity not even priests and bishops were required to be celibate. It was a matter of choice. Later the Church thought it wise to require celibacy of the bishops. But in Eastern Christianity celibacy has never been required of one becoming a priest. The choice to marry or to remain celibate had to be made before ordination. If one married before ordination, then one was required to remain married, albeit the ancient Church witnessed exceptions to this. If one was not married when one was ordained, then one was required to remain celibate. The Roman Church, not the Eastern Orthodox Church, extended the requirement of celibacy to priests and had a very difficult time attempting to enforce it throughout the ages. One can never force forms of spirituality upon a person and expect a spiritually fruitful result. The words of our Lord resound with wisdom — to those to whom it is given, to those who can live in this form of spirituality.

Poverty and Humility

Poverty is not the goal but the beginning point of monastic and ascetical life in early Christianity. Was this a precedent established by St. Antony, a new notion and movement never before contained within Christian thought? Again it is our Lord who establishes the spiritual value of poverty. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (19:21) our Lord commands the rich man who has claimed he has kept all the commandments: "If you will to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor . . . and come follow me." It was not St. Antony who established the precedent. Rather it was St. Antony who heard the word of our Lord and put it into action, who "did the word of the Lord." It is Christ, the God-Man who has put forth the ideal of perfection, who

has commanded us to be perfect (see also 5:48), who has put forth the ideal of poverty as a starting-point for a certain form of spiritual life. Elsewhere in the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (13:44) Christ makes a similar point, asserting that one sells everything in exchange for the kingdom of heaven. "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." All Christianity exalts humility. It should therefore not be a surprise if monastic and ascetical spirituality focus on humility. In the *Gospel of St. Matthew* (18:4) our Lord proclaims that "he who therefore will humble himself as this little child, he is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Elsewhere (23:12) our Lord says that "whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." The emphasis on humility may appear self-evident. Behind it, however, lies a reality of the nature of God to which few pay much attention. In the Incarnation two very core elements of any spirituality are clearly evidenced — the love and humility of God. The idea that humility is rooted in God may appear astonishing. The humility of God cannot, of course, be considered in the same light as ascetical humility, or any human form of humility. However, the human forms of humility are derived from the very nature of God, just as the commandment to love is rooted in God's love for mankind. God's humility is precisely that being God he desires, he wills to be in communion with everything and everything is inferior to God. This has great theological significance, for it reveals the value of all created things, a value willed by God. There is even a parallel here with the saints who loved animals and flowers. And from this idea, an idea intrinsically derived from the Incarnation and *kenosis* of God the Son, one can clearly see the real Divine origin in action of Christ's teaching about "others." In the very notion of a vertical spirituality a concern for others is presupposed. And while one is ascending to God — an abomination for Nygren — his fellow man must be included in the dimensions of spirituality. Through the Incarnation all forms of human existence are sanctified. Through the Incarnation both the love and the humility of God are made known. And man is to love God and fellow mankind because love contains absolute, positive value, a value derived because love is the very nature of God. And man is to experience humility, to become inflamed by humility precisely because humility belongs also to God and hence its value is derived from God. But to become filled innerly with love and humility is not easy. It demands not a mere acknowledgement of the fact that God is love and that humility is Divine. Rather, it demands the complete purification of our inner nature by God. And this is the struggle, the spiritual warfare that must be waged to enter and maintain the reality of love and humility. The path of monasticism and asceticism is an authentic path, a path also ordained by our Lord.

The Writings of St. Paul and the Interpretation of the Reformation

The writings by or attributed to St. Paul form a critical point in the entire great divide between the churches of the Reformation and the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Church. The *Epistle to the Romans* is one of the most important references of this controversy. This epistle and the *Epistle to the Galatians* formed the base from which Luther developed his doctrine of faith and justification, a doctrine that he himself characterized in his preface to his Latin writings as a totally new understanding of Scripture. These two works continue to be the main reference points for contemporary theologians from the tradition of the Reformation. It was from this *new understanding* of the Scriptures that the rejection of monasticism obtained in the Reformation. In general it is not an exaggeration to claim that this thought considers St. Paul as the only one who understood the Christian message. Moreover, it is not St. Paul by himself nor St. Paul from the entire corpus of his works, but rather Luther's understanding of St. Paul. From this perspective the authentic interpreters of our Lord's teaching and redemptive work are St. Paul, as understood by Luther (foreshadowed by Marcion and also St. Augustine). Marcion was condemned by the entire early Church. St. Augustine indeed does anticipate Luther in certain views but not at all on the doctrine of justification and Luther's specific understanding of faith. It is more St. Augustine's doctrine of predestination, irresistible grace, and his doctrine of the total depravity of man contained in his "novel" — to quote St. Vincent of Lérins — doctrine of original sin that influenced Luther, who himself was an Augustinian monk.

The rejection of monasticism ultimately followed from the emphasis placed upon salvation as a free gift of God. Such a position is completely accurate but its specific understanding was entirely contrary to that of the early Church. That salvation was the free gift of God and that man was justified by faith was never a problem for early Christianity. But from Luther's perspective and emphasis any type of "works," especially that of the monks in their ascetical struggle, was considered to contradict the free nature of grace and the free gift of salvation. If one was indeed justified by faith, then — so went the line of Luther's thought — man is not justified by "works." For Luther "justification by faith" meant an extrinsic justification, a justification totally independent from any inner change within the depths of the spiritual life of a person. For Luther "to justify" — *δικαιῶν* — meant to declare one righteous or just, not "to make" righteous or just — it is an appeal to an extrinsic justice which in reality is a spiritual fiction. Luther has created a legalism far more serious than the legalism he detected in the Roman Catholic thought and practice of his time. Moreover, Luther's legalistic doctrine of extrinsic justification is spiritually serious, for it is a legal transaction which in reality does not and can not exist. Nowhere was the emphasis on "works" so strong,

thought Luther, as in monasticism. Hence, monasticism had to be rejected and rejected it was. But Luther read too much into St. Paul's emphasis on faith, on justification by faith, and on the free gift of the grace of salvation. St. Paul is directly in controversy with Judaism, especially in his *Epistle to the Romans*. It is the "works of the law," the law as defined by and interpreted by and practiced by Judaism in the time of St. Paul. Our Lord has the same reaction to the externalization and mechanical understanding of the "law." Indeed, the very text of the *Epistle to the Romans* reveals in every passage that St. Paul is comparing the external law of Judaism with the newness of the spiritual understanding of the law, with the newness of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ through the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of our Lord. God has become Man. God has entered human history and indeed the newness is radical. But to misunderstand St. Paul's critique of "works," to think that St. Paul is speaking of the "works" commanded by our Lord rather than the Judaic understanding of the works of the "law" is a misreading of a fundamental nature. It is true, however, that Luther had a point in considering the specific direction in which the Roman Catholic merit-system had gone as a reference point similar to the Judaic legal system. As a result of Luther's background, as a result of his theological milieu, whenever he read anything in St. Paul about "works," he immediately thought of his own experience as a monk and the system of merit and indulgences in which he had been raised.

It must be strongly emphasized that Luther does indeed protect one aspect of salvation, the very cause and source of redemption and grace. But he neglects the other side, the aspect of man's participation in this free gift of Divine initiative and grace. Luther fears any resurgence of the Roman Catholic system of merit and indulgences, he fears any tendency which will constitute a truly Pelagian attitude, any tendency that will allow man to believe that he — man — is the cause, the source, or the main spring of salvation. And here Luther is correct. Nygren's Agape-Eros distinction is correct in this context, for any spirituality that omits Agape and concentrates only on Eros, on man's striving to win God's influence, is fundamentally non-Christian. *But the issue is not that simple.* Both extremes are false. God has freely willed a synergistic path of redemption in which man must spiritually participate. God is the actor, the cause, the initiator, the one who completes all redemptive activity. But man is the one who must spiritually respond to the free gift of grace. And in this response there is an authentic place for the spirituality of monasticism and asceticism, one which has absolutely nothing to do with the "works of the law," or with the system of merit and indulgences.

Romans

In his *Epistle to the Romans* St. Paul writes in the very introduction (1:4-5) that through Jesus Christ "we have received grace and

apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name." The notion of "obedience of faith" has a meaning for St. Paul. It is much more than a simple acknowledgement or recognition of a faith placed within one by God. Rather, it is a richly spiritual notion, one that contains within it a full spirituality of activity on the part of man — not that the activity will win the grace of God but precisely that the spiritual activity is the response to the grace of God, performed with the grace of God, in order to be filled by the grace of God. And it will be an on-going spiritual "work," one which can never be slackened, and one totally foreign from the "works" of the Judaic law.

St. Paul writes (2:6) that God "will render to each according to his works." If St. Paul was so concerned about the word "works," if he feared that the Christian readers of his letter might interpret "works" in some totally different way from what he intended, he certainly could have been more cautious. But St. Paul clearly distinguishes between the "works" of the Judaic law and the "works" of the Holy Spirit required of all Christians. Hence, it is difficult to confuse these two perspectives and it is significant that the early Church never confused them, for they understood what St. Paul wrote. If anything — despite the lucidity of St. Paul's thought — there were tendencies at times to fall not into Luther's one-sided interpretation but rather to fall somewhat spontaneously into an Eros-type of striving.

It is the "doers of the law" who will be justified" (2:13). The notion of "doers" implies action, activity. Elsewhere in the same epistle (5:2) St. Paul writes that through our Lord Jesus Christ "we have had access [by faith] into this grace in which we stand." The very idea of "access into grace" — *προσαγωγήν εἰς τὴν χάριν* — is dynamic and implies spiritual activity on the part of mankind.

After the lengthy proclamation of the grace of God, the impotence of the "works of the law" in comparison with the "works" of the new reality of the Spirit, St. Paul resorts to the traditional spiritual exhortation (6:12f). "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body in order to obey its lusts. Nor yield your members to sin as weapons of unrighteousness." The exhortation presupposes that man has some type of spiritual activity and control over his inner existence. The very use of the word "weapon" invokes the idea of battle, of spiritual warfare, the very nature of the monastic "ordeal."

In the same chapter (6:17) St. Paul writes: "But grace to God that you who were slaves of sin obeyed out of the heart a form of teaching which was delivered to you." In the second chapter of the *Epistle to the Romans* (2:15) St. Paul writes about the universal aspect of the "work of the law" that is "written in the hearts" of mankind, a thought with profound theological implications. In using the image of the "heart," St. Paul is emphasizing the deepest aspect of the interior life of mankind, for such was the use of the image of the "heart" among Hebrews. When he writes that they obeyed "out of the heart," St. Paul is attributing some type of spiritual activity to the "obedience" which

springs from the "heart." And to what have they become obedient? To a form or standard of teaching or doctrine delivered to them — this is precisely the *apostolic deposit*, the body of early Christian teaching to which they have responded and have become obedient. And in so doing, they have become "enslaved to righteousness," the righteousness of the new law, of the life of the Spirit (6:18). And the "fruit" of becoming "enslaved to God" is precisely sanctification which leads to life eternal (6:22). Throughout is a process, throughout is a dynamic spiritual activity on the part of man. St. Paul becomes more explicit about the distinction between the old and the new law (7:6). "But now we are discharged from the law, having died in that which held us captive, so as to serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter."

St. Paul writes that we "are children of God, and if children, also heirs, heirs on the one hand of God, co-heirs on the other hand, of Christ" (8:17). But all this has a condition, has a proviso, for there is the all important "if indeed" — *εἴπερ*. "If we co-suffer in order that we may be glorified." Our glorification, according to St. Paul, is contingent upon a mighty "if" and that "if" leads us to the spiritual reality, the spiritual reality of "co-suffering." The very use of the word "co-suffer" — *συμπάσχομεν* — presupposes the reality of the idea of "co-suffering" and both presuppose an active, dynamic spiritual action or activity on the part of the one who co-suffers, else there is no meaning to the "co."

In the *Epistle to the Romans* (12:1) St. Paul uses language that would be meaningless if man were merely a passive object in the redemptive process, if justification by faith was an action that took place only on the Divine level. "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, through the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service." St. Paul is asking the Christian to *present*, a reality which presupposes and requires human activity. But not only "to present" but "to present" the body as a living sacrifice, as holy, and as acceptable or well-pleasing to God. And this St. Paul considers our "reasonable service" or our "spiritual worship." The language and the idea speak for themselves. Using the imperative, St. Paul commands us: "Be not conformed to this age but be transformed by the renewing of the mind in order to prove [that you may prove] what [is] that good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God." Taken by itself and out of context this language could be misinterpreted as Pelagian, for here it is man who is transforming the mind, man who is commanded to activate the spiritual life. Such an interpretation is, of course, incorrect but it reveals what one can do to the totality of the theological thought of St. Paul if one does not understand the balance, if one does not understand that his view is profoundly *synergistic*. Synergism does not mean that two energies are equal. Rather it means that there are two wills — one, the will of God which precedes, accompanies, and completes all that is good, positive, spiritual and redemptive, one that has willed that

mankind have a spiritual will, a spiritual participation in the redemptive process; the other is the will of man which must respond, co-operate, "co-suffer." In 12:9 St. Paul exhorts us to "cleave to the good" — *κολλώμενοι τῷ ἀγαθῷ* — and in 12:12 he exhorts us "to be steadfastly continuing in prayer — *τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτεροῦντες*. Such a position certainly does not exclude monastic and ascetical spirituality but rather presupposes it.

I and II Corinthians

Celibacy is a part of the monastic life and it too has its source in the teachings of the New Testament. In *I Corinthians* 7: 1-11 St. Paul encourages both marriage and celibacy — both are forms of Christian spirituality, and St. Paul has much to say about marriage in his other epistles. But his point is that celibacy is a form of spirituality for some, and it therefore cannot be excluded from the forms of spirituality within the Church. In verse 7 St. Paul writes that he would like all to be like him. But he realizes that each person has his own gift from God. "I say therefore to the unmarried men and to the widows, it is good for them if they remain as I. But if they do not exercise self-control, let them marry." In verses 37-38 St. Paul summarizes: "the one who has decided in his own heart to keep himself virgin, he will do well. So, therefore, both the one marrying his betrothed [virgin], does well, and the one not marrying will do better." The monastic practice of celibacy is precisely not excluded by the New Testament. Rather, it is even encouraged both by our Lord and by St. Paul — and without jeopardy to the married state. The decision cannot be forced. Rather, it must come from the heart. And, indeed, it is not for everyone.

The comparison of the spiritual life to that of running a race and to that of warfare is throughout the New Testament. Without diminishing his basis of theological vision — that it is God who initiates everything — St. Paul writes in *I Corinthians* 9:24-27 in a manner, which, if taken by itself, would indeed appear Pelagian, would indeed appear as though all the essence of salvation depends upon man. But in the total context of his theology there is no contradiction, for there are always two wills in the process of redemption — the Divine, which initiates; and the human, which responds and is, in the very response active in that grace which it has received. "Do you not know that the ones running in a race all run indeed. But one receives the prize? So run in order that you may obtain. And everyone struggling exercises self-control in all things. Indeed, those do so therefore in order that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible one. I, therefore, so run as not unclearly. Thus I box not as one beating the air. But I treat severely my body and lead it as a slave, lest having proclaimed to others, I myself may become disqualified." In this text we encounter the race — the spiritual race — and the prize; we encounter the grammatical and the thought structure of "in order that you may

obtain," a structure which implies contingency and not certainty. We encounter the race as a spiritual struggle in which "self-control in everything" must be exercised. And then St. Paul describes his own spiritual battle — he treats his body severely, leads it as though it were a slave, and to what end? So that he will not become disapproved. The entire passage is very monastic and ascetic in its content. Despite St. Paul's certainty of the objective reality of redemption which has come through Christ as a Divine gift, he does not consider his own spiritual destiny to be included in that objective redemption which is now here unless he participates in it — and until the end of the race. In 10:12 he warns us: "Let the one who thinks he stands, let him look lest he falls." In 11:28 he writes: "Let a man prove or examine himself." In the latter context the "proving" or "examining" is in the most serious of contexts, for it is spoken in connection with the Holy Eucharist, which is spoken of so objectively that if one "eats this bread" or "drinks this cup" "of the Lord" "unworthily," that person "shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" and shall "bring damnation to himself" — for that reason, continues St. Paul, some are weak, sickly, and some have died. But our focus here is on self-examination, on those who think they stand. This again is an integral aspect of the monastic and ascetical life; that is, a constant examination of one's spiritual life. In *I Corinthians* 13:5 St. Paul again stresses self-examination: "Examine yourselves, if you are in the faith. Prove yourselves."

In 15:1-2 St. Paul introduces a significant "if" and "also." "I make known to you, brothers, the Gospel which I preached to you, which you *also* received, in which you also stand, through which you also are saved, *if* you hold fast to that which I preached to you."

In *I Corinthians* 14:15 St. Paul speaks of praying with both spirit and mind, a thought that weaves its way through monastic and ascetical literature. The use of the mind in prayer finds its fullest expression in the controversial use of the "mind" in the thought of Evagrius Ponticus. The text, even within its general context in the chapter, is clear. "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray also with the mind; I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the mind."

St. Paul's hymn to love, to *Agape*, fills the entirety of *I Corinthians* 13. Despite later interpretations of the use of the word "faith" in this chapter, specifically the interpretations that entered Christian thought with the Reformation, there was no misunderstanding of this "hymn to love" in the early Church — indeed, in the history of Christian thought until the Reformation it was understood quite directly. It is only through a convoluted exegetical method imposed by a specific — and new — theological understanding that this great "hymn to love" had to be understood by distinguishing different meanings attached to the word "faith." Though one speaks of the tongues of men and of angels, though one has the gift of prophecy, though one understands all mysteries, though one understands all knowledge, though one has all faith "to remove mountains," though one bestows all one's goods to

feed the poor, though one gives one's body to be burned — though one has all this, but not love, one is "nothing," one "becomes as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal," one "profits" not at all. St. Paul is quite explicit on what love is. "Love suffers long, love is kind, love is not jealous, does not vaunt itself, is not puffed up, does not act unseemly, does not seek its own things, is not provoked, does not reckon evil, does not rejoice over wrong, but rejoices with the truth. Love covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But prophecies — they will be abolished; tongues — they will cease; knowledge — it will be abolished. . . . And now remains faith, hope, love, these three. But the greatest of these is love." The goal of monastic and ascetical struggle, of the "ordeal," is love — to love God, to love mankind, to love all created things, to be penetrated by God's love, to participate in love, which is God and flows from God, and to enter a union with God, with love. Often monastic literature will speak of "achieving" this love, as though it is the work of man. But that is not the total context of love in monastic literature, not even in those texts which appear as though everything were nothing but a striving on the part of man in the "ordeal." This language is spoken because it is spontaneous with spiritual nature. This language is spoken because it runs parallel with that assumed knowledge — that God is the source of everything. And yet St. Paul himself often uses language which could come directly from monastic statements. True, both would be taken out of their total context, but it is true that the two languages are spoken — the language referring to God as the source, as the initiator, to the grace of God, to the gift of all spirituality; and the language which concentrates on man's activity, on man's response to the love and redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. When one line of thought is being used, it in no way denies the other line of thought. Rather, it is precisely the opposite, for monastic and ascetical literature can only speak about man's activity if it is presupposed that God has accomplished the redemptive activity in and through our Lord, that God is working in man through the Holy Spirit. Else, all that is written is without meaning, temporarily and ultimately. St. Paul's command in *I Corinthians* 14:1 to "pursue love and eagerly desire the spiritual things" is responded to directly by monastic and ascetical spirituality.

In *II Corinthians* 2:9 St. Paul writes in the very same spirit that an abbot might employ with his novices: "For to this end indeed I wrote — in order that I might know your proof, if you are obedient in all things." Obedience is an important theme and reality in the monastic and ascetic "ordeal" and that very theme of obedience is mentioned often throughout the New Testament.

Monastic and ascetical literature will often use the terms "fragrance" and "aroma" and again the source is the New Testament. In *II Corinthians* 2:14-15 St. Paul writes: "manifesting through us the fragrance of his knowledge in every place. For we are the aroma of

Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those perishing, to the latter an aroma from death unto death, to the former an aroma from life unto life." In *II Corinthians* 3:18 St. Paul uses an expression which is often found in ascetical literature — "from glory to glory." "But we all, with face having been unveiled, beholding in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being changed into the same ikon from glory to glory, even as from the Spirit of the Lord." The Greek verbal structure throughout the New Testament cannot be stressed enough, for it conveys a dynamic activity that is seldom found in other languages and in translations. In this text the emphasis is on the process of "we are being changed." Elsewhere emphasis is often on "we are being saved" — rather than "we are changed" and "we are saved." When the objective nature of redemption is the focus, then the Greek verbal structure uses "we are saved." But mainly, when the process is the focus, the dynamism is expressed by the verbal structure of "we are being saved." In this text it is significant that the objective nature is expressed by "having been unveiled," while the on-going process of our participation in the spiritual process of salvation is expressed by "we are being changed." Here is expressed the dynamism of synergy.

In *II Corinthians* 4:16 St. Paul again emphasizes the dynamism and process of the spiritual reality in man. "Our inner [life] is being renewed day by day." The monastic life attempts to respond to such a text by the daily regulation of prayer, meditation, self-examination, and worship — precisely to attempt to "renew" daily "our inner" spiritual life. In 10:15 the dynamic aspect of growth is stressed and precisely in reference to "faith" and "rule." "But having hope as your faith is growing to be magnified unto abundance among you according to our rule." In 4:12 St. Paul again places the inner depth of man's spiritual life in the "heart," something which Eastern monasticism will develop even in its life of prayer — *ἐν καρδίᾳ*.

The entire fifth chapter of *II Corinthians* is an exceptionally important text. Here, as elsewhere, St. Paul uses language which, when used by others, distresses sorely many scholars working from the Reformation perspective — he uses the notion of "pleasing God," something which some scholars find indicative of man's solicitation to "win" God's favor. But when St. Paul uses such language it passes in silence, it passes without objection — precisely because St. Paul has established his position that God is the source of everything. But monastic and ascetical literature also presuppose that God initiates and is the source of everything. But it is in the very nature of daily spiritual life in monasticism and in ascetical spirituality to focus on man's activity. It is precisely focus, not a theological position. "We therefore are ambitious [to make it our goal], whether being at home or being away from home, to be *well-pleasing* to him. For it is necessary for all of us to be manifested before the tribunal of Christ in order that each one may receive something good or something worthless, according to what *one has practiced* through the body. Knowing, therefore, the fear

of the Lord, we persuade men." In *II Corinthians* 11:15 St. Paul writes that one's "end will be according to [one's] works" — *ὡν τὸ τέλος ἔσται κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν*. Also this is not the only time that the New Testament uses the word "practice," a word which becomes systematized in monasticism. After a profound exposition on the initiative of God in the redemptive work of Christ (5:14-20), in which St. Paul writes that "all things are of God, who, having reconciled us to himself through Christ," St. Paul writes in verse 21: "Be reconciled to God." Moreover, he not only uses the imperative form but also precedes this with "we beg on behalf of Christ." His language here becomes meaningless unless there is spiritual activity on the part of man. And what is more, St. Paul uses a very interesting structure in relationship to the "righteousness of God," for he writes that the redemptive work of Christ was accomplished "in order that we might become the righteousness of God in him" — *ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ*. Here the significance is on "we might become" rather than "we are" or "we have become." Implicit is a synergistic dynamism. This is further stressed in 6:1: "And working together [with him] we entreat you not to receive the grace of God to no purpose" — *συνεργοῦντες*. And St. Paul then quotes from Isaiah 49:8 in which it is said that God "hears" and "helps."

In *II Corinthians* 6:4-10 St. Paul writes what could be a guide to monastic spiritual life. "In everything commending ourselves as ministers of God — in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in tumults, in labors, in vigils, in fasting, in purity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love, in a word of truth, in power of God — through the weapons of righteousness on the right and left hand, through glory and dishonor, through evil report and good report . . . as dying, and behold, we live . . . as being grieved but always rejoicing, as poor but enriching many, as having nothing yet possessing all things." The vigils, the fasting, the purity, the *gnosis* or knowledge — these are to be reflected in monastic and ascetical life. Moreover, St. Paul again uses the image of warfare and refers to the "weapons of righteousness." The language used by St. Paul in this passage can only have significance if man participates synergistically in the redemptive process. If the doctrine of "righteousness" in the thought of St. Paul has only a one-sided meaning — that is, the "righteousness of God," which is, of course, the source of all righteousness — then why the talk of "weapons of righteousness" placed in the very hands, both right and left, of man? If man is solely "reckoned righteous" by the "vicarious sacrifice" of our Lord Jesus Christ, why the need to speak of "weapons of righteousness," unless there is a second aspect of the redemptive process which ontologically includes man's spiritual participation? In *II Corinthians* 10:3-6 St. Paul continues with the reference to "warfare" and again stresses "obedience." "For though walking in the flesh, we wage war not according to the flesh, for the

weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but [have] the power of God to overthrow strongholds, overthrowing reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God and taking captive every design unto the obedience of Christ."

St. Paul writes in *II Corinthians* 7:1 about cleansing, about "perfecting holiness," and about the "fear of God." After referring to our having "these promises," he exhorts: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit, *perfecting* holiness in the fear of God." This exhortation is precisely what monastic and ascetical life attempts to implement. In 13:9 St. Paul writes: "We pray also for your *restoration*." In order for one to be "restored," one would have to have been at a certain level previously. The text bears witness to the dynamic nature of faith, of spiritual life in Christ, of the rising and falling away, and then the restoration.

In *II Corinthians* 7:10 St. Paul speaks in terms quite similar to those found in monastic and ascetical literature, for he speaks of "grief" which works "repentance" which leads to "salvation." "For grief, in accordance with God, works repentance unto unregrettable salvation." St. Paul contrasts this "Godly grief" with the "grief of the world which works out death." The theme of "sorrow" and "grief" over one's sin — precisely "grief in accordance with God" or "Godly grief" — is a constant in monastic spiritual life.

St. Paul ends the text proper of *II Corinthians* with a final exhortation. "Restore yourselves, admonish yourselves, think the same, become at peace, and the God of love and of peace will be with you." Here the emphasis is again on "restoration." St. Paul's sequence of language — if taken by itself and out of context — could be easily misinterpreted as man causing God's action, for he writes "become at peace *and*." It is precisely that "and" that introduces the activity of God. God "will be with you," if you achieve peace — this is how this text could well be interpreted if we did not possess the body of St. Paul's works. What could have happened to the thought of St. Paul is what usually happens to the thought expressed in monastic and ascetical literature.

Galatians

Along with the *Epistle to the Romans*, St. Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians* is the other work from the corpus of St. Paul most often quoted by the theologians of the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation and those theologians who have followed in those theological traditions. They were also the two works most quoted by St. Augustine to support his doctrine of irresistible grace and predestination. But one encounters the same problem in *Galatians* — that is, that there is a second line of thought which, by itself, could be interpreted in a Pelagian sense. The point here is, of course, that both views are one-sided, that the thought of St. Paul is far richer than any one-sided

interpretation allows for, far more realistic both with the glory of God and with the tragedy of man's experience in evil, corruption, and death. But St. Paul not only extols the glory of God, the power and initiative of grace but also the joyfulness of an objective redemption in which each person must participate in order for the redemption of man to be completed.

In the first chapter of *Galatians* St. Paul in verse 10 uses language which implies the seeking of favor with God. "For now do I persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men?" At one point, in *Galatians* 4:9, St. Paul catches himself falling into the very understandable usage of human language: "But now knowing God, or rather, being known by God." Imprecision of language occurs even with St. Paul.

The second chapter of *Galatians* provides an illumination of the central controversial issue in the theology of St. Paul. In context St. Paul is addressing the hypocrisy of St. Peter in Antioch, for St. Peter ate with the Gentiles until those from the "circumcision" party arrived from Jerusalem. At that time St. Peter withdrew from the Gentiles, "fearing those of the circumcision." St. Paul challenges St. Peter face to face. Again the whole controversy is between the "works of the law" and the "works of the Spirit," between the laws of Judaism and the spiritual laws of Christ as a direct result of his Divine redemptive work. It is, therefore, in this context that St. Paul brings the doctrine of justification into discussion. In verse 16 St. Paul writes: "And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of the law but through faith of Christ Jesus, even we believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified out of faith of Christ and not out of the works of the law because out of works of the law all flesh will not be justified" — *εἰδότες [δέ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.* In the Greek construction used by St. Paul a dynamism still exists, for we believed "in order that we might be justified" and "out of faith." This latter expression contains breadth, expansion of spiritual life generating from faith. It is a rich expression and its fullness and dynamism must not be diminished by a reductionist interpretation. And the very use of "in order" has implications theologically, as does the construction "that we might be justified." St. Paul could very well have written that we have believed and are hence justified. But that is not what he has written. The objective reality of redemption, the objective reality of mankind being justified by Christ is one thing. The subjective reality of each person participating in this already accomplished redemptive work of justification, of being really "right" with God is another dimension, a dimension which requires and addresses the entire spiritual composition of man. In the very next text St. Paul writes "if seeking to be justified in Christ" — *εἰ δὲ ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ.* In 5:5 he can write "for we in

the Spirit eagerly expect the hope of righteousness" — *ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεύματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης ἀπεκδεχόμεθα*. What is the ontological meaning of "the hope of righteousness" if "righteousness" is "imputed" to us as though a legal transaction, and if it is the "passive righteousness" of God which "justifies" us? No, St. Paul's vision is far deeper. The "hope of righteousness" is precisely our hope to share in that objective "righteousness of God" which is now freely given by God in and through Christ. But we "hope" because there is "work" for us to do in order to take hold of and participate in that righteousness eternally. God creates in his freedom. God created man with this image of freedom. Christ accepts the Cross in freedom. Freedom is the foundation of creation and redemption. And man's freedom, however weakened, can still be inspired by the free gift of Grace. And in this freedom man must, as St. Paul writes in his *Epistle to the Philippians* 2:12, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." It cannot be denied that monastic and ascetical spirituality took this seriously. In *Galatians* 5:1 St. Paul writes that "Christ freed us for freedom. Therefore stand firm" — *τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν. στήκετε οὖν*.

The total theological significance of all that took place in the coming of Christ, in the Incarnation of the God-Man, in his life, his teachings, his death, his Resurrection, his establishment of the Church and the mystical sacramental life in the Church, his Ascension, his sending of the Holy Spirit, his abiding in his Body the Church, and his Second Coming and Judgment — all this has radically altered the *old law of works*, and the meaning was clear to the early Church. It is true that what St. Paul says about the "works of the law" can be applied to any form of Christianity that deviates from the precision of the balance, that deviates from the authentic "works of the Spirit," replacing them by a mechanical and mechanistic attitude. And in *Galatians* 3:27 St. Paul immediately connects "justification by faith" with the mystical sacrament of baptism. "For you are all sons of God through the faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Within this context what is the distinction between the "justification by faith" and "by faith" being "baptized into Christ," and, hence, having "put on Christ"?

St. Paul is addressing Christians, those who have been baptized, those who have accepted the faith. Despite all his language about "justification by faith," about "putting on Christ" through baptism, about the objective aspect of redemption having been accomplished, St. Paul still can write in *Galatians* 4:19 that he "travails in birth until Christ is formed" in them. What can this mean except that the redemptive process for man is one of struggle, one of rising and falling, one of continual spiritual dynamism? In 5:7 he writes that they "were running well" and asks "who hindered you?", invoking again the image of a race.

In *Galatians* 5:14 St. Paul repeats Christ's commandment of love, a thought not foreign to St. Paul, especially when one considers his "Hymn to Love [Agape] in *I Corinthians* 13. "For the whole law has been summed up in one expression: you shall love your neighbor as yourself." He then distinguishes the "works of the Spirit" from the "works of the flesh," explicitly linking the latter with the old law. And then he again exhorts and commands from the realism of spiritual life (5:25). "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." What is the meaning of such an exhortation? It has a meaning based on realism only if the "living in the Spirit" refers to the entirety of the objective work of the redemptive work of Christ now accomplished and available to mankind, a redemption which surrounds them by the life of the Church in which they live but a redemption in which they must actively participate, in which they must "walk" if they are to obtain and receive the final work of redemption, the union of man and God in love, in goodness, in truth. The "walk" is an obvious expression of activity, of movement toward a goal. In *Galatians* 6:2 St. Paul links the commandment of love and the "walking" in the Spirit with "the law of Christ." "And thus you will fulfill the law of Christ." The very language of "the law of Christ" and the "fulfilling" of that law" is theologically significant, for "the law of Christ" refers to everything communicated to the Church through Christ. The monastic and ascetical life is precisely such an attempt to fulfill this "law of Christ." His concluding thought in *Galatians* is: "Peace and mercy upon those many who will walk by this rule." The "new creation" about which St. Paul speaks is both an already accomplished redemptive reality and, for us as individuals with spiritual freedom, the "new creation" — *καινή κτίσις* — is a reality which must be "formed," a reality which can come about only through process, when the subjective reality of each person is "formed" into the objective reality of the "new creation" wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians

In *Ephesians* 1:14 St. Paul uses extremely interesting language in relationship to our "salvation" in Christ "in whom we believed and thereafter were sealed with the Holy Spirit "who is an earnest of our inheritance unto redemption of the possession." The meaning here is clear: the seal of the Holy Spirit is the "deposit" toward an inheritance of which we take possession when we acquire it. It is a dynamic text. That possession of such an inheritance requires that we walk in "good works" is clear in *Ephesians* 2:10: "For we are a product of him, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God previously prepared in order that we might walk in them." In *Ephesians* 6:11 St. Paul again uses the image of warfare and of putting on the "whole armor of God" — *ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ*. The "walk" is evoked again in 5:8 and 5:15. "Walk as children of the light" — *ὡς τέκνα*

φωτὸς περιπατεῖτε. "See, therefore, that you walk carefully" — βλέπετε οὖν ἀκριβῶς πῶς περιπατεῖτε. In 5:9 he writes that "the fruit of the light [is] in all goodness and righteousness and truth" — ὁ γὰρ καρπὸς τοῦ φωτὸς ἐν πάσῃ ἀγαθῶσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ. It is the "walking in the light" that produces "the fruit" which is all goodness, righteousness and truth" and this is described as "proving what is well-pleasing to the Lord."

In *Ephesians* 5:14 St. Paul quotes from what was probably a hymn of the early Church, a text which has the ring of a monastic motif to it. "Rise, sleeping one" — ἔγειρε, ὁ καθεύδων. And to what purpose ought one to rise? In 5:1 he commands us to "be therefore *imitators* of God" — γίνεσθε οὖν μιμηταὶ τοῦ θεοῦ. In 4:23 St. Paul writes that we are "to be renewed in the spirit of [our] mind" — and (4:24) "to put on the new man" — καὶ ἐνδύσασθαι τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον. He begs us in 4:1 "to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called." In 4:15 he exhorts that "we may grow into him [Christ] in all respects" — αὐξήσωμεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα. In 6:18 St. Paul stresses the importance of prayer. "By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time." All these are aspects of the monastic and ascetical life.

Philippians

The *Epistle to the Philippians* contains many expressions that directly relate to an active spiritual life. In 1:25 he speaks of "advance and joy of the faith" — προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως. In 1:27 he speaks of "conducting" oneself "worthily of the Gospel" — μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε. "Stand in one spirit, with one soul *striving together* in the faith of the Gospel" — συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Here is the "striving" so disliked by Nygren.

For St. Paul we are required not only to believe but also to suffer (*Philippians* 1:29). And he refers to this as a "struggle," an "ordeal" — ἀγῶνα. In 2:16 he speaks of the possibility of "running and laboring in vain" — ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα. In 3:8 St. Paul speaks of "gaining Christ" — ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω — and this within the context of the "righteousness of the law" as opposed to the "righteousness based on faith" — δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει (3:9). *Philippians* 3:11-16 is one of the more interesting texts. "If somehow I may attain to the resurrection out of the dead. Not that I received already or already have been perfected, but I follow if indeed I may lay hold, in as much as I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brothers, not yet do I reckon myself to have laid hold. But one thing [I do], forgetting on one hand the things behind, and stretching forward on the other hand to the things which are ahead, I follow the mark for the prize of the heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, as many as [are] perfect, let us think this . . . Nevertheless, to what we arrived,

let us walk by the same." Here St. Paul speaks both of laying hold of Christ and being "laid hold of by Christ." The synergistic activity is obvious and realistic. All the language in the passage indicates and underscores the activity of God and the activity of man, of the objective reality of an achieved redemption and man's process of "laying hold," of "stretching forward" to the ultimate goal, a goal unachievable if man does not become spiritually active. The Greek verbal structures of "I may attain" and "I may lay hold of" are not without meaning.

In *Philippians* 4:8-9 St. Paul speaks universally as he does in *Romans* 1. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovable, whatsoever things are well-spoken of, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, consider these things." These qualities — the true, the just, the pure, the lovable — are not qualities which have been revolutionized by the new creation wrought by the Incarnation of the God-Man, they have not come into existence nor been revolutionized by Christian thought. Rather, they are within the very texture of human nature and existence, things that every conscience knows spontaneously. What Christianity has done, however, is to break forth a new path for mankind to participate in the true, the just, the pure in a new way and with a new power through Christ. They now no longer exist as ideals, as the absolute, but are existentially and ontologically accessible to human nature through redemption. St. Paul speaks almost a Platonic language here, and yet it is thoroughly Christian.

Colossians

In St. Paul's *Epistle to the Colossians* 1: 22-23 and 29 the realism of synergy is depicted. "But now he reconciled in the body of his flesh through his death to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, if indeed you continue in the faith having been founded and steadfast and not being moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you heard." The objective reconciliation now exists but in order to participate in it one must be found holy, blameless, and irreproachable, and this is all contingent upon the significant "if" — "if indeed you continue in the faith." In verse 29 we encounter the ideas of "maturity," "labor," and "struggle" or "ordeal." "In order that we may present every man mature in Christ, for which also I labor struggling according to his energy energizing in me in power" — *εἰς δὲ καὶ κοπιῶ ἀγωνιζόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν δυνάμει*. *Colossians* 1:10 expresses the same idea of "worth," of "pleasing" God, of "bearing fruit in every good work," and of "increasing in the knowledge of God." But the very power comes from the might of the glory of God. "With all power dynamized according to the might of his glory" — *ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει δυναμούμενοι κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ*. (1:11)

Colossians 2:6-7 expresses also the two spiritual wills and activities in the process of redemption. "As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him, and being confirmed in the faith as you were taught."

The depth of the idea of synergy is found not only in co-dying and co-suffering with Christ but also in co-resurrection with him. In *Colossians* 3:1 St. Paul writes: "If therefore you were co-raised with Christ, seek the things above" — *εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ, τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε*. St. Paul continues the use of many imperative exhortations in chapter 3. "Put to death therefore your members on earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry" (5). "Put away now all things . . ." (8). And then the command (4:2) to continue in prayer and vigil — *τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτερεῖτε, γρηγοροῦντες*.

I and II Thessalonians

In *I Thessalonians* St. Paul continues this second aspect of the redemptive process by referring to the "work of faith" (1:3), by expressing concern that "labor may be in vain" (3:5), by exhorting "if you stand in the Lord" (3:8), by exhorting that the "breastplate of faith and love" be put on (5:8), and by commanding to test everything, to hold fast to what is good, to abstain from every form of evil (5:21-22). In 3:10 St. Paul writes: "Praying exceedingly night and day . . . to adjust the shortcomings of your faith" — *νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ δεόμενοι . . . καὶ καταρτίσαι τὰ ὑστερήματα τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν*. Why the need to adjust the shortcomings of faith, if faith "alone" is the sole criterion of salvation, as is held by certain schools of theology rooted in the tradition of the Reformation? In 4:3-4 St. Paul writes interestingly. "For this is the will of God: your sanctification . . . that each one of you know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor" — *τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἁγιασμός ὑμῶν . . . εἰδέναι ἕκαστον ὑμῶν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σκεῦος κτᾶσθαι ἐν ἁγιασμῷ καὶ τιμῇ*. The goal here of the spiritual life in Christ is sanctification and the significant text is to "know how to possess" this "vessel." Such language expresses the dynamism of a synergistic process of redemption. In 5:9 St. Paul uses the expression "unto the obtaining of salvation" — *εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας*. In *II Thessalonians* 2:14 St. Paul uses the expression "unto obtaining of the glory of our Lord" — *εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν*. In *II Thessalonians* 1:11 St. Paul prays that they may be deemed worthy of the calling and that they may fulfill every "good pleasure of goodness and work of faith in power."

I and II Timothy

In *I Timothy* 1:5-6 we read: "Now the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and unpretended faith, from which things some, missing aim, turned aside." In 1:18-19 the image of warfare is again used. "This charge I commit to you, child Timothy . . . in order that you might war by them the good warfare, having faith and a good conscience, which some, thrusting away, have made shipwreck concerning the faith." *I Timothy* 2:1-3 has the same intensity of spiritual activity found in monastic and ascetical literature: "I exhort, therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and eucharists be made on behalf of all men, on behalf of kings and all those in high positions, in order that we may lead a peaceable and quiet life in all piety and seriousness. This is good and acceptable before God our Savior, who wishes all men to be saved and to come to a full knowledge of truth." The same emphasis continues in 4:7-10, especially the expressions "exercise yourself" and "for unto this we labor and struggle." *I Timothy* 6:11-12 again stresses the "struggle," that "laying hold" of that which has been objectively accomplished in redemption. "Struggle the good struggle of the faith, lay hold on eternal life" — ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως, ἐπιλαβοῦ τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς. And in the verse preceding this one it is commanded "to pursue righteousness, piety, faith, love, endurance, meekness." What spiritual meaning can the "pursuit of righteousness" have unless it in fact indicates that, although the "righteousness of God" is established in Christ Jesus, we still must actively struggle in spiritual warfare in order to "lay hold on" this "righteousness"? Already in *I Timothy* 5:9 it is clear that "widows" of a certain age had a special place within the spiritual life of the Church. "Let a widow be enrolled." Enrolled into what? It is obviously a special activity within the spiritual life of the Church to which widows were enrolled, already a special form of spiritual activity in the earliest life of the Church.

In *II Timothy* 1:6 both the objective reality of the gift of redemption and the subjective, individual work necessary to "lay hold on" this redemptive work are clearly apparent. "I remind you to fan the flame of the gift of God, which is in you." The synergy of redemption is spoken of in 2:11-12 with the all-significant "if." "For if we co-died with him, we shall also co-live with him; if we endure, we shall also co-reign with him" — εἰ γὰρ συναπεθάνομεν, καὶ συζήσομεν, εἰ ὑπομένομεν, καὶ συμβασιλεύσομεν. In 2:21 sanctification is contingent upon self-purification. "If, therefore, anyone purifies himself . . . he will be a vessel unto honor, having been sanctified." In 2:22 again we are exhorted to "flee youthful lusts" and "to pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace"; and the "calling on the Lord" must be done "out of a pure heart." In 4:7 the path of salvation is presented again as a struggle. "I have struggled the good struggle, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

Hebrews

The *Epistle to the Hebrews* is rich in its thought on both aspects of redemption — on the work of God, and on the spiritual struggle on the part of man. In 3:14 the language is striking. "For we have become sharers of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the foundation until the end" — μέτοχοι γὰρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ γεγονάμεν, ἐάνηρ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν κατάσχωμεν. In 4:1 the idea is similar. "Let us fear, therefore, lest a promise being left to enter into his rest, any of you seems to have come short." The idea of "entering this rest" is continued in 4:11. "Let us be eager, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest anyone falls in the same example of disobedience." In 6:1 "the beginning" of the process is spoken of, accompanied by the exhortation: "let us be borne on to maturity." In 6:11 one must show eagerness to the "full assurance of the hope unto the end." The same exhortations of "let us" are found throughout *Hebrews*. In 10:22-23 it is: "Let us approach with a true heart" and "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope unyieldingly." In 11:1 a definition of faith is proffered. "Now faith is the foundation of things being hoped, the proof of things not being seen." This definition of faith is often dismissed too readily. It is a deep idea, especially when considered in its original Greek structure. Faith is the "foundation," the "reality" upon which the "hope" of the Christian faith is built. And in its reality it contains the very proof, the evidence of the heavenly kingdom. The entire eleventh chapter reveals that "faith" was active under the "old law," although the faith of and in Christ is of deeper ontological significance precisely because it is the foundation into a new reality not available under the "old law." After a lengthy exposition of examples of "faith" under the "old law," the *Epistle to the Hebrews* in 12:1 engages in an exhortation that concerns the very spiritual activity of the new faith. "Putting away every hindrance and the most besetting sin, let us run through endurance the struggle set before us." The reality of "discipline" is stressed in *Hebrews*, especially in 12:7: "Endure unto disciple." And that one can "fail from the grace of God" is clear from 12:15 — ὑστερῶν ἀπὸ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ.

I and II Peter

In *I Peter* 1:9 it is not the beginning of faith or faith in general which results in salvation but it is precisely the "end of faith" which "obtains" salvation — κομιζόμενοι τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν. Purification and obedience are dominant themes in *I Peter*. "Having purified your souls in the obedience of truth unto an unpretended brotherly love, love one another earnestly from the heart (1:22). The process of growth in the spiritual life is stressed in 2:2: "in order that . . . you may grow into salvation" — ἵνα . . . αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν. The "war" between lust and the soul is spoken of in

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2:11: "I exhort you as sojourners and aliens to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

In *II Peter* 1:4 a profound theological thought is expressed. The promises which God has given are great and precious; corruption is in the world because of lust; and man can not only escape the corruption but also become partakers or participators in the Divine nature, an idea which is developed in early Christian and in Eastern Orthodox theological thought, an idea which lays the foundation for the doctrine of *theosis*, of divinization. "He has given to us precious and very great promises in order that through these you might become partakers of the Divine nature, escaping from the corruption that is in the world by lust" — τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως ἀποφυγόντες τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς. Precisely because of this we are instructed in the following verses to *supplement our faith*, and then the dynamic spiritual process of growth is presented. "And for this very reason bringing in all diligence, supply in your faith virtue, and in virtue [supply] knowledge, and in knowledge [supply] self-control, and in self-control [supply] endurance, and in endurance [supply] piety, and in piety [supply] brotherly love, and in brotherly love [supply] love."

In *II Peter* 1:10 there is mention of one's "calling" and "election." And yet in the very same text one is exhorted to be "diligent" precisely to make this "calling and election" firm. "Be diligent to make your calling and election firm." And in 2:20-22 the falling away from the "way of righteousness" is not only possible, but it actually takes place, and it is worse than had one not known the "way of righteousness" at all. And the texts speak about those who had a "full knowledge of the Lord." "For if, having escaped the defilements of the world by a full knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, these persons again have been defeated, having been entangled, the last things have become to them worse than the first. For it was better for them not to have fully known the way of righteousness than, fully knowing, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. It has happened to them."

The Epistles of St. John

In the three *Epistles of St. John* we encounter the same language, the same reality of the two aspects of redemption. The same "ifs" are there, the same emphasis of purification (see *I John* 3:3), the same language about "pleasing God," and the same emphasis on "keeping the commandment" and "not sinning." There is an organic link between loving God and keeping his commandments — the full range of the commandments of Christ.

The Epistle of St. James and Luther's Evaluation

Luther's attitude toward the *Epistle of St. James* is well-known. In fact, Luther positioned not only *James* at the end of the German Bible but also *Hebrews*, *Jude*, and *Revelation*. And his criterion was that they lacked evangelical "purity." He was not the first to do so. His colleague at Wittenberg, upon whom Luther later turned, Carlstadt, had distinguished among the books of the New Testament — and the Old Testament — before Luther took his own action. As early as 1520 Carlstadt divided the entirety of Scripture into three categories: *libri summae dignitatis*, in which Carlstadt included the Pentateuch as well as the Gospels; *libri secundae dignitatis*, in which he included the Prophets and fifteen epistles; and *libri tertiae dignitatis*.

Luther rejected the *Epistle of St. James* theologically but of necessity retained it in the German Bible, even if as a kind of appendix. The ending of Luther's *Preface* to his edition of the German Bible, which was omitted in later editions, reads in the German of his time: "*Summa, Sanct Johannis Evangel. und seine erste Epistel, Sanct Paulus Epistel, sonderlich die zu den Römern, Galatern, Ephesern, und Sanct Peters erste Epistel. Das sind die Bücher, die dir Christum zeigen, und alles lehren, das dir zu wissen noth und selig ist ob du schon kein ander Buch noch Lehre nummer sehest and horist. Darumb ist Sanct Jakobs Epistel ein recht strohern Epistel, gegen sie, denn sie doch kein evangelisch Art an ihr hat*" — "for that reason St. James' *Epistle* is a thoroughly straw epistle, for it has indeed no evangelical merit to it." Luther rejected it theologically "because it gives righteousness to works in outright contradiction to Paul and all other Scriptures . . . because, while undertaking to teach Christian people, it does not once mention the passion, the resurrection, the Spirit of Christ; it names Christ twice, but teaches nothing about him; it calls the law a law of liberty, while Paul calls it a law of bondage, of wrath, of death and of sin."

Luther even added the word "alone" — *allein* — in *Romans* 3:28 before "through faith" — *durch den Glauben* — precisely to counter the words in *James* 2:24: "You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith only" — *ὁρᾶτε ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνου*. What is more is that Luther became very aggressive and arrogant in his response to the criticism that he had added "alone" to the Biblical text.

If your papist makes much useless fuss about the word *sola*, *allein*, tell him at once: Doctor Martin Luther will have it so and says: Papist and donkey are one thing; *sic volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas*. For we do not want to be pupils and followers of the Papists, but their masters and judges." Luther continues in a bantering manner in an attempt to imitate St. Paul in the latter's response to his opponents. "Are they doctors? So am I. Are they learned? So am I. Are they

preachers? So am I. Are they theologians? So am I. Are they philosophers? So am I. Are they writers of books? So am I. And I shall further boast: I can expound Psalms and Prophets; which they cannot. I can translate; which they cannot . . . Therefore the word *allein* shall remain in my New Testament, and though all pope-donkeys should get furious and foolish, they shall not get the word out.

In some German editions the word "*allein*" was printed in larger type! Some critics of Luther's translation have accused him of deliberately translating inaccurately to support his theological view. As early as 1523 Dr. Emsler, an opponent of Luther, claimed that Luther's translation contained "a thousand grammatical and fourteen hundred heretical errors." This is exaggerated but the fact does remain that there are numerous errors in Luther's translation.

Indeed, the entire Reformation in its attitude towards the New Testament is directly in opposition to the thought on this subject of St. Augustine, who was highly esteemed in many respects by the Reformation theologians and from whom they took the basis for some of the theological visions, especially predestination, original sin, and irresistible grace for Luther and Calvin. On this subject, as on some many others, there is no common ground between Luther and Calvin on the one hand and St. Augustine on the other. St. Augustine wrote: "I should not believe the Gospel except as moved by the authority of the Church" — *ego evangelio non crederem, nisi me moveret ecclesiae auctoritas*. It should be pointed out that Calvin did not take objection to the *Epistle of St. James*.

Luther was so caught up in the abstraction of a passive righteousness, so infuriated by his experience as a monk in practicing what he would refer to as "righteousness of works," so caught up in attempting to create a specific meaning to one line of the thought of St. Paul that he misses the very foundation from which the theological thought of St. James comes forth — and that is the initiative and will of God. Luther's criticism that St. James does not mention the passion, the resurrection, and the Spirit of Christ is inane, for his readers knew the apostolic deposit — there was no need to mention the very basis and essence of the living faith which was known to those reading the epistle. Such a criticism by Luther reveals the enormous lack of a sense for the historical life of the early Church, for the Church was in existence and it is from the Church and to the Church that the epistles are written. Historically, the Church existed before any texts of the "new covenant" were written. The Church existed on the oral tradition received from the apostles, as is clearly revealed from the pages of the New Testament itself.

The very foundation of the theological vision of St. James is *the will of God*. In 1:17-18 St. James writes: "Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with

whom change has no place, no turning, no shadow. Having willed, he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." In 4:15 St. James writes: "You are instead to say: if the Lord wills, we will both live and will do this or that."

One theologically weak text in the *Epistle of St. James* is in 4:8: "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you." *Taken by itself* it has a Pelagian ring to it. And in monastic and ascetical literature one often encounters such expressions. But the meaning in both this epistle and in monastic and ascetical literature *must be understood within their total context*. Once the synergism of the redemptive process takes place in the human heart, then the existential reciprocity of grace and response is so dynamic that one can, as it were, use such expressions, precisely because it is assumed that God has initiated and that grace is always at work in the human heart, in all the depths of the interior of man as well as in external life. The text in the *Epistle of St. James* must be understood within the context of 1:18 and 4:15. Moreover, it is to be noted that this text is preceded by "Be subject, therefore, to God" — *ὑποτάγητε οὖν τῷ θεῷ*. In being "subject to God," a relationship is already in place, a relationship which presupposes the initiative of God and the response of man.

The *Epistle of St. James* contains many expressions that will be used in monastic and ascetical life. Temptation (1:14), the passions (4:1), purifying, cleansing, humbling oneself (4), and "be distressed and mourn and weep" (4:9). The excoriating words against the rich (5:1-6) undergird the monastic vow of poverty.

The Life of the Early Church

The life of the early Church as described in the *Acts of the Apostles* is so clear that no analysis or presentation of texts is necessary to demonstrate that the essentials exist for a form of spirituality similar to that of monastic and ascetical Christianity. Mention should also be made of the life of St. John the Baptist. "It is on solid grounds that a student of monastic origins like Dom Germain Morin upheld his apparent paradox: it is not so much the monastic life which was a novelty at the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth, but rather the life of adaptation to the world led by the mass of Christians at the time when the persecutions ceased. The monks actually did nothing but preserve intact, in the midst of altered circumstances, the ideal of the Christian life of early days . . . And there is another continuous chain from the apostles to the solitaries and then to the cenobites, whose ideal, less novel than it seems, spread so quickly from the Egyptian deserts at the end of the third century. This chain is constituted by the men and women who lived in continence, ascetics and virgins, who never ceased to be held in honor in the ancient Church."

PART FOUR: ECUMENISM: AN EASTERN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE

THE TRUE CHURCH

This paper is an attempt to write in a new and ecumenical language. Probably the attempt has not been successful. Probably some would detect in it a heavy confessional flavor, and others would complain of vagueness. And so it will not be out of place to briefly summarize my main contentions in a language familiar to myself. As a member and priest of the Orthodox Church, I believe that the church in which I was baptized and brought up *is* in very truth *the Church*, i.e. *the true Church* and the *only* true Church. I believe this for many reasons: by personal conviction and by the inner testimony of the Spirit which breathes in the sacraments of the Church and by all that I could learn from Scripture and from the universal tradition of the Church. I am therefore compelled to regard all other Christian churches as deficient, and in many cases I can identify these deficiencies accurately enough. Therefore, for me, Christian reunion is simply universal conversion to Orthodoxy. I have no confessional loyalty; my loyalty belongs solely to the *Una Sancta*.

I know well that my claim will be disavowed by many Christians. It will seem to be an arrogant and futile claim. I know well that many things I believe with full and uttermost conviction are disbelieved by others. Now, I do not see any reason whatsoever to doubt them or disbelieve them myself. This is all I can reasonably do to proclaim my faith and to try to phrase it in such a way and in such a manner that my poor idiom may not obscure the truth. For I am sure that the truth of God carries conviction. This does not mean that everything in the past or present state of the Orthodox Church is to be equated with the truth of God. Many things are obviously changeable; indeed, many things need improvement. The *true Church* is not yet the *perfect Church*.

The Church of Christ has to grow and be built up in history. Yet the whole and the full truth has been already given and entrusted to the Church. Revision and re-statement are always possible, and sometimes imperative. The whole past history of the Ecumenical Councils is evidence of this fact. The holy Fathers of the Church were engaged in this task. Yet on the whole, the "deposit" was faithfully kept and the testimony of faith was gained in accuracy and precision. Above all, the sacramental structure of the Body has been kept integral and intact. Here again, I know that this conviction of mine may be rejected as an illusion. For me, it is a matter of evidence. If this is obstinacy, it is the obstinacy of evidence. I can only see what I actually do see. I cannot help it. But in no way am I going to "un-church" anyone. The judgment has been given to the Son. No one is entitled to anticipate his judgment. Yet the Church has her own authority in history. It is first the authority to teach and to faithfully keep the word of truth. There is a certain rule of faith and order that is to be regarded as normal. What is

beyond is just abnormal. But the abnormal should be cured, and not simply condemned. This is a justification for the participation of an Orthodox in the ecumenical discourse, in the hope that through his witness the Truth of God may win human hearts and minds.

THE QUEST FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Situation

The ecumenical problem is an embarrassing topic for Orthodox theologians. Speaking frankly, it is not their own problem. It has arisen on another theological soil, in another historic setting and climate. In its contemporary shape and content and in its immediate urgency, the ecumenical problem is the problem of the Protestant world. As it is understood in the current ecumenical movement, the terms of the actual problem are given and posited by the Western Reformation, or rather by several different "Reformations" — precisely by that which has been described by Bossuet as "Variations of the Protestant Churches."

In this setting the main question is that of "denominationalism." Now, "denominations" as such, and "denominationalism" as challenge and predicament, are obviously the product, or perhaps an unwanted by-product, of the historic Reformation. They are essentially a "Protestant" phenomenon. Accordingly, in this situation, the problem of Christian unity, or of Christian reunion, is normally regarded in terms of interdenominational agreements, more or less involving partners. It is precisely in this manner that various negotiations for reunion — partial or comprehensive — were initiated in the recent decades. And the most conspicuous achievement in this field was undoubtedly the Church of South India. In the Protestant universe of discourse this manner of handling the problem of reunion is fair and natural. But it is uncongenial to the Orthodox mind.

Two main presuppositions are implied in this approach to the problem of reunion. First of all, it is assumed that the Church, conceived as co-extensive with the whole "Christian World" or Christendom, is not divided but only that its "unity" or "oneness" are not adequately manifested in visible forms. In other words, the problem of reunion is restricted to the field of "order" or "polity," to the realm of historic manifestation. From this point of view it may be said that the crucial problem is that of order, and it is contended that in this realm there is ample room for variety and relativity. Indeed, "unity in faith" seems to be secured by the acceptance of a certain quasi-creedal *basis*, that is — in the World Council of Churches — by the common acknowledgement or confession of our Lord Jesus Christ, "as God and Savior," to which a "Trinitarian" allusion has been recently added. However, there is no authoritative interpretation of the "basis," and wide freedom is conceded at this point. Of course, this basic presupposition of "given unity" is very differently understood and interpreted in various churches and denominations and is variously

qualified. But it is an official starting point for the ecumenical Commission on Faith and Order, according to its constitution: "To proclaim the essential oneness of the Church of Christ and to keep prominently before the World Council and the Churches the obligation to manifest that unity and its urgency for the work of evangelism." The words are purposely chosen: not "to recover" or "to restore" or "to achieve," but precisely to *manifest*. What is missing is not "unity," but only its adequate or proper "manifestation."

Secondly — and it is but a corollary to the first — the basic "parity of denominations" is assumed, although this recognition of parity is not formally imposed as a condition of participation in the ecumenical endeavor. It is a very delicate point. Indeed, the member churches in the World Council are formally free to reject and to disavow this assumption, and this has been emphatically declared in the "Toronto Statement" of the Central Committee (1950). Yet, this freedom has been granted reluctantly, after a heated and protracted debate, and, in fact, the parity is professed and acknowledged by an overwhelming majority of the participating churches in the ecumenical movement. This explains the constant pressure for "open communion" or "intercommunion" at ecumenical gatherings, to be sponsored and commended by the World Council. The actual policy in the World Council is still that of wise and sober reserve. On the other hand, the strength of the pressure reveals the strength of conviction. The "parity" is widely admitted, although this admission may be sometimes in contradiction with certain denominational commitments.

No Orthodox theologian can accept any of these basic presuppositions. Indeed, Orthodox theologians are fully aware of the challenge of Christian disunity. But they assess this challenge from another perspective and respond to it in a different way. They duly acknowledge the relevance of the Protestant predicament: the relevance and reality of that ecumenical problem which emerges from the Protestant situation, the problem of manifold denominationalism. But the ultimate ecumenical problem is much deeper and larger, and much more tragic and painful. For the Orthodox it is primarily the problem of schism, of secession and separation, of disruption and disintegration. The Orthodox assess this problem in the total context of Christian history and interpret it in theological terms. They have their own terms of reference and it may seem that they are wrestling with a different problem, different from that of the Protestant. Indeed, along with "Protestant ecumenism," which is dominating the actual "ecumenical" institutions or movements, there is also a "Catholic ecumenism," that of the Roman Church. There is also an "Orthodox ecumenism" in its own right. However, the Roman Church does not participate in the modern "ecumenical movement" initiated by the Protestants; although one may anticipate, in the near future, a closer, if still informal, cooperation. But the Orthodox are in the ecumenical movement and it may be contended that their participation is essential for the true

"ecumenicity" of the whole endeavor which would have been otherwise reduced to an inter-Protestant fellowship, within the circle of the Reformation. The presence of the Orthodox within the ecumenical movement challenges the circle itself. The goal of reunion is Christian unity, and by its very nature it must be integral and comprehensive. A "partial unity" is a contradictory concept, and no solution. In any case, it can be no more than a provisional step.

"The nature of the unity we seek" is still an open question in the contemporary ecumenical movement. It is a divisive issue, and there is a comprehensible tendency to postpone it, or to avoid it altogether, at least at the present stage of discussion. In fact, this question can be answered only if two other crucial questions have been answered beforehand. First, what is the nature of that disunity which is to be overcome, if it is really meant to be overcome? Secondly, what is the "norm" of Christian unity, not from the point of view of practical expediency but from the point of view of Christian truth?

There is little agreement on both of these crucial issues in divided Christendom. The recent "Report of the Commission on Faith and Order on the subject of the Future of Faith and Order" is a noble effort to wrestle with all these problems and, in any case, to delineate clearly and comprehensively the program of further study and action. Now this "Report" has been submitted to the member churches of the World Council for consideration and comment. Indeed, it is a "balanced," conciliatory, report, and its phrasing is rather vague and evasive. On the other hand, the concept of unity is soberly described, if only on the level of local congregation:

The Commission on Faith and Order understands that the unity which is both God's will and His gift to His Church is one which brings all in each place who confess Christ Jesus as Lord into fully committed fellowship with one another through one baptism into Him, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel and breaking the one bread, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all; and which at the same time unites them with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and in all ages in such wise that ministry and members are acknowledged by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls the Church.¹

It is not meant to be a definition of "the unity we seek." It is but a pointer. Yet, the Commission went a bit further and plainly asserted that the achievement of the objective described "involves nothing less than a death and rebirth for many forms of church life as we have known them." The phrase is perhaps a bit too summary. The next sentence is, however, strong enough: "we believe that nothing less costly can finally suffice." The statement is general enough to admit

different interpretations, and yet is also accurate enough to exclude other modes to the visualizing of Christian unity.

One small detail in the statement attracts the attention of the Orthodox: "in all places *and all ages*." An Orthodox would normally decipher it as a disguised reference to tradition, if in a very general sense. The Orthodox always felt that current ecumenical discussion has been, as it were, excessively and exclusively *planimetric*, without the third dimension, without depth, both historical and theological. It was a kind of *ecumenism in space*, concerned with the adjustment of the existing denominations as they are at the present. Of course, this description must be carefully qualified. But as a first approximation this description is fair and correct.

Now the Orthodox would plead for an *ecumenism in time*, which would require much more than an exercise in "comparative theology," with the desire to remove, by means of interpretation, all disagreements which separate the contemporary denominations from each other. At one time there was an optimistic illusion, shared by not a few, that it could be done successfully on almost all crucial points. It is enough to recall the famous letter of C. H. Dodd to Oliver Tomkins, the present Bishop of Bristol, written in 1948, soon after the Amsterdam Assembly. Now, this illusion has been dispelled and methods of "comparative theology" were disavowed by the Lund Conference on Faith and Order in 1952. Moreover, "comparative theology" itself must use historical methods. On the whole, ecumenism, in order to be truly "ecumenical," must acquire or recover the *historical dimension*. Curiously enough, neither is this historical approach incompatible with the principle of the Historic Reformation. The witness of the Ancient Church was extensively quoted by the great Reformers, if selectively and critically. And the principle of a *consensus quinquesaecularis*, used in a normative sense, was one of the first formulas of Protestant ecumenism or "irenic theology" in the past. In any case, it is not enough to seek an agreement *in status quo*. Past ages must also be taken into consideration quite seriously.

"*Ecumenism in time*" is in no sense an easy or smooth path. In fact, most of the *planimetric* dissensions among Christians are rooted precisely in the different and discordant visions of Christian history, in discordant interpretations of its meaning and relevance. And for that reason they can be properly discussed only from an historical perspective. The phrase "in all ages" is ambiguous and all too simple, just as the great Vincentian Canon does not call for a democratic plebiscite on doctrinal issues. It is no more than a pointer, but a pointer in the right direction.

The Orthodox Position

The Orthodox Church claims to be *the Church*. There is no pride and no arrogance in this claim. Indeed, it implies a heavy responsibility.

Nor does it mean "perfection." The Church is still in pilgrimage, in travail, *in via*. She has her historic failures and losses, she has her own unfinished tasks and problems. Nor is it just a claim — it is an expression of deepest conviction, of deepest spiritual self-knowledge, humble and grateful. The Orthodox Church is conscious and aware of her identity through the ages, in spite of all historic perplexities and changes. She has kept intact and immaculate the sacred heritage of the Early Church, of the Apostles and the Fathers, "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." She is aware of the identity of her teaching with the apostolic message and the tradition of the Ancient Church, even though she might have failed occasionally to convey this message to particular generations in its full splendor and in a way that carries conviction. In a sense, the Orthodox Church is a continuation, a "survival" of Ancient Christianity as it has been shaped in the age of the Ecumenical Councils and of the Holy Fathers. She stands exactly for the patristic tradition, which is embodied also in her liturgical structure and in her spiritual practice. In this sense the Orthodox Church does not mind being "archaic," being committed to "old" tradition.

By no means is it simply an archaic relic, an obsolete remnant of ages gone. It is *living* tradition. It is what gives the Orthodox Church her Christian identity. Nor is it just a human tradition, maintained by human memory and imitation. It is a sacred or holy tradition, maintained by the abiding presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The ultimate identity of the Church is grounded in her sacramental structure, in the organic continuity of the Body, which is always "visible" and historically identifiable and recognizable, although at the same time it transcends and surpasses the closed historical dimension, being the token and the embodiment of the divine communion once granted and also the token and anticipation of the life to come.

The Church is constituted by divine action, which is still continuing in her by sacramental means and which is dutifully acknowledged by faith and obedience. The Orthodox Church finds herself in an unbroken succession of sacramental life and faith. Her ministry also stands in the right and unbroken apostolic succession of orders. Her sacramental and spiritual life has ever been the same in the course of ages. She is aware of having been ever the same since the beginning. And for that reason the Orthodox Church recognizes herself, in the distorted Christendom of ours, as being the only guardian of the ancient Faith and Order; that is, as being *the Church*. For the same reason the Orthodox Church cannot regard herself as just a "denomination" among the multitude of others or just as a "branch" of some wider Church. By her inner consciousness the Orthodox Church is bound to claim an exceptional position in divided Christendom. She is also bound to claim for herself an exceptional and peculiar task in all endeavors to overcome the present sore disunity of Christians and to recover that Christian unity which has been given once and has been lost.

The whole program of ecumenical action is implied in this Orthodox ecclesiology. First of all, this ecclesiology is committed to a definite interpretation of Church history at large. This aspect of ecclesiology has been sorely ignored or deliberately neglected in current ecumenical thinking. Indeed, the problem itself has been brought to the focus by the initiation of a special theological commission on "Tradition and traditions."

The question may be put in this form: is there any basic *tradition* in Christianity which should be accepted as normative and controlling in the confrontation of the diverse *traditions* of divided Christendom? The question itself is vigorously resented in many ecumenical quarters. The prevailing tendency is still to restrict this "tradition" to or to identify it with the Scripture. This restriction implies and presupposes a particular vision of Church history. Historical and theological problems are closely connected. The normative character of tradition is usually contested because it is assumed that the Church, the "historic Church," has gone astray at some particular time, and her teaching has deviated from the apostolic pattern of faith. This basic assumption may be variously qualified, and the date of "deviation" may be differently identified. But the assumption itself is almost a commonplace in historiography.

Church history, as a scholarly discipline, came into existence as a polemical endeavor in the age of the Reformation and still has not freed itself completely from the original polemical bias and purpose. An ecclesiological issue has been integrated into the historical quest. And historical study is still aiming at a theological conclusion. In fact, however, these conclusions are often derived not from historical study but from presuppositions which control the study and provide the pattern of interpretation. Indeed, one finds "deviation" in the history of Christian doctrine simply because one refuses in advance to regard *dogma* as a rightful manner of professing the faith and sharply contrasts *kerygma* and *dogma*, or *evangelium* and *dogma*. But, obviously, these antitheses are construed in advance. The other instance of these controlling presuppositions is the sharp antithesis between the *charismatic* and *institutional* forms of Christianity or even between *ecclesia* and *Church*.

The overarching presupposition, however, is the static conception of the *apostolic norm*. This static conception dominated the study of Church history almost up to the present day. Accordingly, what could not be attested for the apostolic age was at least readily relegated to the realm of *adiaphora*, if not to the realm of "human inventions," and the test of "conformity" with the Scripture has been applied with excessive rigor and in a static manner. On the other hand, there was an opposite temptation to read the later developments into the picture of the Early Church. Moreover, when the pattern of "development" was finally adopted in the interpretation of Church history, it came to be used without adequate discrimination and without proper attention to the

nature of the Church. "Development" was often equated with "evolution" or was interpreted in the terms of Hegelian philosophy, and in all cases it was regarded as something exclusively "human" and "all too Human," and for that reason inextricably relative. Or else it was restricted to the sphere of historical adjustment in polity or in culture.

The inner impetus of the living tradition has often been overlooked and disregarded, and therefore the ultimate identity of the Church in the process of her growth and expansion could not be clearly perceived. Indeed, the growth in doctrine, ritual and constitution is a human phenomenon. But the character of the "human phenomenon" itself has been radically changed by the Incarnation of the divine Logos. The relativity of the human phenomenon has been overcome by the divine indwelling and transvaluated. The "human element" in the Church is no more simply "relative," as it is not simply "relative" in the Scripture and in the sacred history of the "people of God," both under the Old Dispensation and in the New. "Historic forms" of Christianity are not simply passing and transient. The history of the Church is the mysterious process of the formation of redeemed humanity, which will be consummated and recapitulated, and not simply judged and abrogated on the last day.

Nor are these "historic forms" simply "accidental" in relation to the unique and absolute truth of the revelation. There is an accumulation of permanent Christian values in the history of the Church, in the process of existential assessment of the divine truth and life. Many things are just relative, indifferent, or neutral, even in the history of the Church. But there are also permanent structures, both in doctrine, ritual and institution, which belong to the very *esse* of the Church, and constitute her perennial "form." They are "binding," not as an external "authority," but rather because they express the inward *esse* of the Church in the dimension of her historic existence, which itself is not just a transient "phenomenon" but an integral part of her very being.

This comprehensive vision of Church history belongs to the very essence of Orthodox theology. This theology is controlled by the intuition of the organic continuity of the Church in her historic pilgrimage, which is more than just a pilgrimage, since the Church is the Body of Christ. This intuition of continuity enables the Orthodox to live in the tradition and to be free at the same time from any static traditionalism. The Orthodox are not tempted to idealize the Church's past or to ignore tragic shortcomings or failures of the historic Church. The pattern of devout self-criticism has been set precisely by the great Fathers of the Church — it is enough to mention St. John Chrysostom, with his harsh and biting indictments. There is no room for any pharisaic self-righteousness. The Christian existence has always been a tragic existence. But the "form" of the Church has never been broken.

The Orthodox Church is conscious of being precisely *the* Church. She cannot admit any "parity of denominations." Historically speaking,

all other Christian bodies came into existence with their distinctive marks at a later date and precisely by the way of dissent or separation from the traditional legacy of the Ancient Church. This is the Orthodox reading of Church history. The Orthodox still abide by that legacy, unchanged and kept alive. The unity of Christendom has been broken first in the realm of thought and habits. The unity of the Christian mind was lost long before communion was broken. The schism was first consummated in minds before it was enacted in the realm of administration. The basic misfortune of Christian history was precisely this progressive disintegration of the Christian mind. Accordingly, from the Orthodox point of view, the first imperative of any sound ecumenical action; that is, of any conscientious effort to overcome disruption, is *the integration of the Christian mind*.

In no sense is this a plea for "uniformity," although, indeed, it is a plea for a comprehensive "unanimity" — a unanimity in faith and doctrine. At this point it would be wrong to separate or to contrast the two. The ecumenical "basis" is just a token and this token must be redeemed by a true and deeper assent. The contemporary concern for "comprehensiveness"; that is, for minimal and vague formulas of agreement, is but a sign of evasion. There is no "formalism" in the insistence on a deep unanimity. It is a demand for honesty in faith. Formulas should not be imposed before people are moved to accept them by their own vision of faith, by their own Christian experience and conviction. Then they will be gratefully accepted, not as bonds but as a natural and spontaneous idiom of the believing heart and mind.

The integration of Christian mind is a spiritual adventure on which the divided Christians must be urged to embark. It would require also, and probably first of all, the widening of the historic vision. Each denomination must review its own history in the perspective of the *common history* of Christendom. It would also require an existential reassessment of the Christian tradition. It has been recently suggested with great sincerity and genuine Christian courage by a Protestant minister that the first century alone is an inadequate ground for any ecumenical endeavor — to repeat the old formula of a *consensus quinquesaecularis* would be a great step forward.

Actually, on their own initiative and for their own sake, not a few among the divided Christians have already undertaken this pilgrimage into Christian antiquity, led, not by the spirit of archaeological curiosity, but by the instinct of inward catholicity. The task is enormous, and the path is arduous. The problem is utterly complex. In fact, tradition itself is rather manifold. Nevertheless, it is one and consonant, if one learns to view it from inside.

The reintegration of the Christian mind or the recovery of catholic tradition is not yet a solution to the ultimate ecumenical problem. The ultimate problem is that of schism. It is a canonical concept, but it has deepest theological significance. It denotes separation from the Church. Now, to be Christian means precisely "to be in the Church," to belong

to the visible community. Are the Orthodox compelled, by the logic of their belief and conviction, to claim that they alone are Christian? It is a heavy challenge, and there is no easy answer. But the question itself points to the crucial antinomy of the Christian disruption. There is but One Church. But there are committed Christians outside, *extra muros*. The concept of the *vestigia ecclesiae*, sometimes invoked for help in this connection, does not help very much — it is vague and ambiguous, and implies some kind of "partial churchmanship" which is difficult to conceive. The plea for "unity without reunion," in the dimension of mystical encounter apart from any ecclesiastical affiliation, advocated and sponsored by certain Orthodox writers, is a treacherous and deceiving dream, subversive of any responsible ecumenical endeavor.

The only true Christian unity is unity in the Church, a "Churchly" unity, under strict and formal conditions of creed and order. The schism is an antinomy and a paradox. The ecclesiastical status of the separated cannot be properly described. Ecclesiology deals with the Church as she is constituted according to the divine pattern and norm. There are no adequate terms for the case. Nor can the case simply be dismissed for the sake of charity. Indeed, from the Orthodox point of view, the core of the ecumenical problem is precisely here. The problem can be solved only by the recovery of "churchly unity." But there is some prospect of its ultimate realization only because there are, even in disrupted Christendom, certain tokens of unity, which are inadequate in themselves but which are pregnant with promise and have some genuine spiritual validity: right belief, sincere devotion, the Word of God. They provide the ground for Christian encounter, for conversation, for common search. For that reason alone is the Ecumenical Movement at all possible.

We are compelled to use antinomical terms: *the separated brethren*. There is an inner contradiction in the term: "brotherhood" excludes "separation" and, again, Christian brotherhood is identical with common membership in the Church. But, in spite on the inner contradiction, the term is adequate for the actual situation in ecumenical intercourse. One must only take the adjective "separated" no less seriously than the noun "brethren." The ecumenical movement is *a search for unity* and not the unity itself. It is a way, not a goal. And it is not enough to enjoy the fellowship on the journey. One has to move, and move toward the goal. The Orthodox enjoy the fellowship in search. But they are primarily concerned with the goal.

¹Commission on Faith and Order, *World Council of Churches, Paper No. 31: Minutes of the Faith and Order Commission, 1960, St. Andrews, Scotland*. Geneva, p. 113.

THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

No Church of the Orthodox East has, up to the present time, made any official pronouncement on the reunion now enacted in the inauguration of the Church of South India. Nor was the scheme ever examined and discussed in the East by any competent authority. An Orthodox theologian, in his personal capacity, therefore, can offer no more than his private comments and considerations. Yet there are certain points in the scheme on which probably all the Orthodox will agree.

No True Unity of Faith

First of all, the ethos itself of the South Indian scheme is utterly uncongenial to the Orthodox mind. In the Orthodox conception of reunion a comprehensive doctrinal agreement comes first. All care should be taken to exclude any ambiguity in the interpretation of the true meaning of such an agreement by the contracting partners. For that reason, the "historic Creeds" are not regarded by the Orthodox as an adequate basis or a sufficient safeguard of the true "agreement." Surely not because the Orthodox Church fails to recognize the basic importance. On the contrary, the Orthodox Church, strictly speaking, has no other doctrinal or symbolic criterion except the ancient Nicene Creed along with the formal definitions of the Ecumenical Councils *and the unbroken tradition of her own being*. For herself she does not need anything else beside the Creed. An unambiguous understanding and interpretation of the Faith, witnessed to by the Creed, is secured precisely by this continuity of her life. But, in her negotiations with those from whom she has been separated for centuries, if only by a lack of contact, the Orthodox Church will always require much more to secure a true *unanimity* and ultimate *identity* of Faith.

Now the main concern of the South Indian scheme was just the reverse of that. The alleged "agreement" is deliberately phrased in general and rather vague terms with a definite purpose of leaving the greatest possibility for a "reasonable liberty of interpretation." This phrase may mean the freedom of critical scholarship, as well as the freedom to continue, in the "united" Church, the whole variety of those *confessional* interpretations which existed before the merger. The latter seems to be the case, for it is openly permitted to use for the instruction of the faithful in the new Church any of the "confessions" which had been in use in the uniting Churches while in the state of disruption and separation. An Orthodox would never accept such terms as adequate, as solid to secure the true *unity of faith* — and for him this unity is the indispensable prerequisite of Church Unity. For him the South Indian scheme, as it stands and as it has been enacted, is not a

scheme of *Reunion* but rather an *administrative arrangement* which allows for divergent bodies and traditions to act together *as if* they were in agreement. For the Orthodox, however, no "as if" is permissible in such an august and sacred cause.

No Clear Definition of the Church

In the second place, the Church herself seems not to be an article of faith, as the faith is described in the scheme. "Faith" and "Order" seem to be not only distinguished in the scheme but precisely divorced. In any case, there is no clear definition of the Church, her nature and structure, which is at least commended to the uniting Churches as a *common* criterion. Even their terms of membership are described in a peculiar way. Strangely enough, the *right faith* is not mentioned at all among the requirements. What is required from the prospective members is only their willingness "to abide by the rules and regulations of the united Church." Accordingly, the Ministry is regarded only as a "constitutional form," i.e., as something that belongs to the outward organization and historic settlement, and not to the intrinsic nature of the Church. "The Historic Episcopate" is just an *historic* feature, nothing more. The final choice of this particular form or type of Church order seems to be decided by the motives of expediency and conformity with past history, since no doctrinal interpretation of the Ministry is given, and full liberty is left to the partners in the scheme on this crucial point. In the true Catholic conception of the Church the Ministry is not merely an historic feature but belongs absolutely to the *very nature* of the Church.

No Theological Description of the Ministry

This has been made quite clear by the Orthodox Churches in all their ecumenical negotiations. One of the chief questions put forward on various occasions by the Orthodox to Anglicans was usually this: Is the ordination to the priesthood regarded as "*a mystery*," i.e., a sacrament? If a Church fails to answer this question in the affirmative, her ministry, from the Orthodox point of view, is not true and valid. Just because orders are not valid simply *ex opere operato*, the "Historic Episcopate," established or reestablished, without and apart from the true belief about it, can hardly be identified by the Church Catholic as the same Apostolic Ministry which she is aware of having preserved since the beginning. There is no *theological* description of the Ministry, or of the Episcopate, in the scheme. Their ultimate meaning in the newly constituted Church remains obscure. "Episcopal ordination" is regarded as a normal method of authorization for the ministry, yet all the ministers of the uniting Churches, including those who had no such ordination, are admitted to the ministry without any further requirements, and given the status of "presbyter." The functions

of the presbyter are described, but the nature of the presbyterate remains unexplained. There is no theology of the presbyterate. What is the meaning of ordination? It seems to be only an act of jurisdiction, a commission, an authorization. The Orthodox Church speaks of the ordination to *priesthood*. No priesthood is mentioned in the scheme. Moreover, it is formally suggested that all the ministers retain their former ecclesiastical status in the Churches from which they came to the Church of South India, and are entitled to exercise ministerial functions in their former confessions also, provided they are actually permitted to do so by their new Church. But, obviously, this permission is understood to be of a merely disciplinary character. A very ambiguous situation is thereby constituted, and perhaps there is an inner contradiction in the whole arrangement. Is the Church of South India, so constituted, really a Church in the theological sense of this term? Is there any real *union* except an organizational unification? All care is taken to change nothing in the existing situation at large and a sort of double *allegiance* is formally encouraged. A member and a minister of the Church of South India remains, at least in principle or *in potentia*, a member and a minister of the Church or confession to which he belonged before the union. It seems to be assumed that he *does* still belong. This precarious position cannot be authorized unilaterally by the Church of South India, but must be authorized by the other Churches too. No wonder that some of these other Churches are seriously embarrassed by such a double membership and have difficulties in endorsing it.

A Confusion of Churches

An Orthodox theologian cannot help thinking that the scheme under discussion has inaugurated in South India not a reunion, but rather an utter *confusion of Churches*. An "historic episcopate" of a nondescript theological character does not conceal this confusion. Moreover, there is no assurance that episcopal ordination will actually become the only permissible way of commissioning for the ministry. The present arrangement is subject to revision in the future, obviously from the practical and not the doctrinal point of view. There is no definite doctrine of the ministry to check or to guide the revision. For no doctrine, by basic agreement, can be binding, and therefore the only criterion available will be that of expediency and efficiency. On the whole, everything seems to be confused in the Church of South India: membership itself, ministry, theology.

Yet it is not quite true to say that there is no definite theology implied in the scheme and no definite conception of the ministry and episcopacy imposed and commended. No definite interpretation is really a very *definite* interpretation: an interpretation which gives the ministry no place in the doctrine. There are *rules* or regulations, but *no doctrine*. Now this proposition has a definite *doctrinal* connotation. And this

connotation is, obviously, *not a catholic one*. We come to the crucial point: Is the Episcopate a part of the *Divine constitution* of the Church, or merely an *ecclesiastical institution*? Does it exist *jure Divino* or merely *jure ecclesiastico*? The latter assumption is essentially implied in the whole scheme. And this obvious *doctrinal assumption* makes the whole scheme unacceptable for any Catholic, i.e., for any one who is committed to the former conviction.

In brief, from the Orthodox point of view, the South Indian scheme is but an unfortunate attempt to bring about *unity* by means which are not only inadequate for the purpose but, by their very nature, exclude the basic unity in faith and doctrine, and even encourage *disunity*, precisely in faith and doctrine. From the Orthodox point of view it can hardly be considered a step *forward*, a step *towards* a true and comprehensive reunion, truly catholic and ecumenical, towards the true healing of *schism*. Now the basic presupposition of the scheme was perhaps just this: *There was no real schism* at all, only some *disagreements* on Church order. This is the crucial point: No, *there is a schism*. The diagnosis was wrong; therefore the prescription was wrong too.

[As a footnote to Dr. Florovsky's article the following facts and figures will be of interest.

In the Nandyal area before the inauguration of the union there were the S.P.G. Telugu Mission in the Diocese of Dornakal and the South India United Church (Telugu Church Council). Of the latter some 30,000 members out of 45,000 have refused to enter the Church of South India, have appointed their own pastors and continue, although cut off from supplies from England, their own organization. Of the Anglicans, some 36,000 out of 44,000 continue as an Anglican body under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon. That is, 66,000 Indian Christians out of 89,000 in the area have remained outside the union, and there are now three bodies where before there were two. Such are the unhappy fruits of premature union.]

OPEN COMMUNION AND INTERCOMMUNION

One may seriously doubt whether what is called "open communion" is open in the strict sense of the word. The case seems to be rather obscure. There are two possible interpretations. Perhaps it is presumed that all doctrinal convictions are irrelevant at this point, and that doctrinal conformity should not be regarded as a term of admission to Holy Communion; this assumption is itself obviously a kind of doctrinal conviction which is unacceptable for many Christians. Or, and this seems to be the case, "open communion" is open only to those who satisfy certain requirements, obviously ones of a doctrinal character, and such an "open" table is still limited. It is really irrelevant whether a fencing formula is actually said or omitted: in any case, it is implied.

In either case, the practice of "open" communion is justified by a particular conception of Holy Communion which is not acceptable to those who refuse to join. The opposition of "open" communion and a "confessional" communion is wrong. Strictly speaking, "open" communion is also meant for a particular confession, i.e. for people of a particular persuasion, even if this persuasion is so wide as to ignore all doctrinal dissensions. An un-baptized member of the Salvation Army would usually be admitted, even though he does not believe in the divine institution of the sacrament. A member of the Society of Friends would also be admitted if he so wished, although it has been made clear that any Friend who finds himself in need of habitual participation is to be reminded that his place is probably not with the Society. The door seems to be open to the direction of vagueness and indifference.

But surely those who hold a "catholic" view of the sacrament cannot conscientiously be admitted, since their belief in the sacrifice of the liturgy is to be viewed as a "corruption" and an "erroneous doctrine," along with many of their other superstitions. A "catholic" therefore finds himself excluded from "open" communion by the implied terms of admission and by the conception of the rite implied therein. It is no good talking of his obstinate resistance. His participation would be a nonsensical betrayal on his part, and a concealed insincerity on the other. And in the end, it would not promote ecumenical fellowship at all. A sentimental gesture cannot solve the conflict of deep convictions. Unity of brotherly feeling is not yet unity of faith. Are we permitted in the Church to be satisfied with anything less than this unity of faith?

Briefly, there are three main objections which constitute a radical impediment to an all-inclusive and "ecumenical" fellowship in Holy Communion. First, utter divergence in the sacramental doctrine itself — possibly the conception of a sacramental sacrifice is the very point of demarcation. There can be no communion, because there is no

common belief. Secondly, and this is but the wider context in which the first is to be seen, there are deep divergences in doctrine in general, although these divergences, in our own age at least, definitely cut across the historical and confessional boundaries. And communion presupposes "one mind" no less than "one heart." Thirdly — and this is probably the crucial point, at least in the practical field — there is utter disagreement on the doctrine of Christian ministry. A "catholic" cannot divorce order from faith; a very definite Church order is for a "catholic" an article of his integral Christian faith or dogma.

This fact has been partially recognized in recent times in so far as many recent schemes of reunion included the restoration of a "historical episcopate." This restoration was, however, compromised and rendered meaningless (from the "catholic" point of view), since this order was emphatically excluded from faith or doctrine. For the "catholics," the point is not merely the restoration of an episcopal order, but the recognition of the sacramental character of the priesthood; but to many this still seems to be nothing but detestable "sacerdotalism." For a "catholic," all-inclusive communion will be possible only after the integrity of the faith and the fullness of the sacramental fabric of the Church have been restored throughout Christendom. It will then be not simply a manifestation by human arrangement of Christian charity and mutual recognition — and in catholic conviction, the sacrament of the Eucharist was not instituted or meant for that purpose — but a true revelation of the Holy Church of God in all her power and glory.

The whole ecumenical situation is certainly complicated and obscured by the fact that those who claim for themselves the name of "catholics" (not merely in a vague and general sense, but in a concrete and specific historical one) are also divided and not in communion with one another. And at this point another serious and painful problem arises: that of intercommunion. The difficulty in this case is of a different, though similar, character. Again, what is required for intercommunion is obviously unity of faith and the integrity of the sacramental structure. Unless this is secured and avowed, no action should be taken. The practice of occasional intercommunion (or even of an occasional open communion) which has been adopted in certain episcopal churches only confuses the issue. True intercommunion can only be a corporate and catholic action. In a case in which the sacramental integrity of two churches which are not in communion with each other is mutually recognized, the unity of faith still has to be identified and emphasized by corporate action of the churches concerned, and not simply by a personal conviction of some advanced individuals. In the whole process there is no question of confessional loyalty, but solely of the catholic truth.

APOSTOLIC TRADITION AND ECUMENISM

At the recent assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, a group of Orthodox delegates assigned to the section discussing "Unity" endeavored to submit a statement on the subject under discussion. It was not meant to be a formal doctrinal statement on behalf of the Orthodox Churches. It was intended rather as a contribution to theological discussion, for which the section on "Unity" had gathered and organized. Every Orthodox delegate had the full right and freedom, and indeed the duty, to state his convictions in the debate. But it seemed proper to anticipate these prospective individual interventions with a joint explanation of the position in the discussion to which all Orthodox representatives are committed by the teaching and discipline of their Church. The discussion itself, in the section and in the assembly at large, had to be centered around the recent report of the Faith and Order Commission, adopted at its meeting at St. Andrews in 1960 and circulated to the churches for their consideration and comment. It was to this report that the Orthodox delegates were addressing their comments. Their "statement" was later reviewed at a plenary meeting of all Orthodox delegates, consultants, and observers present in New Delhi. It was then unanimously approved as an accurate and authentic description of the Orthodox position. In the course of conversation it was even suggested that it was actually the best and most satisfactory exposition of the Orthodox point of view, as compared with formal declarations made by the Orthodox time and again at major ecumenical gatherings in the past: Lausanne, 1927; Edinburgh, 1937; Evanston, 1954; Oberlin, 1957. For that reason it seems proper to introduce our present discussion with the text of the New Delhi document.

Representatives of the Orthodox Church in the Section of Unity welcome the Report of the Faith and Order Commission adopted at St. Andrews, Scotland, in August 1960, as an important and stimulating ecumenical document. The Ecumenical Movement, as it is now embodied in the World Council of Churches, was begun by Protestant initiative, but was not meant, from the very beginning, to be a Protestant endeavor, nor should be regarded as such. This must be especially emphasized now, when almost all Churches of the Orthodox Communion have entered the membership of the World Council. In this situation the Orthodox Representatives feel themselves obliged to underline the basic difference between their own approach to the ecumenical problem and that which is implied in the document of St. Andrews. The ecumenical problem, as it is understood in the current ecumenical movement, is primarily a problem of the Protestant world. The main question, in this setting, is that of "denominationalism." Accordingly, the problem of Christian

Unity, or of Christian Reunion, is usually regarded in the terms of an interdenominational agreement or reconciliation. In the Protestant universe of discourse such approach is but natural. For the Orthodox, however, it is uncongenial. For the Orthodox the basic ecumenical problem is that of *schism*. The Orthodox cannot accept the idea of a "parity of denominations" and cannot visualize Christian Reunion just as an interdenominational adjustment. The unity has been broken and must be recovered. The Orthodox Church is not a confession of denomination, one of many, one among the many. For the Orthodox, the Orthodox Church is precisely *the* Church. The Orthodox Church is aware and conscious of the identity of her inner structure and of her teaching with the Apostolic message, or *Kerygma*, and the tradition of the Ancient undivided Church. She finds herself in an unbroken and continuous succession of sacramental ministry, sacramental life and faith. Indeed, for the Orthodox, the Apostolic succession of Episcopacy and of sacramental Priesthood is an essential and constitutive, and therefore indispensable, element of the Church's very existence. The Orthodox Church, by her inner conviction and consciousness, has a special and exceptional position in divided Christendom, as the bearer of, and the witness to, the tradition of the Ancient undivided Church, from which all existing "denominations" stem, by the way of reduction and separation. From the Orthodox point of view, the current ecumenical endeavor can be characterized as *Ecumenism in Space*, aiming at agreement between various denominations, as they exist at present. This endeavor, from the Orthodox point of view, is quite inadequate and incomplete. The common ground, or rather the common background, of existing denominations can be found, and must be sought, in the past, in their common history, in that common ancient and Apostolic tradition, from which they all derive their existence. This kind of ecumenical endeavor can be properly denoted as *Ecumenism in Time*. The Report of the Faith and Order Commission itself mentions "agreement with all ages" as one of the normative prerequisites of unity. The Orthodox theologians suggest this new method of ecumenical inquiry, and this new criterion of ecumenical evaluation, as a kingly road, with the hope that unity may be recovered by the divided denominations by their return to the common past. In this way divergent denominations may meet each other in the unity of common tradition. The Orthodox Church is willing to participate in this common work as a witness which had preserved continuously the deposit of Apostolic faith and tradition. No static restoration of old forms is envisaged, but rather a dynamic recovery of the perennial ethos, which only can secure the true agreement with "all ages." Nor should there be a rigid uniformity, since the same faith, mysterious in its essence and unfathomable adequately in the formulas of human reason, can be expressed accurately enough in different manners. The immediate objective of the ecumenical

quest is, according to the Orthodox understanding, reintegration of *Christian mind*, the recovery of Apostolic tradition, the fullness of Christian vision and belief, in agreement with all ages.

This document describes with sufficient accuracy the Orthodox position in the context of the contemporary ecumenical search. Once more it should be recalled that it was not an official or formal declaration. It was simply an effort to clarify the Orthodox stand in the ongoing discussion on Christian unity. The statement was obviously "situation-conditioned" — by the terms of reference of the St. Andrews report. The report itself was an important achievement. Its aim was to suggest the terms of an ultimate ecumenical consensus which may be required for the sake of Christian unity. This consensus is not yet achieved, however, and the phrasing of the report is deliberately vague, not to mention ambiguous.

This "dialectical" method had been profitably used on a previous occasion, in the Report of the Section on Unity at the Amsterdam assembly. At that time it was sharply and emphatically stated that there was within the membership of the World Council a profound "difference" in the very concept of Christian unity, an ultimate tension between two trends, which were provisionally and probably not quite happily labelled as "Catholic" and "Evangelical." It was quite proper for the Orthodox delegates at New Delhi to insist in the context of the discussion on this major "difference," on the inevitable tension, if not an open clash, between the "Orthodox" and the "Protestant" understanding of the basic ecumenical problem. In fact, the Orthodox cannot discuss the problem and prospect of reunion on "Protestant" terms. This has been stated more than once in the past and the very term "uncongenial" had already been used in the Orthodox formal declaration at the conference at Edinburgh in 1937. The same contention was strongly expressed in the "Statement" submitted by the delegates of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America to the North American Faith and Order Study Conference at Oberlin in 1957. Yet on both occasions the Orthodox representatives firmly expressed their readiness and eagerness to participate in ecumenical study and dialogue. It was obvious that they could do so only on their own terms.

It is summarily admitted in wide ecumenical circles that the *essential* unity of Christians has not actually been broken at all. It is assumed that the God-given unity is still preserved and that the Church, conceived as coextensive with the whole "Christian world" or Christendom, is not divided. Divisions are just on the historical surface and it is still hoped that they can be healed or overcome by certain theological agreements. The Church is still one but the "unity" or "oneness" is not adequately manifested in visible forms. Accordingly the aim of the ecumenical endeavor is conceived not primarily as the recovery of a unity which has been lost but rather as an increase in the

manifestation of an already existent unity. In other words, the problem of Christian reunion is restricted or reduced to the field of "polity," to the realm of historic manifestation. This seems to be the general line of the ecumenical quest in "Protestant" circles.

It is precisely at this point, at the starting point, that the Orthodox are bound to object. The current conception is but a subtle form of the peculiar doctrine of the "invisible Church," present under discordant historic forms which are only relevant in so far as they "manifest" the "invisible" reality. In our day there is surely a greater urge towards and concern for the outward manifestation of unity than ever before. But the initial presupposition is the same and it is one that cannot be accepted by the Orthodox. Of course, this basic assumption of "given unity," which is only not adequately "manifested" or embodied in external structures or actions, is differently understood, described and interpreted in various denominations, and it is variously qualified; but on the whole the tendency in ecumenical circles is to reduce this unity to some consensus in faith or doctrine, in "apostolic *kerygma*." "Church order" is emphatically not included in this "given unity," given from above. There is a common tendency to dissociate faith and order, and to regard order or "polity" as a feature of historic development or arrangement. Order, at least any definite order, is not regarded as an integral or constitutive feature of the Church's existence.

There is no room in this sketchy outline for a detailed analysis of this crucial matter. It is enough to refer here to the "constitution" of the Faith and Order Commission. The basic aim and function of this commission is described here as follows: "To proclaim the essential oneness of the Church of Christ and to keep prominently before the World Council and the Churches the obligation *to manifest that unity* and its urgency for the work of evangelism." The wording was indeed purposely chosen — not "to recover" or "to restore" or even "to accomplish" but precisely and only "to manifest." It is thereby assumed that the ultimate predicament of divided Christendom is not disunity but only inadequate "manifestation." Unity is given in this connection the constant pressure for "open communion" or "intercommunion" at ecumenical gatherings; it is quite natural and comprehensible. The actual policy concerning this matter in the World Council is still that of wise and sober reserve. Yet the strength of the pressure reveals the strength of the conviction and the reserve itself is mostly of a tactical character. In principle, "intercommunion" of some sort, more or less qualified, is almost commonly regarded as a lawful and desirable manner of manifestation.

No Orthodox theologian and no Orthodox believer can accept any of these basic presuppositions. The Orthodox are bound to insist that *the unity of the Church has been broken*. The very term "given unity" is ambiguous and misleading. Unity has indeed been given and the Church is essentially one. But this original or *given unity* has been lost. The Orthodox cannot consider the sum total of various historic

denominations as the Church. Indeed, they cannot accept the "parity of denominations" and regard all of them as "churches." It is but fair to mention that this firm conviction of the Orthodox has been formally honored by the World Council of Churches. The member churches of the World Council are formally free to reject and to disavow the assumption of "parity" and are not bound to regard all existing denominations, even within the fellowship or membership of the council, as "churches" in the full and proper sense of the word (obviously, as they, the Orthodox, understand it). The "Toronto Statement" of the Central Committee of the World Council (1950) is, as it were, an important interpretative amendment to the constitution of the Faith and Order Commission. Yet this amendment is no more than a provisional concession, for it challenges and probably even contradicts the basic clause of the constitution. The amendment implies indeed that not all "denominations" have an identical ecclesiological status and that therefore something more than the "manifestation" of a given unity is required for true reunion. Moreover, the term "essential oneness" has never been properly and accurately defined. For the Orthodox Church order or, more accurately, a particular form of order and ministry is of the *esse* of the Church. Thus, if it is missing or deliberately excluded and disavowed there can be no "essential oneness" at all.

Faith and Order discussions began at Lausanne in 1927 and actually even earlier in preparation for the First World Conference in an atmosphere of hope and reconciliation. An attempt was made to prove and to show that there was within divided Christendom no "essential" disagreement. It only led at Lausanne to the formal abstention of the Orthodox delegates and to their separate statement. The method of "comparative theology" was used persistently in the preparation for the Second World Conference which was held in 1937 at Edinburgh. Various denominational commitments were carefully confronted and compared and it was expected that no essential divergences could be found. In fact, it was stated at Edinburgh that no such *impedimentum dirimens* could be found in the doctrine of grace and in the conception of the Word of God. It may still be doubted whether a real agreement had been reached even on these points. In any case, no agreement was reached in the section on ministry and sacraments, and no unified statement could be drafted on this matter. Failure to achieve agreement at this point was apprehended as a scandal by many participants in the deliberations and was attributed to the lack of theological comprehension and charity. In fact it was rather the most important positive achievement of the Edinburgh conference, at least from the Orthodox — or rather from the "catholic" — point of view. Under the impression of this drastic failure a decision was taken to concentrate further ecumenical study on the doctrine of the Church, including the doctrine of the ministry. The Orthodox delegates were again constrained to make a separate declaration, stressing the uncongeniality of the majority approach to the basic problems under discussion. The report

on the study in this field, submitted to the constitutive assembly of the World Council at Amsterdam in 1948, provoked a lively discussion, and the findings of Edinburgh were confirmed and restated: there was a major difference which could not be overcome by any agreement or adjustment. This was a sober and courageous statement.

No further step toward "reconciliation" has been made in later discussion. Only the method of study has been changed. The method of "comparative theology" was disavowed. Instead it was suggested that comprehensive commissions should undertake a thorough study of "primary sources," of Christian foundations, with the hope that greater clarity and agreement might be reached by this method. The primary assignment in this new work was precisely the theme of the Church, and this time in a comprehensive Christological perspective: "Christ and the Church." The report of two commissions which were appointed for this task, one in Europe and the other in America, will be submitted to the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, which is to meet at Montreal, Canada, in July, 1963.

It is outside the scope of the present paper to recount the history of the ecumenical movement. Its purpose is to describe and to clarify the attitude and position of the Orthodox Church in the contemporary ecumenical search. Orthodox leaders and theologians are fully aware of the challenge of Christian diversity but they assess this challenge in their own perspective and respond to it in their own way. Indeed, along with "Protestant ecumenism," which is currently dominating "ecumenical" institutions and movements and is addressed primarily to the problem of disruptive denominationalism, there is also an "Orthodox ecumenism," as there is a "Catholic ecumenism" of the Roman Church.

For the Orthodox, the ultimate ecumenical problem is of *schism*, of secession and separation, of disruption and disintegration. This problem is much deeper and much more tragic and painful than the predicament of an inadequate manifestation of some "given unity" of which we are already in possession. From the Orthodox point of view what is broken is precisely unity. The unity of the Church cannot indeed be broken. The Church is indivisible: one Lord and one Church. But it is possible for men, even for believers, to *break away* from the Church. The Orthodox assess this situation in the total context of Christian history and interpret it in theological terms. This break can be affected in a double manner: integrity of faith may be twisted or distorted or reduced; the essential fabric of Christian community or *koinonia* may be distorted or reduced. These two manners are in fact intimately intertwined.

All this may seem arrogant and offensive. But one has to be fair and honest. It seems proper to recall at this point the famous Lambeth Quadrilateral. It was much closer to the Orthodox position than the assumption of the "parity" of confession or the "parity" of various ministries. The restoration of the "historic episcopate" was declared to

be an essential prerequisite of Christian union. Of course, the Orthodox are in conscience bound to go beyond the request for the *historic* episcopate and to insist that episcopacy belongs to the very *esse* of the Church and not simply to her *bene esse* or her *plene esse*. For them the order itself is an article of faith, as it obviously was in the ancient Church. "Order" is actually implied and included in the "faith." Therefore episcopacy is not a matter of polity, construed as a historic arrangement or "manifestation." For the Orthodox, episcopacy is not just a historic institution or a matter of canon law alone. It is essentially a matter of faith and dogma.

This brings us to the conception of "Catholic reunion." This conception originated on Anglican soil. The famous "branch theory" of the Church, to which the great Newman himself was at one time committed, was an ambitious ecumenical project. It was assumed that the Church Catholic exists in modern times in three branches: Greek Orthodox, Roman and Anglican. It was asserted that these are essentially one in basic belief and in sacramental fabric, although temporarily out of communion with each other. But the whole world of the non-episcopal Reformation was simply left out, as being *outside* of the Church. The scheme is untenable from the Orthodox point of view and it is mentioned here not in order to advocate or to vindicate it. The "schism" between the "branches" is in fact much deeper than the scheme allowed. The "parity" of the branches can be strongly contested. The strength of the scheme was, however, in that it did not separate faith and order. Again, it looked back to the unity of the ancient Church. What is important to note at this point is that "schism" within the apostolic order is of another character than a "schism" which surrenders the basic features of this order.

The Faith and Order Commission itself has recently suggested that the ultimate goal of Christian reunion is a visible unity, both in faith and in order. It is to this statement at St. Andrews that the Orthodox delegates referred at New Delhi. It must be quoted in full.

The Commission on Faith and Order understands that the unity which is both God's will and His gift to His Church is one which brings all in each place who confess Christ Jesus as Lord into fully committed fellowship with one another through one baptism into Him, holding the one Apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel and breaking the one bread, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all; and which at the same time unites them with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are acknowledged by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls the Church.

This was not meant to be a definition of "this unity we seek" in the Ecumenical Movement. As a definition it would be distressingly vague.

It is but a pointer. Moreover, the commission went much further and plainly asserted that the achievement of the objective described "involves nothing less than a death and rebirth for many forms of Church life as we have known them." This phrase is perhaps rather summary. The next sentence is, however, strong enough: "We believe that nothing less costly can finally suffice." The statement is general enough to admit different interpretations and this is its obvious weakness. But it is sharp enough to exclude other modes of visualizing the goal and norm of Christian unity, at least on the theological or territorial level. In any case, it points beyond the manner of "manifestation." It anticipates radical changes and even sacrifices: "death and rebirth."

One point in the statement deserves special attention. The phrase "in all places and *all ages*" is a disguised reference to *tradition*, even in a very general sense. At this point one has to recall that immediately after the Evanston assembly the Faith and Order Commission instituted two special commissions, again one in Europe and the other in America, to study the whole problem of tradition in the Church under the title "Tradition and Traditions." These commissions will also report at Montreal. The crucial question in this area of research is whether there is any overarching and common normative tradition which can serve as a base or pattern of evaluation in the ecumenical search. The topic is delicate and complex and it is hardly possible to expect a speedy solution of controversial issues in this field. But the inclusion of a historical subject in the program of ecumenical study is in itself an achievement, controversial and divisive as the matter inevitably is in divided Christendom. The Orthodox can but wholeheartedly welcome this widening of the perspective. It is interesting to note that a similar project of study and discussion in the early period of the Reformation has already been suggested. The famous formula of the *consensus quinquesaecularis* (consensus of the first five centuries) was one of the first formulas of "eirenic theology." Of course this formula, like that of the "Seven Ecumenical Councils," is anti-historical and narrow if taken in a statically restrictive sense. But it is still much broader than imprisonment in the present. Indeed Ecumenism, in order to be really "ecumenical," must acquire or recover the historical dimension. The phrase "in all ages" is ambiguous and all too simple, just as the great Vincentian Canon is not just a call for a democratic plebiscite. History must be studied critically, and a simplified appeal to Christian antiquity may lead to confusion: *antiquitas sine veritate vetustas erroris est*, in the elegant phrase of St. Cyprian. The reference to "all ages" is no more than a pointer but it is a pointer in the right direction. The present state of divided Christendom must be seen in the perspective of common Christian history.

The modern ecumenical search, begun in a mood of hope and expectation, is now continued in a temper of impatience. Immediate "intercommunion" on a large scale is still regarded in certain quarters as

a speedy solution to the problem. On the other hand, there is in wider circles a growing despair that sometimes leads to a radical change in aims and objectives. The new formula "unity without union," whatever that may mean, is gaining support and popularity. It is dictated and motivated by disappointment and despair: Is it realistic to expect in the near future such a unification of Christians as has been suggested by the statement of St. Andrews? Why not be content, then, with practical cooperation across denominational borders without raising any doctrinal or theological issues which seem to be intrinsically divisive? Why not be content with a comprehensive "spiritual" unity, in charity and in service, or in mutual trust and affection? In fact, this has been contended for in various quarters since the famous slogan of the Stockholm conference of 1925: "Service unites, doctrine divides."

No doubt, the growth of mutual confidence and esteem and of the ability to cooperate in practical fields is an ecumenical asset and achievement. But does it lead to unity? There is a misleading ambiguity in this practical approach. Is Christian unity really possible without union? The Orthodox are bound to say emphatically, No. Christian unity can be conceived only as unity in the Church and of the Church because Christianity is Church. Schism is an antinomy and a paradox. From the Orthodox point of view, the core of the ecumenical problem is precisely here. Even a comprehensive "reconciliation" in the realm of dogma and belief will not restore or accomplish Christian unity, important as the reintegration of the Christian mind undoubtedly is, and important as "doctrinal agreement" is in the process of recovery. One cannot work for Christian unity conscientiously and honestly without keeping the vision of One Church in the center. Any other direction of search is an impasse or a dangerous illusion.

The Orthodox Church is bound by her internal loyalty to claim for herself an exceptional and peculiar position in the ecumenical endeavor. She stands for Church unity. And only for that reason is she able to render witness and service.

PART FIVE: THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORTHODOX

THE ORTHODOX CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Is there a place for Orthodox theologians, above all for commissioned representatives (but by no means authorized ones) of local Orthodox Churches in a movement — which is so structured that it is almost an organization — whose initiative and direction belong to "Protestants" (taken in its broad sense, which acknowledges the Reformation)? Could some profit and success be gained from this collaboration? The overly-critical and the hesitant would easily add: surely such a collaboration indicates a serious confusion in ecclesiastical notions as well as a loose and uncertain ecclesiastic consciousness, a lowering of ecclesiastic standards, a premature and unjustified acceptance of the principles and measures of that which is called the Reformation (which some voices, even Protestant ones, have at times albeit rarely called the deformation)?

I do not hesitate in saying yes to all these questions. Yes, there is room for Orthodoxy within the Ecumenical Movement; it has its own unquestionably useful task there. However it does not follow that there are no difficulties or even serious danger in this. Ecumenical work is also familiar with its "strait path" and "strait gate." The idea is to not be dragged along wide paths, which are not lacking in the "catholic" world as temptation and scandal.

Since I do not count on escaping wrong interpretations of what I say, I believe I ought to return to it. I understand the act of taking part in the Ecumenical Movement as an act of participation in ecumenical conversation or colloquium, and I consider such a participation as not only allowed and possible for all Orthodox people, but furthermore as a direct obligation which stems from the very essence of Orthodox consciousness and from the duty of the true Church to relentlessly and everywhere observe "in synagogues, before kings and princes." How will one believe without having heard? And how will one hear without preaching? This apostolic sentence is well-placed here.

I regard Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement in the same way as missionary action. The Orthodox Church is specifically called to play a part in ecumenical exchanges of ideas, precisely because it is aware of its own role as guardian of apostolic faith and of Tradition in their full integral shape, and it is in this sense the only true Church; since it knows that it holds the treasure of divine grace through the continuity of the ministry and apostolic succession; and finally because in this way it can claim a special place among divided Christianity. Orthodoxy is the universal truth, the truth for the whole world, for all the ages and all nations. These are the reasons the Orthodox Church is called and obligated to illustrate the truth of Christ always and everywhere, before the whole world.

If I define the task and nature of Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement as missionary, I do not understand the term as meaning direct propaganda or proselytizing. I would imagine that that remains clear from what I have just said. But to the inner conviction that Orthodoxy is the absolute truth, a formal consideration is added which impedes Orthodoxy from being placed among the denominations even on the outside; it has to do with its early beginnings and its fidelity to Tradition.

The Orthodox theologian does not feel lost among colleagues of different thought or faith, even when they are a majority; this is precisely because he is aware of his loyalty to apostolic tradition, and because it is not his own conjectures or theories nor theological opinion that he exposes before his colleagues, but the indisputable and unchanging doctrine of the Universal Church. Nor is it ever from a special denominational point of view that he speaks; besides, for such a thing he does not have the kind of support of the XXXIX Anglican articles or the *Confessio Augustana* or the *Heidelberg Catechism*. But he refers directly or indirectly to Ecumenical Councils and to the Holy Fathers, that is to authorities and moments which essentially transcend historic disagreements and ought to have determining value for all Christians.

Such a position brings us also to the "common ground," in other words to "the undivided Church." The Orthodox theologian can and must represent the contemporary "East" less than ecumenical antiquity itself. That is why it will never take sides with those who only necessarily represent the present or the recent past, or even something older but already tainted by provincialism due to the breaking up of unique Tradition. Early history is obviously important, mostly due to its integral, synthetic character rather than its longevity. Orthodoxy expresses the patristic moment within the economy of Ecumenism. In any case, it is only there that Orthodox Ecumenism finds its meaning and justification. The reference to contemporary currents of "oriental" (or, rather, Russian) theology can only ever have a subordinated, limited and not always positive meaning.

It can therefore be seen that Orthodoxy and its theologians have a special responsibility: if the world has lost the path of faith and if for Christians themselves the purity of faith has been veiled, a considerable portion of the fault falls upon the Orthodox people, who so often forget the universal character of the faith confined to and confessed by them. The Church is not only called upon to teach its children but also to be present for those outside who have left it.

A final question is now raised, one which does not spring only from pastoral practice or pedagogic psychology. Is the ecumenical world an appropriate setting for such a presence and is the Ecumenical Movement, as well as the role which the Orthodox play in it, a suitable and certain means of observation? Would it not be better, simpler and more reasonable to maintain a distance, speak from the outside and,

from the very beginning, to underline the incompatibility underlying the initial premises as well as the essential differences in the formulation of tasks and final objectives?

This question is too complex and delicate to be treated briefly; besides it would be impossible to discuss it here in detail. But the answer is simple and spiritually convincing, without calling for lengthy proof and careful analysis. Authentic pastoral prudence unquestionably demands Ecumenical testimony precisely in its concrete research form.

It suffices to stress two things which are perhaps not among the most important. Firstly, it is certainly not difficult to reject the Reformation where its historical aspects are concerned, but it is impossible to do the same thing with the problem or problems which have been raised and discussed since the time of the Reformation in Europe. This is true even when "Protestant" solutions offered for these ought truly to be set aside. Instead one ought to rethink the whole path of this problem with complete attention and sympathy, and from the inside, to raise it and clarify it in the same way as Catholic solutions. Such a thing is impossible from the outside and in capacity of observer, and only possible for a fellow traveler and a companion. This is particularly true in our day and age in which a thorough revision of Protestant positions is taking place and when forgotten depths and spaces are being rediscovered.

There is no craftiness nor condescendence in such an attitude. Orthodox members of the Ecumenical movement have never concealed the extraordinary character of their position and state of awareness, neither in Lausanne nor in Edinburgh. This extraordinary character is no secret for anyone; besides, there is nothing to hide here. Everyone within the Ecumenical Movement knows that for Orthodox people Orthodoxy is the unchanging truth and plenitude, not one of those varied and also justified types ("cultural-psychological" types) of Christianity. Brotherly dialogue has not become spiritually impossible because of this.

Thus we come to the second point. As bland as the "basic" wording of the Ecumenical Movement may be, in so much as it is accepted sincerely and seriously it marks (which cannot be doubted) a majorly important limit and authentic mystical depth. Faith in Christ as God and Savior truly unites those who keep and confess it; it does so in a psychological manner but also at a depth which goes beyond psychology and is incomprehensible. We cannot express this unity in a single logical adequate formula; the very fact of unity is beyond doubt and protest. The agreement over the foundations of faith, albeit incomplete and not always unified, brings men together not only subjectively on the level of human "unanimity" and affinities of the soul, but it also traces, and objectively so, a certain ontological circle which causes those who are inside it to be separated from the dark outside world, from all that is alien from the Cross and which does not receive Christ the Lord and Savior at all. In fact one can only

subjectively be with Christ in love and in faith. There is a very deep ecclesiological problem and mystery here. I am well aware of the fact that I am exposing it in a one-dimensional, imprecise and hardly intelligible way. Be that as it may, it completely justifies the common thoughts and acts of Christians on the practical level, and endows these with a value which cannot be calculated exactly in purely psychological categories. In spite of all these deficiencies such Ecumenical action treads on the path of unity and reintegration of Christianity.

In this action the *final objective* and the *immediate task* ought to be distinguished clearly. To confuse them would be dangerous and misleading. To accomplish the immediate task whenever possible is not to reach the final objective. It is always possible to forget this. The Ecumenical community cannot be taken for the "coming together of Churches." And with that it contains a certain positive meaning even though within the general economy of Christian unity its definitive meaning is not yet apparent. On the other hand, one must also avoid turning the final objective into an immediate task, since this would only lead to fallacious utopianism, now optimist, then pessimist. In both cases, there would be an absence of level-headed historical judgment and of the meaning of truth.

I repeat: I speak from an Orthodox point of view and I express a personal opinion. There are perhaps few among Ecumenists who would agree with me; no doubt there are many who see and appreciate things completely differently. It would not be at all surprising if Protestants were to consider this from their point of view (if they do possess a unified one, which we have every right to doubt), the opposite would be surprising. But there is no reason why the "Protestant" judgment of Ecumenism ought to be considered as the only legitimate one, and the only "authentic" one so to speak, on the real level rather than on the level of conjecture and human tasks. Within the divine economy of Christian history then, it would be possible that the Ecumenical Movement lead to entirely different objectives than those perceived by "Protestant" Ecumenists, and that Orthodox interpretation, inspired as it is by a more adequate and in a certain sense more intimate vision of the Church, instead penetrate more deeply the arcana of divine Providence.

Once again: I speak of Ecumenism within a *dynamic* perspective and I do not turn a blind eye on the faults, the gaps and even the illusions of the Ecumenical world; I do not even speak of what the Ecumenical Movement takes itself for or what it claims to be; there are many insufficiencies, plain or potential mistakes there. I am presenting what the Ecumenical Movement could be, could become, if the "catholic" presence penetrated it in different ways: as ferment, catalyst, warning, brake, *veto* or at least a *non possumus*, which would be said not from the outside but from the inside, and not as simple condescendence or tolerance but in a spirit of love and fraternity.

I might be wrong in this judgment, but until now I have not had reasons to doubt it. At any rate, the Lord of the harvest carefully allows

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the bad grain to grow with the good until the appropriate day, so as to not hinder the growth of the latter. I say: even the bad grain; since I conclude *a fortiori* that Ecumenism for me is not bad grain.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

By her witness the Eastern Church does not impose her own claims but rather reminds all Christians of their common heritage and of their common background. There is a sort of an ecumenical challenge implied in the witness of the Eastern Church. This is her most distinctive and peculiar contribution. We may differ widely in our attitude toward Christian antiquity, but we cannot easily deny that there is a problem and a challenge in the witness of the undivided Church of Christ. I do not mean uniformity, but rather a fellowship of convictions. And since the common ground and common mind have been lost and we have to regain or rediscover them in our concrete and existential situation, it is to be primarily a fellowship of search.

The names East and West stand for principles and attitudes, not merely for territories. All local Churches indeed have their particular contributions. But the Eastern Church is in an unparalleled position to contribute something more and something different. The witness of the Eastern Church is precisely a witness to the common background of ecumenical Christianity because she stands not so much for a local tradition of her own but for the common heritage of the Church universal. Her voice is not merely a voice of the Christian East but a voice of Christian antiquity. The Eastern witness points not only to the East but to an *Oikoumene*, in which East and West belong together in the peace of God and in the fellowship of the primitive tradition.

The Church is One. And for that reason she is Universal, the same Church throughout the whole world. Her unity transcends all barriers and boundaries, whether of race or language, or of social rank and learning. Even in early times, when Christians were but a scattered minority in an unconverted world, the Church was fully conscious of her intrinsic Universality. The message of Salvation had to be proclaimed to all nations, and all nations had to be brought into one fold. The Mystery of Pentecost was precisely the mystery of universality. All nations had to be integrated into unity by the power of faith, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. "And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own languages the mighty works of God." (*Acts 2: 8-11*).

In the last decades of the second century, St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, vigorously pointed to the Universal Unity of the Church in faith. "Although scattered throughout the world, the Church, having received these teachings and this faith, still carefully preserves it as if occupying but one house. She also believes all these doctrines just as if

she had but one soul and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, teaches them, and hands them down with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For, although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of tradition is one and the same." (*Against Heresies*, 1.10.2.)

The Church of God is an historical body, even though it also transcends history, being the Temple of the Spirit and the Body of Christ. She will carry her mission through the ages until all enter into the unity of faith. This Church, One and Universal, is the Holy Orthodox Church, truly Apostolic in her faithfulness to the Apostolic teaching and order, truly Catholic in the integrity of her witness, Holy in the abundant Grace of God. She is the steward and dispenser of sacred sacraments in the whole world, "the pillar and ground of truth." — *στῦλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας* (*I Timothy* 3:15). She has an undivided responsibility for the propagation of the Gospel, as she also has authority to witness to "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." — *τῇ ἀπαξ παραδοθείσῃ τοῖς ἀγίοις πιστεῖ* (*Jude* 3). She speaks various languages as the Apostles themselves did on the day of Pentecost, in order to reach all nations, each of them in its own element. But the strength of the Tradition is ever the same, and it never can be belittled by the variety of its expression.

In this divided world of ours, the Universality of the Orthodox Church is often sorely obscured and perspective often narrowed or shortened. The world of God, the true *Oikoumene*, is too large and wide for frail men, and they are more at ease in the small worlds of man. The Universality of the Orthodox Faith is obscured by human divisions, and it is often forgotten that Orthodoxy is *the* Church, and that it therefore is not and cannot be confined within any territorial or historical boundaries. There should be no limits to Orthodox expansion, and in new conditions the Church may speak a new tongue.

It was the glory of the Orthodox Church that from the very beginning and throughout the ages, she did address diverse nations in their own idioms, and the Holy Liturgy was celebrated in many tongues. It was the glory of the Orthodox Church that she addressed the Slavs in their vernacular and encouraged them to worship God in their own language. The glorious example of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the "Slavic Apostles," has been closely followed by the missionaries of the Russian Church from the days when St. Stephen of Perm endeavored to evangelize the Finnish tribes in their own language and adapted the Liturgy to their vernacular, to the days of the great Orthodox "Apostle of Japan," Archbishop Nikolai of Japan, who laid the foundations for Japanese Orthodoxy. The languages are many, and any one of them may be used for propagation of the true faith and for spontaneous offerings of praise and thanksgiving to God, who is the God of all nations. It was a special glory of the Russian Church that she never hesitated to use a variety of tongues in her missionary endeavor. This is the perennial legacy of the great Byzantine missionaries to the Slavs.

On the other hand, it is often forgotten that the Orthodox Church, as *the Church of Christ* and therefore the faithful steward of Apostolic Faith and Order and the depository of the Apostolic authority, has responsibility *for the whole world*. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher." — *πῶς δὲ πιστεύσωσιν οὐ οὐκ ἤκουσαν; πῶς δὲ ἀκούσωσιν χωρὶς κηρύσσοντος?* (*Romans* 10:14). Have the Orthodox taken all possible measures to make the Orthodox Faith known in the world? Has their witness to the true faith been urgent and loud enough to be heard? Christendom is sorely divided. There is utter confusion and divergence even among those who claim allegiance to the Lord. Can the Church be silent in this situation? Should the Church not proclaim the Orthodox faith to divided Christendom, with charity, discretion and conviction?

The Orthodox have no right to retreat from the world, which needs and seeks the truth of Christ, because it is the duty of Orthodox Christians to witness to that truth which is deposited forever in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. It may be that at present many Orthodox would feel themselves not equipped for the task. Then, let us take up the whole armor of God (*Ephesians* 6:13) and serve our brethren in the whole world as witnesses of the Lord. There is no proud self-assertion in such an attitude. On the contrary, there is a strong feeling of responsibility and duty. One should stand steadfast in faith and grow in it, but the treasures of Orthodoxy cannot be buried underground. "So then neither is he who is planting anything but God is the one who is causing to grow." — *ὥστε οὔτε ὁ φυτεύων ἐστὶν τι οὔτε ὁ ποτίζων ἀλλ' ὁ ἀυξάνων θεός* (*I Corinthians* 3:7). Yet men are called to plant and to water, for in the phrase of St. Paul, "we are co-workers of God" — *θεοῦ γὰρ ἐσμεν συνεργοί.* (*I Corinthians* 3:9). "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt is tainted — *μωρανθῆ* — by what shall it be salted? (*Matthew* 5:13).

A CRITICISM OF THE LACK OF CONCERN FOR DOCTRINE AMONG RUSSIAN ORTHODOX BELIEVERS

The late Metropolitan Eulogius was discussing the recent religious revival among Russians, both at home and in exile, during the early years of Russian emigration. The fact was obvious: there was an awakening. The reasons were obvious, also: the shock of tragic events, insecurity and uncertainty, suffering and fear. But exactly what was it that attracted Russians to the Church? The dogmas, the Orthodox doctrine? Yes, said the Metropolitan, so it was in the past, and especially in Byzantium among the Greeks, but not in Russia. There was a time when even lay people were deeply interested in questions of faith. But Russians, the Metropolitan contended, with the exception of the few educated theologians, have not yet reached the point at which they would be concerned with the problems of abstract theological thought, and in fact they are not interested in them at all. It may be, the Metropolitan conceded, that the Church has failed to develop an interest in theology among believers. But, in his opinion, the true reason for this lack of interest among the Russians was that they neither cherish, nor understand the theoretical aspect of the realization or embodiment of the Church's ideals in the lives of men. Above all, they cherish the ritual aspect of religion, the beauty of services, ikons, melodies, and the like. The Metropolitan proceeded to explain the emotional and educational value of the rites. He added, however, that all this ritual may be little understood, and that people do not really know what truth is witnessed or symbolized in the rites. Yet, he contended, rites themselves are so touching and moving, exalting and inspiring, regardless of their meaning.

Whether this is a fair description of the Russian approach to Christianity is open to doubt. But the attitude described by the late Metropolitan is typical of certain elements in the Russian Church. It is persistently asserted by various writers that Russians learn Christianity not from the Gospel but from the Lives of Saints. It is also asserted that for the Orthodox in general, Christianity is not "Doctrine" but "Life." The Orthodox are concerned not with "dogmatic systems" but with "living." They comprehend the truth not through the mediation of intellectual understanding, but through the mediation of "the heart" and in an aesthetical manner. One should look for Orthodox teaching not in systems but in images, rites and ikons. It is even asserted that in the Orthodox East there is "no theory of Christianity," but that instead there are saints, ikons, poetry and so on.

No Orthodox, and no Catholic, would deny the basic importance of sacred rites and the life of sanctity. What is embarrassing in the statements which we have just quoted is their exclusiveness, their

emphasis on *not — but*. One should ask why "doctrinal systems" and "intellectual understanding" are so carefully restricted, so contemptuously devaluated and almost altogether eliminated. The balance seems to be broken. In any case, this over-emphasis on the "artistic" aspect of the ritual is not in agreement with the actual tradition of Orthodox art itself. And if one can be instructed by Orthodox hymnography and ikons, it is precisely because a very definite "theory of Christianity" is embodied and expressed there. "Theory" means above all "contemplation;" it is an insight and a vision, a poetic insight and an intellectual vision. According to Orthodox spiritual tradition, the *Nous* is the ruling power of the inner life, "to *hegemonikon*." Traditional Eastern Orthodox hymnography, inherited by Russians from the Greeks, is not just lyrics; it is marked not by emotion, but by sobriety. It is high poetry, indeed, but it is "metaphysical poetry," or rather "theological poetry," and does not hesitate to sometimes use elaborate theological terminology. Indeed, some of the greatest hymns of the Eastern Church are simply paraphrases of dogmatic definitions: *a Son, who was born before ages of the Father without mother, and who hath in no way undergone either a change, or intermingling, or division, but hath preserved in their entirety the peculiarities of each nature* (Dogmatic Theotokion, in the 3rd tone.) This is precisely the definition of the Council of Chalcedon, and it requires theological understanding. It was aptly said that Orthodox Ikons are "dogmatic monuments" (V. V. Bolotov.) They witness the same truth which is defined in doctrine, and according to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, they must be controlled by sound doctrine. In brief, there is no room for this disjunction: *not — but*. Of course, dogmas must be lived and not assessed by abstract thinking alone, but for that very reason it is misleading to urge *not* doctrine *but* life. This habit of division and disjunction only distorts the "life" itself. One cannot separate "spirituality" and "theology" in St. John of Damascus, or in St. Gregory of Nazianzus. One misses the very center of the spirituality of Father John of Kronstadt when it is deliberately "abstracted" from his theological vision. Holiness in the Orthodox tradition is always interpreted "theologically," and not in the categories of aesthetic emotion or exaltation, but in the categories of spiritual sobriety, in faithfulness to truth.

It is really embarrassing that there is so little concern for "dogmatic systems," as well as for the Doctrine of the Church, in various circles and quarters of the Orthodox society of our day, and that "devotion" is so often forcefully divorced from "faith." There is too much concern with "the vessels" and too little concern with the Treasure, which alone makes the vessel precious. Symbols and rites are vehicles of the truth, and if they fail to convey the truth, they simply cease to function. Unfortunately, it is often suggested that "interest in doctrines" is something rather archaic and is a Greek attitude rather than a Russian one (again, *not — but*). There is but one Orthodox Tradition of faith,

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and it transcends all national barriers. The feast of Orthodoxy, which we still faithfully celebrate on the first Sunday in Lent, is precisely a theological feast. The Legacy of Fathers is the core of our Orthodox tradition, and it is a theological legacy. The Doctrine of Fathers is the spring of Orthodoxy in life. One is fully justified in contending that our modern confusion in life comes directly from the contemporary neglect of "sound teaching," from the lack of "sound learning" in matters of faith.

Orthodoxy stands by its faithfulness to the Seven Ecumenical Councils. It is so often forgotten that the Councils were engaged precisely in the formulation of Christian Doctrine, in the elaboration of "dogmatic systems." Is it a step forward that now we are not moved or impressed by the dogmatic teachings of those great men who gave their entire lives to the establishment of the Right Faith, of Orthodoxy? We praise the Three Hierarchs, who were above all the ecumenical *teachers*, the teachers of the right faith, but we are strangely indifferent to their perennial contribution to the life of the Church: namely — their teaching, their theology, their interpretation of the Christian truth "in the words of reason." And do we not need, as a matter of first priority, for our intellect to be illuminated by the "Light of Reason" in the present days of intellectual confusion? Without a sober guidance, without the stable element of sound doctrine, our feelings would but err and our hearts would be blinded.

One should accept the present revival of religion, the awakening of the heart, as a gift of Grace, as a token of Divine Mercy, but also as a stern summons and invitation to study and understanding, to the Knowledge of Truth which embraces our Eternal Life. There is an unfortunate prejudice, one which does not stem from Orthodox sources, that "doctrines" are abstract and "theology" is intellectualism. Our Lord and Redeemer is the Logos, and He illumines all men; and the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, is the Spirit of Truth. "Emotions" are human moods, but the truth is Divine.

Let us adorn the vessels, but not forget that vessels are of clay. Yet in them an Eternal Treasure is hidden: the Word of Life.

THE WITNESS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

In one of his pastoral letters the great Russian bishop of the last century, Theophanes "the Recluse" (d. 1894) makes a startling statement. What the Russian Church most needed, he said, was "a band of firebrands" that would set the world on fire. The incendiaries must themselves be burning, and go around with the purpose to inflame human minds and hearts. Theophanes did not trust "residual Christianity." Customs could be perpetuated by inertia, he said, but convictions and beliefs could be kept only by spiritual vigilance and a continuous effort of the spirit. Theophanes felt that there was too much routine and convention in the life of Russian Christians. He anticipated a crisis and even a collapse. He resigned from his diocese and retired to a monastery because he felt that he could do much more service to the Church by writing books than by administering a bishopric.

Theophanes was a man of broad learning and experience. For some time he was Rector of the Theological Academy in St. Petersburg. He traveled extensively in the Christian East and was intimately linked with Mount Athos. He was a good Greek scholar, and he used this knowledge for translations. He always insisted that he retired not in order to have a heightened spiritual life (which is possible, and should be practiced even in ordinary life) but to have time and leisure for literary and scholarly work. He took with him to his monastic cell all his books, a select library which did not exclude books by Western scholars and secular literature. He wanted to know the world to which he had to bring the message of salvation. He did not dispute the labors and achievements of those who did not belong to the Orthodox communion of faith.

The retired bishop spent his time writing; he translated the *Philokalia*; the works of St. Simeon the New Theologian; and the ancient Monastic Rules (Eastern and Western); he published several volumes of his commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, intended not so much for scholars but to help all believers understand this inspired teaching; he wrote several books on Christian Ethics and Spirituality. Theophanes began every day with the Divine Liturgy, which he celebrated alone in his tiny domestic chapel, and he would use the inspiration of the daily communion for his scholarly and pastoral work.

The impact of Theophanes' writings on the life of the Russian Church was enormous. In his retirement as a "recluse," he was more influential than he could ever have been as the administrator of a worldly diocese. He made Christian doctrine accessible to average Christians, to all Christians. He wanted to equip them with spiritual weapons for their Christian struggle. He required from all Christians — first and foremost from the clergy — a thorough knowledge and understanding of our Holy Faith, which alone could wave our life from

unhealthy sentimentalism and imagination. He insisted on the study of the Scriptures and of the Holy Fathers.

Many years have passed since Theophanes' time. His worst anticipations were justified. The whole Orthodox Church — not only in Russia — is involved in a desperate struggle with the raging assault of godlessness and unbelief. Human souls are undergoing an incredible trial. But the protecting veil of Divine Mercy is spread over the suffering Church and the possessed world, and men are called to be Christ's witnesses: his Messengers and Apostles. The Church is essentially a missionary institution. One has to thank God for the army of new martyrs and confessors who have revealed or manifested the strength and beauty of Christian Faith. And yet one should not be too easily satisfied with what has been done by others. We have left so much incomplete ourselves.

At present let us confine our attention to one aspect of our Christian duty. Everyone knows that we are desperately short of books. Behind the "Iron Curtain" an impressive literature of atheism has been created and widely spread. Special colleges have been established to train people "for a godless ministry." Textbooks on anti-religious propaganda and on the methodology of godless preaching have been prepared for classrooms.

What is our response to this challenge? In the Ancient Church, the Holy Fathers met the challenge of the pagan world with an outpouring of Christian writings, attacking point by point the arguments of the opponents. What have we done in our own situation? Can we really meet the enemy on the field and save the victims of this unparalleled spiritual persecution?

The rusty weapons will not do. I am not speaking of the Holy Tradition, of the writings of the Holy Fathers, but of the inadequate books of the last century, which were so often ephemeral and rarely presented a satisfactory interpretation of the Holy Tradition. Our theological production stopped years ago, and this cessation testifies to our neglect of the teaching mission of the Church. Ignorance is growing in the Church and we are not alarmed!

Are there any books in which our Holy Orthodox Faith can be convincingly preached and commended to our own generation?

We in America, where the majority of Orthodox Christians are English-speaking, are in an especially difficult situation. There is no Orthodox literature in English. There are occasional books, often of modest quality and rarely on the most urgent or basic subjects. The real problem, however, is not with books but with study. Each generation, especially in a new country, has to assess the Christian truth afresh, in continuous contact with the past as well as in close contact with the changing present. It is not enough to learn prepared answers by rote. They may be perfectly right and correct. But we have to solve questions by thinking through the answers, and not by merely reciting formulas, sacred and perfect though they may be. Listen to the searching man! He

knows the formula, but cannot relate it to his existential questioning. Our Creed is a most perfect formula. How often do we recite it without conviction? Are we able to relate it to our urgent spiritual needs? How many Orthodox dispense with the Creed because it has ceased to have any direct spiritual appeal for them? The Creed is charged with an eternal and loving Truth. It is an eternal key to human unrest, but it needs interpretation. Otherwise we would not know how to fit the key in the lock.

What our present generation wants, especially in our country, is a true theological revival — a revival of a living theology, which would unlock for us the Truth that one can find in the Scriptures, the Tradition, and the Liturgical life of the Church, but which is concealed from us by our ignorance and neglect. Today more than ever before, we need just such a "band of spiritual firebrands" who can inflame minds and hearts with the fire of a loving knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. In our generation God is calling us to be his witnesses and messengers. How can men believe if they do not hear the quickening Word? Even if we are men of unclean lips, let us respond to the Divine call, and the fire of the Spirit will cleanse us for the ministry of the Word.

TO THE ORTHODOX PEOPLE: THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORTHODOX IN AMERICA

Brethren and friends. Let me begin by thanking you most heartily for two things. First, you have had the desire to elect me to be a member of your organization. To me, a stranger, a newcomer to this country that is most wonderful. I am truly moved by this undeserved honor. Secondly, you have invited me to address you this evening. I had no time to be properly initiated into your life and activity and if I dare speak tonight at all it is only because I discovered a very substantial link, a very peculiar link between us, a link which passes all limitations of space and time. You understand that I am referring to our common membership in the Church, our common sharing of the Orthodox Faith.

You describe yourselves as Russian Orthodox Clubs. You describe yourselves as being of the Orthodox Creed. Now, this is a tremendous claim. It is a very great statement. For, when we call ourselves Orthodox, we are claiming that we belong to the true Church, the only true Church, that we keep the true faith, that we are trodding the true road of life. Discrimination is implied in this statement, for we are presuming that we alone have the true message of Christ, that we are the only true and authorized representatives of him on earth, of him as a teacher and as a Lord and Master. We are insisting that we actually possess unpolluted and undiluted Christianity, and that we alone are authorized to speak with full authority in the name of the Heavenly Lord and Master. This is the only meaning which can be connected with this assertion. We mean, indeed, that we are keeping the right faith. This, of course, is a tremendous claim.

It is no good to lay claims. We must not only lay claims, but justify them as well. Now, is there any man on earth who can state in full sincerity and with a clear conscience that he is substantially and essentially, to the very depths of his being, an Orthodox Christian, that he really knows what the message of Christ was, that he is really worthy of this message? Well, I am not going to simply preach a conventional sermon in this most unsuitable environment at a most unsuitable hour, even though as a priest of the Church I tend to feel as if I were always in the pulpit. I am not a dreamer, and I am not going to drive you to speculation. I am speaking now as a business man and my concern is utterly practical.

It is a tremendous privilege, a high prerogative, to belong to the true Church and I believe that we do in fact belong to it. Yet this means precisely that we have a very heavy responsibility. It is not enough to *call* ourselves Orthodox Christians, we must *be* Orthodox.

You in this country have a special responsibility. America is a peculiar country. It is a country built up by immigrants who came here

from all the corners of the earth, who took refuge on this virginal soil at various dates. America was built up by people who came from different lands and who brought with them their own heritage, their own traditions. They have stored the traditions they brought into the common treasury as their distinctive contributions.

You belong to this country. You are a part of this country. You are no longer strangers in this country, you are not pilgrims who came here for a time and are going somewhere else. You are staying here. You belong to this country. Most of you were born in this country. It is your home. It is your Fatherland. You belong to it.

Now let us be frank and outspoken. Have you really fulfilled your obligation? Your spiritual obligation to your American home and nation? Have you brought all your treasures, all treasures which you have inherited from your forefathers and ancestors, into the common treasury of American civilization, of American life, of the American Commonwealth? Have you taught Americans from other backgrounds to respect the Orthodox Church? Have you taught them to understand the pure Orthodox Faith? Have you converted them, if not exactly to membership in the Church, then at least to an understanding that there is something distinctive, something unprecedented, something ultimately precious in your own tradition? Have you not rather kept your traditions exclusively for yourselves? Have you not rather regarded them as something connected with specific or national circumstances? Have you not rather considered them as belonging only to Russians, or to Greeks, to Rumanians, to Albanians, and as not belonging to other nations, to people with other national backgrounds? Have you fulfilled your primary responsibility?

Let us ask ourselves, do we stand with the Orthodox Church because it was the Church of our fathers and forefathers, and of our ancestors? Do we stay in the Orthodox Church out of national inertia, or because we believe it really is the only true Church? Are we Orthodox because we regard the Orthodox Faith as the only authentic presentation of the Eternal Message of God, or simply because we happen to be Russians, Greeks, Albanians? The question is of greatest importance, because we are consistently tempted to reduce our Orthodoxy to our nationality. Now, Christianity is a universal truth. We never can say that Orthodoxy is Russian, any more than one can say that the truth of Christ is simply Russian, Rumanian, American, South American, Latin American, or anything else. The truth of Christ is a universal truth, i.e. it must be interpreted and kept as an eternal treasure.

You will perhaps object and say, "well, it is but a dream." Indeed, before we can preach true Orthodoxy to the world, we have to be really Orthodox ourselves. Are we? We glory in the legacy which has been left to us by our forefathers, but I'm afraid we deal with this legacy in a rather lazy way. It is, of course, a great treasure, but is it the proper way of showing our respect for the treasure to put it aside, to put it in a safe, as it were, to deposit it in a bank or to store it in a treasury like

something very delicate, very fragile, which cannot be used and which must be preserved under glass or some other kind of cover? One is tempted to say, he puts the treasure aside because it is a very sacred thing. I suspect that one does not usually do so because he does not know very well what to do about it and prefers to adapt to the conditions of the surrounding life and to keep the treasures elsewhere as in a safe.

Again, Christianity is not a fragile thing. It is not a delicate thing which must be protected. Christianity is a weapon given to men to be used in a resolute fight against evil and for the sake of truth on earth. It is not a delicate thing to be set aside. It is the strongest thing in the world. Do not be afraid! Learn that this heritage of the past is the power of the present and the hope of the future.

In this connection I would like to commend the new institution of your Church in your country, St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary. To commend it not only to your generosity and charity, but to your very serious consideration. You remember that almost all the Orthodox countries as well as many other countries, on the other side of the water, are now, as we usually say, behind the Iron Curtain. Remember that this curtain is not made of some rough material. It is made of principles. These principles are Godlessness and unbelief. Obviously, behind this curtain of unbelief and Godlessness the free development of the Church is not possible.

The whole Russian educational system was destroyed about thirty years ago. There has been no theological training or religious education in Russian for thirty years. It has been completely discontinued. Theological libraries have been destroyed. There has been no religious education or training for the Christian ministry, and even if, as it is reported, an attempt has now been made and permission has been given to reopen some training colleges, well, the picture would still be very, very grim.

Let us imagine for a moment that all theological schools in America were to be closed for the next thirty years, and all theological publications were to be discontinued. No training of any kind would be given, to future ministers or to the people who are in need of theological or simply religious instruction. Well, this is a hypothetical situation. Yet we can easily perceive what would happen if after these thirty years one would again be permitted to start anew — what an enormous difficulty such a person would have to face.

These are the difficulties which people are facing in Russia. They are behind the times, because for thirty years they could not read religious books, they could not publish such books, they could not teach one another. The same thing is now happening in other countries. This means that in the whole world there are now no more than three or four theological schools for the entire Orthodox Church — for the whole Orthodox world. There are only two which are connected with the

Slavonic tradition of Orthodoxy —the Theological Institute in Paris, and the newly formed St. Vladimir's in New York City.

Again we have to understand what we really need, what the Church needs. We do not need merely a professional school in which a few people would be trained for the ministry — people who would be able to conduct services in the Church and to carry on the routine work. We do not need simply craftsmen — we need masters. We need not simply routine ministers — we need prophets. Again this is not a pretentious statement. On a previous occasion I have already quoted the stirring words of a man whom no one would suspect of being a theological snob. I am referring to Bishop Theophilus who was the undisputed teacher and master of Orthodox spirituality and devotion in Russia in the last century. On one occasion he said, "What we need now is a band of people who would go everywhere and set the world on fire." To be able to do so they must themselves be burning with this spiritual fire.

His prognosis was a very, very pessimistic one. He anticipated the complete collapse of Orthodoxy in Russia just because he was afraid that people were keeping the Orthodox Faith more out of an inherited predisposition or inertia, and simply because they happened to be of the Church. His idea was that the Church could not go on for very long unless it became something more, unless Orthodox allegiance became an internal challenge from God.

Now, what we need to do in America is not only to have a modest school, a professional training college. We need a school of prophets possessing a spiritual and intellectual strength. We have to produce a land of people able and desirous of going out into the world, carrying with them the true knowledge, the true understanding, a burning conviction and a power of persuasion. Again, one may be tempted to object and say, "we cannot do this." No one can do it by himself, of course, but we must ask for Divine Assistance and we have to trust in God.

I am not dreaming glorious dreams, I am by no means visionary. The only thing I see is my duty. Of course, it is not my duty alone, it is yours as well — our common duty. We must recognize the urgent need of the Church. We have to hear the urgent call of God.

Orthodoxy cannot be maintained simply by inertia. No tradition can survive unless it is continued through creative effort. The message of Christ is eternal and always the same, but it must be reinterpreted again and again so as to become a challenge to every new generation, to be a message which may appeal to man in his concrete situation. We have not simply to keep the legacy of the past, but must first realize what we have inherited and do everything we can to present it to the others as a living thing. For that purpose it is not enough to go through a few text books. By the way, we have no text books either. There are some, but they are at least thirty years behind the times. There have been no theology textbooks produced in any country, in either Russian or English, for these thirty years. Even if we had some in Russian, there

would be no use for them since most of you cannot read Russian. You must realize this. Thus, we have to create a new Orthodox literature in your native language, which is English, or perhaps American.

We have an enormous task before us. Let us glory in this task. Let us glory in the hour of our visitation. God has visited us in America. He has called us to his service, but it is not enough to simply be enrolled for the service of God. *The real roll of honor is not a list of freshers that are required.* The roll of honor is a list of men who have proven their ability, who have served their cause and the purpose.

So I come back to the beginning. Let us not glory in our privilege of being Orthodox Christians. Let us rather glory in our task, in our responsibility, and let us do this task and not be distracted by that which is of secondary quality. We must have the very, very best, because only the very best is permissible for those who pretend to be the sole pillar of truth on earth. We are not serving our own purposes. We are serving the purposes of God, and God is never satisfied with second best. He requires from us the very best. He requires from us our whole heart, our whole mind, our whole obedience. Let us concentrate all our efforts on building a *unified* theological school in America, on the highest possible level, because this alone would correspond to the dignity of our Church. Let us not waste time in making many things at once, for we are not strong enough to afford it.

St. Vladimir's is not a proud institution. We are aware of our weakness and limitation. Yet we cannot escape our responsibility and our duty, and we need your help. Perhaps you are not able to do much, but you have to make St. Vladimir's your major concern. You have to assume full responsibility. No one knows the future. No one is a prophet. I do not claim to be a prophet, but I do know one thing. The time may come, and it is perhaps already approaching, when America will be the only country in which freedom will still be preserved and maintained, and the free development of religion and theology will be possible. It is quite possible that this freedom will be lost on the whole European Continent in the next generation. It may turn out that America will be the only place where traditions of Orthodox scholarship may be preserved and carried on. We must prepare ourselves for this eventuality. Again, this is not pessimism. I fear that it is simply a realistic prognosis.

I would not like to stop on a pessimistic note. There is no pessimism in my heart and mind. I am very optimistic. I am optimistic because I am sure of divine help, I am sure that divine help is always given, but it is given only to the obedient and the faithful. It is given only to people who truly dedicate themselves to the cause of God. It is the only thing we can do, and once we have done it we can be sure that everything will be alright, because the help will come.

Let our loins be girded about and our lights be burning. We can at least keep our light going. It is difficult, indeed. Everything real is difficult in this world, but we are united in this room in the name of

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Christ, in our trust in the Lord. Let us make this trustfulness not only nominal but a real principle, the real guiding principle of our lives. Let us ask, and it will be given. God bless you and keep you under the protection of his Almighty Wings.

"CONSIDER YOUR WAYS"

"Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruin? Now therefore thus says the Lord Almighty: Consider your ways. You have sown much, and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages earns wages to put them into a bag with holes. Thus says the Lord Almighty: Consider your ways." (*Haggai* 1: 4-7.)

The events surrounding our text occurred in the days of Persian kings, when Jewish exiles were permitted to go back to the land of their forefathers. They were happy to return to the Holy Land, yet it was desolate and despoiled. The glory of the past was gone. Life was miserable and insecure. The struggle for existence was heavy and exacting. As the prophet says, "He who earns wages earns wages to put them into a bag with holes." There was a growing feeling of frustration and disappointment.

The ultimate reason for failure was, however, much deeper. "Why? says the Lord Almighty. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while you busy yourselves each with his own house." Was it not natural for each man to busy himself first with his own house, with his own security and safety, and to wrestle first of all with his own concrete and immediate needs? By worldly logic of faith. "Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, 'Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?'"

A Troubled World

No urge for security should be allowed to deter people from the service of God. The cause of God has an unconditional priority, and God's claim on man is absolute. No national home can be rebuilt or re-established unless the nation consents to be God's servant. It was precisely to this devout service that the Israel of old was summoned in this period of trial and readjustment. The mysterious image of the Suffering Servant was the sign of that bright future which God had prepared for his faithful people. All human endeavor had to be inwardly subordinate to the purpose of God. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." There was no room for disappointment or despair. It was high time for repentance and rededication. "Consider your ways" (*Haggai*, King James version).

We are living in a troubled and distorted world, a world of tensions. We find ourselves in the midst of an inclusive and radical crisis which affects all levels of existence and all walks of life. Memories of the last

World War are still fresh in many minds and hearts, while the world continues in a state of war, even though it be a cold war. The burden of the last war could be endured only because there was a hope and conviction that armed struggle would solve the tensions and secure a just and durable peace. This hope has been frustrated. Few problems were actually solved. Tensions are as strong as ever; in fact they have grown stronger. Kingdoms still rise and stand against each other. There is a growing feeling of insecurity. The ground itself seems to be explosive. No human cause seems to be safe, and no human device valid. The whole fabric of civilization seems to be disintegrating and about to collapse. There is a growing awareness of the strength of evil. And there is little trust in the power of the Good. One is tempted to speak of the end of our time.

Is there any hope for the future? The number of those who have lost all hope is steadily increasing. There is a rising wave of hysterical apocalypticism, and it gains followers not only among the dreamy and uprooted but among believers as well. To them the end of time seems to be near, and they fear it will expose the futility of human life and of all historical hopes. At this critical hour everyone is busy with his own house, but is overtaken by the feeling of approaching doom. Again, as in the days of Haggai the prophet, "You have looked for much, and, lo, it came to little." And the reason is still the same — the house of the Lord still lies in ruins. "This people says the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord; it still lies in ruins." It is high time again to speak of the only Hope that never fails.

The God of History

We are accustomed to asking what is going to happen, what one should expect. But is this a proper question? The only question a Christian should ask is this: What am I going to do? In this desperate and dangerous situation, what does God expect me to do in order that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven? We ask this question, but usually fail to arrive at the answer. Obviously our destiny cannot be ultimately settled either on the battlefields or by the conferences of wise men, but only in the depths of our own hearts. Again, "Consider your ways."

As Christians, we are committed to certain basic beliefs concerning history. To us, God is the Lord of History. Human history is not just an autonomous display of the blind forces of nature, nor does its course depend solely upon man's scheming and planning. The ultimate order of history is of God's own making. It may be difficult and presumptuous to attempt to detect God's ways in the complex and confused texture of historical events. Yet we know that God himself is taking part in our lives as supreme Master and Judge. Nor are we left without guidance in our interpretation of human life. God acted in the life of his chosen people — the Israel of old — as he is acting still in the life of the new

Israel — the Church; and all nations of the earth are subject to his sovereign rule. Nor does he only sporadically intervene in the course of human affairs.

The pattern of history is of God's making, and it is a pattern of salvation. There is a divine order in human history, however difficult it may be for us to discern it at any particular point. Yet at all points and in all situations, God's claims on our obedience and service are obvious. It is in his Law that we discern his order. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and in Him, it has been revealed to us, once and forever, that God expressed his redeeming purpose in human history. Our historical hopes depend precisely upon our ultimate trust and belief in divine guidance.

Recurrent Cycles

History is not just an infinite sequence of vain repetitions. In the light of Christ we are brought to see more than the preacher of old could discern. "Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See this is new?'" he asked. The "new" has come into the world in Jesus Christ and by his cross. Christ himself is the abiding *New* and in him the whole of creation has been renewed and is being renewed again and again. The old has passed away and is passing away in the lives of those who by faith and obedience belong to him and dwell in his continuing newness. The cycles of cosmic necessity, the recurrent circles of destiny or *fatum*, have been broken, and we are given to follow the straight line, which is Christ, as St. Augustine phrased it.

A new vision of history has been made possible. Yet this vision had been already anticipated by the great prophets of the old dispensation. History is not just a series of happenings, of births and decays. There is real *movement* in history, and it is God himself who moves it. He moves it towards an end, and this is God's own end and purpose. History moves towards its consummation. *Christ is coming again*, and then his victory shall be disclosed in full. The future is therefore full of promise and meaning.

In the Christian vision and interpretation history is essentially a *finite* process, because it moves and leads to a goal and to an end. Christians are given by faith to anticipate an ultimate and abiding *redemption of history*. And they are called to be more than just spectators, but actors in this drama of salvation. For Christians history is not just a stage on which a symbolical play is performed and certain eternal values are exhibited. History is reality itself, in which God is accomplishing his own creative purpose.

Christ is the Savior of the world, *Salvator mundi* — the Savior not only of our souls, but of the world. The world itself has been redeemed. Nothing can succeed in the world that is not organically related to God's purpose. In a sense, the history of salvation is the only true history. It is precisely a rebuilding of the house of the Lord which lies in ruins.

Ultimate Victory

The hope of Christians is that something radically new will come. This ultimate redemption obviously transcends history. But in this ultimate consummation nothing will be lost that has been dedicated to God and marked by the sign of the cross. History will not simply be abrogated or replaced. History is not just a prologue to the eternal story of an otherworldly Kingdom. The prologue belongs to the fulness of the story. The King has come and has been enthroned forever through the victory of his cross. In this sense, our earthly history has already been integrated into the story of the Kingdom.

The ultimate victory will transcend all historical dimensions. In the ultimate consummation everything will be changed and renewed, yet it will still be a true summation or recapitulation in which nothing will be lost or left out.

In light of this ultimate expectation, the whole course of human history is given new sense and new meaning. This meaning is given by the integration of human endeavors into the purpose of God. There are no values and no achievements apart from God's pattern of history. God's will must be mediated through the faithful acceptance of his purpose by men. Yet his cause will be vindicated irrespective of human neglect or resistance.

Divine Pattern

We are brought to wait for an ultimate *reintegration of our history*. It is in this sure hope that we are encouraged for action and service. Apart from the divine pattern of salvation, we would labor in vain.

Even in this transitory age we are anticipating the gathering for the world to come and, as it were, for the building up the Kingdom to come. Only in this ultimate perspective can we recover the true sense of urgency in our historical doings and discern the proper dimension of our Christian duty. We look for the age to come, and for this very reason we are called to work. We have to be wary of all utopian illusions and abstain from all exaggerated interpretations of our actual achievements. The true and final achievement lies in the realm beyond. But it is this very anticipated *justification of history* that gives meaning to our present life and inspires courage to be and to serve God's ends and purposes.

History has meaning, not only because in history individuals may make decisions, but precisely because it is a part of God's world which he wants to save; that is, to redeem and to preserve. History stands under the judgment of God, not only in parts or fragments but in its integrity, as a whole. And our historical life belongs to this totality. The ultimate hope of Christians is that *Christ is coming* to judge the quick and the dead, to judge the world.

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Is there any hope? The Christian reply is simple and categorical: *He is the Hope*. The phrase can be easily misunderstood and misinterpreted. It does not mean simply that *through* Christ or *by* him we are encouraged to hope for many things. It is precisely he himself who is our only Hope. We should beware of a depersonalization of history and of the age to come.

We look for Christ's coming because we long for personal encounter with him. And this personal encounter of the whole of humanity with the Redeemer is the true meaning of his coming again. It will be a judgment. At this last hour it will be made obvious and clear whether, in the course of history, we busied ourselves with our own frail houses or with the abiding house of the Lord.

The question is still asked: "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?"

PART SIX: REVIEWS AND CRITIQUES

A CRITIQUE OF ZANDER'S ECUMENICAL THOUGHT

In a brief review it is obviously impossible to adequately state all the doubts and objections which even a cursory reading of this book cannot fail to provoke. A closer examination of the argument only increases the initial embarrassment. It is a very personal book. It is in no way typical of the Orthodox position. It is, in a sense, "a voice from the East," but what this voice says is neither "Eastern," nor "Orthodox."

The author has been trained and reared in a certain particular tradition, and his treatment of the "Ecumenical Reality" is heavily colored by his peculiar convictions. One may question whether these convictions are at all compatible with the basic tenets of the Orthodox Faith. Moreover one may ask whether the new conception of "Ecumenism" sponsored by the author is compatible with the main principles of the historical Ecumenical Movement. In fact, the author does not seem to take much interest in the problems of either "Faith" or "Order." He chooses to dwell beyond dogmas, canons, or rites. "Ecumenism," as conceived by the author, is essentially mystical. It is not concerned with "external events," nor is it interested in historical achievements. "The unity which is its aim is a unity of love, unrealizable in any historical form but promised in the life of the world to come" (p. 44). In this sense, Ecumenism is "an anticipation of the kingdom" (p. 222). Ecumenism is essentially paradoxical and metalogical. "Ecumenism is possible only in spite of logic, or rather independently of it" (p. 38). Historical planning is disavowed and discouraged. Even theological discussion is discouraged. This exercise in "comparative theology" only reinforces the schism. "This work can scarcely be called ecumenical" (p. 210). No "healing of the schism" is possible in history, nor should it even be attempted.

The author disbelieves in the possibility of any ecumenical advance on the level of history. One is invited to indulge in a kind of "eschatological" vision, and there is no call to a sober and responsible action. One may hesitate: is not this "vision" rather a domestic dream? "The eschatological interpretation, on the other hand, is independent of all historical failures. The prospect of "always being divided" is not terrifying for it; the whole history of the Church is the history of divisions and therefore cannot be regarded as a kind of preface to the still unwritten book on unity; the historical tragedy of Christianity is an inevitable condition of sinful humanity — and it is this sinful reality that is the object of eternal transfiguration and of future *parousia*" (p. 45). The author obviously overlooks the fact that "visible unity" and precisely "unity in the faith," is one of the marks of the Church according to the teaching of the New Testament, and that the Church had been intended by Christ to be "the pillar and the ground of the truth." There is no question of "inevitable" progress, but rather of a duty and of an impending and positive task.

It is interesting to compare the author's statement with what has been recently said about Ecumenism by another writer, whose book appeared almost at the same time as the one we are discussing here. It is a Norris Prize essay by William Nicholls, *Ecumenism and Catholicity* (SCM Press Ltd., London 1952). Comparison is pertinent, as both writers start from the same "experience" and have the same background (WSCF). Only Mr. Nicholls obviously had a wider theological training and more of an ecclesiastical sense. Accordingly, he states: "Division amongst Christians is not a necessary consequence of their historical existence. Since Christ, sin and history are not to be equated. Sin in Church history is a fact, even a permanent fact, but it is not inevitable. The Ecumenical Movement is the renewal of the consciousness that this state of affairs is scandalous and utterly abnormal. Its inherent drive towards unity in history, however conceived, is its movement of repentance" (Nicholls pp. 54-55).

It is precisely this spirit of repentance that is missing in the book we are reviewing. "Divided Christendom" is taken to be an inevitable and ultimate fact of history. Nothing can be done about it at all. On the whole, a very peculiar sort of "Ecumenism" is advocated, one which has very little in common with the actual Ecumenical endeavor of the Christian Churches. The driving power of this endeavor has always been a desperate search for "Christian Reunion." It was a search for a "common mind." Whether this goal can be attained in history and whether it can be attained by the means and methods adopted in the Ecumenical Movement is another question. In any case, the main preoccupation of the Ecumenical Movement was always with the Unity of the Church. Now, it is this very preoccupation that is disavowed by the author. He advocates a "Unity without Union," i.e. Unity in dis-Union, or in dis-agreement. No agreement can be ever reached on a historical level, and all attempts at agreement are therefore pointless and futile, and even dangerous, from the author's point of view. The author is very eloquent in his plea against "proselytism," which he identifies with "conversion." Everybody should stay in the confession in which he happened to be born or brought up. According to the author, "a necessary postulate of ecumenical reality" is not only abstention from "proselytism" (in the current and pejorative meaning of the word), but also from theological argument altogether, as the latter is no more than a subtle form of spiritual violence or pressure. "In practice it means that, although I see that my brother is erring, I make no attempt to disabuse him of his errors and to guide him into the way of truth" (p. 113). Disputes about faith are "merely a kind of game of chess" (p. 110). All of this is described as the finest achievement of "ecumenical love." Is it not rather a drastic example of "stony insensibility," of a complete lack of love to both the "erring brother," and the Catholic Truth?

The author protests that his attitude is "neither compromise nor relativism," but just a normal *modus vivendi*, "i.e. a conscious attitude

of freedom and tolerance towards all Christians, which is essential to ecumenical life" (p. 118). Strangely enough, he expects to build "ecumenical communion" on this foundation. He extends the scope and range of this peculiar "communion" indefinitely. He wants to include "Liberal Christians" and to make "ecumenical communion" available for all who "want to be Christians and to be called so," regardless of their actual convictions concerning Christ. This question alone should be asked: "do you profess to be Christian, do you want to bear Christ's name?" And again: "do you want to be in communion with other Christians, do you feel somehow connected with 'other sheep which are not of this fold' but also follow Christ?" An affirmative answer to these very vague questions, in the opinion of the author, would be quite sufficient "for being received into ecumenical communion" (pp. 176ff). The author is dissatisfied with the limitations imposed on membership in the Ecumenical "organizations": Christ is to be acknowledged as God and Savior. The "basis," doctrinal and discriminative, is obviously indispensable for an organization, but it only shows that no organization can adequately cope with ecumenical reality as the author conceives it. "We have no right to exclude from the grace of Christ those who love him, even if merely in the sense of being attracted by his image and of taking a "scholarly" interest in him" (p. 71). "However much Christians might err about Christ and differ among themselves, his very name is the bond which, stronger than steel, links them with the disciples in Antioch who first called themselves Christians." He waves away the natural objection that the same name may obviously be used in different senses, and exclaims pathetically: "As though human frailty or foolishness could annul or weaken the power inherent in God's Name. As though the Name did not live and act of itself, apart from its right or wrong interpretation" (p. 136 and n. 2). On the other hand, "the name 'Christian' indicates that which is most essential in man: the direction of his will, the highest spiritual value recognized by him, the object of his love and service"(p. 179). There is some obvious confusion in these statements "Direction of the will" cannot be independent of the conception one has of "the object of his love," and therefore cannot be the same if these conceptions contradict and exclude each other. It is obviously not the same to wholeheartedly believe what is professed in the Nicene Creed and to take a "scholarly interest" in a Galilean prophet.

Can the "direction of the will" be the same in both cases? Would the author include in his "ecumenical communion" people like the famous pastor Kalthoff who wanted to continue his ministry in a Christian community while denying that Jesus had ever lived? Kalthoff was prepared to call himself "Christian," in some sense. And why then exclude from the projected "ecumenical communion" those advanced Jews who not only took "scholarly interest" in Jesus, but were prepared to consider him as one of the greatest moralists of the Jewish race?

But the author goes further than "tolerance" may require. He suggests that, in actuality, "ecumenical revelation" overshadows everything that can be discovered in the historical dimension. He suggests that because divergent conceptions are really about the "same" reality, all of them are partial revelations of Christ himself. Not only are there certain grains of Truth in all of them, but ultimately it is Christ himself who manifests himself in the chaos and confusion of human misinterpretations. "Divided Christendom," with all of its historical internecine strife and disruption, turns out to be an authentic "Revelation," or simply a new "*Christophania*." "It really is a revelation: in it our spiritual eyes truly open to the vision of the hitherto invisible image of Christ in the Christians" (p. 207). This new "Ecumenical revelation" overshadows everything that can be discovered in the historical dimension, on "the phenomenal plane of the Church's existence," as the author puts it (p. 201), i.e. in the "institutional" Church, in dogmas, rules and rites. Everything becomes a genuine "image" of Christ. One only has to acquire a new vision, "independently of logic." One may suggest: and independently of truth also. One may wonder whether St. Athanasius and Ernest Renan really spoke of "the same Christ." The author actually suggests that the Pantocrator of the Byzantine ikon and Ude's Galilean are "images" of the same Christ (p. 208).

A prominent Russian philosopher of the last century tells in his memoirs that he lost the faith in his boyhood and on one occasion intimated to his mother that he "respected Jesus." The mother, not yet acquainted with the new "ecumenical postulate," burst into tears. For her it was blasphemy. In the new "ecumenical" interpretation it would be but one legitimate expression of Christian discipleship. It seems, however, that the old unsophisticated lady knew better what was Christianity. It is difficult to see how one can be "Christian" if all dogmas, canons, and Dominical institutions are deliberately rejected and set aside as "human accretions" or even "superstitions." Plurality of interpretations is a poor escape.

Of course, in the "ecumenical communion" advocated by the author one has to reason "independently of logic" and to look at things without discerning them. But many readers of the book will be unable to "sacrifice their reason," and to dilute their faith. They may consider the offer of a *sacrificio del intelletto* as just an act of pressure and violence. Their protest will probably never reach the author, who would take refuge in "the Paradoxical" and convict his opponents of "confessional rigidity," of spiritual short-sightedness, or blindness. The question still remains: how could "ecumenical communion" be built on the shifting sands of human opinions? The author actually speaks of this "communion," to which one may belong in spite of utter dissension in the matter of belief with the other members of this singular "Society," which is not a closed one. And this "Society" possesses deeper insight into the ultimate Mystery of God than all "institutional" Churches or denominations can ever attain, being imprisoned in the narrow limits of

"dogmas, canons and rites" (p. 211). "Churches" is in the plural, because for the author "one Christian Church" simply "does not exist" (p. 30).

He would even praise the distinctive ethos and promote the distinctive contribution of "his own Church" — one of the many existing ones. All "confessions" ultimately reflect the same "mystery." Yet he would exclude all "confessional" features from his prayer for Christian Unity. This prayer would be insincere unless all who join "completely renounce their confessional ideals." Unity should know no limitations. "But this liberation of prayer from all concrete content, from all church imagery, means rising to spiritual heights which are accessible only to a few" (p. 156). This prayer is bound to be "apophatic," and probably not a prayer of the Unity of the *Church*, as it is impossible to conceive of a "church" without any concrete features. The real difficulty is created for the author by the phrase that "there should be one fold and one shepherd." There would be obvious ambiguity if Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants were to join in the recitation of this phrase, because they would interpret it differently.

It is not clear at all why the author is embarrassed by the "ambiguity" of words at this point while he acquiesced so easily with it in any other context. Why he was not upset by the fact that the "Name of Jesus" obviously did not have the same connotation for an Orthodox and for "Liberal Christians" (at least, it should have a different connotation). In any case, is it not clear what he makes of this scriptural phrase "one fold"? Obviously, it refers to history, and not just to the "spiritual heights which are accessible only to a few." The author is concerned with a very particular problem, which he unfortunately mistakes for the main problem of Ecumenism, namely with the problem of ecumenical encounter. It is true that the Ecumenical Movement has created a "new atmosphere" in inter-Christian relations (p. 20). People of various confessional loyalties and background and loyalties are brought together and compelled to face each other. The practical problem which inevitably arises is this: what is the meaning of this gathering of disagreeing Christians, and what they should think and do about each other as individuals? Our author has no hope of reconciling the divergent opinions and systems of belief. At the same time he is impressed by the friendliness of the encounter. Ecclesiastical barriers are insuperable. As there are many divergent systems, none should regard itself as the only true or consistent one (p. 24ff). This argument is rather lame.

The author chooses to meet the challenge of disunity in another way. "My church is naturally regarded by me as the true Church — this is implied by my belonging to it; and being the true Church, it is unique. But this does not give me the right to condemn other churches" (p. 91). The real question is not what is "natural" to me, but what is true. The author unnecessarily complicates the problem with spurious presuppositions. In his interpretation, "faith," i.e. "the primary

intuition," is "radically different from processes which we call knowledge"(p. 126). Accordingly, the "notes of the Church," *notae Ecclesiae*, "can never be objects of knowledge" (p. 129). In other words, the Church can never be identified.

Nevertheless, in a lengthy chapter on "The Problems of Ecumenism," our author deliberately chooses precisely the *notae Ecclesiae* as the heading under which he describes and analyzes the new "Ecumenical Reality" (pp. 119-202). And he finally comes to the conclusion that the true key to the ecumenical problem is "the idea of a single Christian world — Christendom." It is a metalogical idea and "does not form part of any ecclesiological doctrine and cannot be logically justified." Christendom is apparently identical with the alleged "ecumenical communion," or the new and open "Society." In any case, what cannot be accomplished in the categories of the Church ("one Church" does not exist) is accomplished in the categories of "Christendom" (which is one). "Christendom" replaces the "Church." "But since Christ knows those who want to be his disciples, and since his disciples, though disagreeing about everything else, are one in their desire to be faithful to their Master, *tota Christianitas* is a reality" (p. 224). One should remember that this desire "to be faithful to the Master" can be expressed in any way one may select: from confessing Christ as "God and Savior" all the way to describing him as a sentimental Galilean preacher or an unsuccessful Apocalypticist. One may well doubt the "reality" of *one* Christendom based on such foundations. How much of the true Historic Christianity is left in this startling interpretation?

A special chapter deals with "the presuppositions of Ecumenism" (understood in the author's sense). They are classified under four headings. First, there are "historical presuppositions." The main tension is not between the "Catholic" and "Protestant" attitudes, but between "the East" and "the West." In other words, the ultimate tension is not on the level of faith or doctrine, but rather on the level of cultural psychology. There is a dangerous point of confusion here. This "presupposition" simply abolishes the possibility of any sound Ecumenism. Christian Unity is simply impossible, since East and West must diverge. The historical excursus of the author is utterly poor (p. 55ff), and is nothing more than antiquated platitudes. The unity of a cultural "universal of discourse," contrary to what the author says, was broken not in the third century, but probably only in the eleventh, if not in the thirteenth. St. Hilary, St. Ambrose and St. Jerome were no less "Hellenistic" in their intellectual outlook than were their "Greek" contemporaries, and Platonism obviously played a greater role in the spiritual formation of St. Augustine than did the "Roman Law," as the true key to Aquinas' system is Aristotle and not the *Pandects*, and one should not forget the Greek background of even Anselm. One should not forget that "Roman Law" was codified in Byzantium under Justinian, and that on the other hand, Rome itself was thoroughly Byzantine up to the time of Charlemagne, if not even later.

The antithesis of "West and East" belongs more to the polemical and publicistic phraseology than to sober historical thinking. For at least a millenium there was one world, despite all schisms and tensions, and at the time tension between "East" and "West" was by no means stronger than certain internal tensions in the East itself. In any case, St. Augustine was closer to Origen than, say, Theodore of Mopsuestia was to St. Cyril of Alexandria. It was obviously a tension not between "Greek" and "Latin," but between theological conceptions, one which by no means can simply be reduced to cultural or psychological factors. Again, the Reformation certainly was a greater break, even psychologically, than was the split between the Catholic West and the Orthodox East. The "Unity of the West" is grotesquely exaggerated by the author. "The East can think of the West only as a whole" (p. 74). Yes, but only when "the East" loses the true theological perspective and mistakes itself for a "Greco-Slavonic type" of Christianity. "Historical morphology" is a cheap substitute for theological analysis.

The author suggests that the only legitimate starting point for "ecumenical dialogue" can be found "in the depths of mystical experience, in prayer and direct knowledge of God" (p. 19). Is it not rather in historical Revelation, as recorded in the Scripture and attested by the consensus of the "Church Universal," to which the source and foundation of true Christian conversion may be traced? Secondly, a number of "logical presuppositions" are mentioned, of which the most important is "Confessionalism." It is not at all clear why it is a "logical presupposition." What is contended is very simple. Divisions are to be taken as they exist, and no denomination should be "denied." Next come "psychological presuppositions." "Ecumenism" is described as "love for heretics" (p. 99 ff). Obviously, "heretics" as persons cannot be excluded from the universality of Christian love, the test of which is "love for one's enemies." In this sense there will be no difficulty for a conscientious Christian to love his "erring Brother," as there was no difficulty for the Crucified Lord to pray for the crucifiers. But the author has something different in mind: he wants to love "heretics" for their very heresy, in order to rejoice in the fact that even heresy does not estrange people from Christ if only they invoke his name in some way. "Holiness" is possible in heresy no less than in the Church: "unorthodox, separated from the Church, but genuine holiness by the grace of God" (p. 189). One may come to the conclusion that the Church is not "necessary for salvation." And finally there are ethical presuppositions, i.e. the concept of the non-permissibility of conversions.

Many readers will put this book away shuddering and in despair. As it stands, it is a treacherous and misleading book. If it was meant to be an introduction to Ecumenism, it is no more than a wrong guide. In fact, it is the most anti-ecumenical book recently published, much more so than any hostile attack on Ecumenism. It denies the very possibility of ecumenical action. It destroys the presuppositions of Ecumenical work.

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The Ecumenical Movement, however great and ominous its shortcomings, was inspired by a noble vision of a noble goal. It is true that the way has not yet been found, and that the goal is still variously conceived or misconceived. But now it is suggested that there is no goal, and that there should be no goal.

An exhilarating sign of recent times is the recovery of a deeper understanding of the Church. The book in question here takes no notice of this theological achievement, which is also an immense spiritual advance. The author was not interested in the ecclesiological aspect of Ecumenism. He does not say anything about the recent study of the doctrine of the Church in the Ecumenical Movement. In this respect his book is a reactionary book. It takes us back — into the mists of a romantic revivalism.

It is a most untimely book in an age when one is living, as it has been aptly said, "in the midst of uncertainties and at the edge of an abyss." It is the common feeling of an overwhelming majority of Christians that the only hope for the world lies in the recovery of a "common mind." We live in an age of rapidly growing disintegration.

The Church has an immediate responsibility for the crisis. In the new interpretation of "Ecumenism" the historical task and vocation of the Church are dangerously obscured. There is no sense of tragedy in the book. The tragedy is glossed over by a "mystical," or dreamy interpretation. The "ecumenical suffering" of which the author speaks (p. 220) is not true suffering. It is romantic suffering, which one enjoys. "Pain is always a sign of life," we are told. True, but it is above all a sign of disease to be cured. To all these *reveries* there is but one sober and responsible answer, a categorical "No."

THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THE THEOLOGY OF HENRY NELSON WIEMAN

Wieman has little to say about the Church. The Church as a historic institution does not interest him. An institution, with its inevitable fabric and machinery, with dogma, officers and regulations, is not fit to serve the real human purpose as Wieman construes it. In his opinion, the only relevant motive for gathering into churches is the desire of individuals to share their common joy or wonder, i.e., their "religious" discoveries and experience. It is a kind of gregarious instinct, like that which may bring together the happy parents of new-born babies (Wieman's own analogy). Whatever else a church may be doing, he contends, "its true reason for being is to provide an opportunity for the mutual cultivation of religious vision through sharing the joy and thoughts about the precious thing which the individuals have found. Wherever two or three are gathered together to converse about this matter we have a genuine church. A church is then a free and voluntary gathering of like-minded individuals, coming together "to converse" about their "religious" discoveries. It is quite irrelevant how these discoveries have actually been made and in what name people are joining together: Jesus, Buddha or even Mohammed. Yet, in the Gospel passage to which Wieman is alluding, it is plainly stated: gathered *in My name*. The "name" in this context is clear. But Wieman continues: "Such was the church, and the only sort of church, which Jesus established. The twelve disciples gathered about him were not controlled by any machinery . . . They were bound together only because of a common vision and a common joy."¹

The phrasing here is vague and ambiguous. And from a purely historical point of view, Wieman's description is inaccurate and incomplete. The "genuine church" of which he speaks is precisely "the only sort of church" that Jesus did *not* establish. There was indeed "a common vision," or rather a *common witness*. The "vision" itself was meaningful and significant only because it was *an obedient and grateful recognition of certain mighty acts* of God — sovereign, ultimate and unique. The "joy" of the disciples was a *Messianic joy*. It was a response of faith to the act of God. God had acted. Man had to acknowledge this gracious action. Only in this perspective can the New Testament story be properly and adequately understood. The first disciples were gathering around Jesus *in response* to his call. The initiative was his. And they were responding to the call only because they had, by faith, recognized Jesus as Christ, i.e., as him *who* was to come. They were gathering around him not to converse but to listen, to hear the Good News, which was not of their own making. The "vision" of the first disciples was a historical vision, a prophetic reading and interpretation of the actual events, which were assessed and

comprehended as God's own self-disclosure. God "visited his people" in those "last" days. The Good News was apprehended as the consummation of that long story of guidance and promise which has been authoritatively recorded in "the Scriptures." The Shepherd had come and was gathering his scattered sheep into one fold. The first followers of Jesus were not isolated individuals engaged in their own private quest for truth. They were Israelites — regular members of an established and "institutional" Community, of the "Chosen People" of God. They were "waiting for the consolation of Israel." Indeed, a "Church" already existed when Jesus began his ministry. It was Israel, the People of the Covenant. The preaching of Jesus was first addressed precisely to the members of this existing "Church," to "the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Jesus never addressed individuals as individuals. The existing Covenant was the constant background of his preaching. The Sermon on the Mount was addressed not to an occasional crowd of accidental listeners, but rather to an "inner circle" of those who were already following Jesus. It was the pattern of the Kingdom. "The Little Flock," the community which Jesus had gathered around himself, was in fact, the faithful "Remnant" of Israel, a reconstituted People of God. This first community was already an "organized" community. The Twelve did not gather about Jesus by their own initiative. They were called and chosen, and finally they were "appointed" by Jesus and sent on a mission. The number itself was significant. It was clearly an allusion to the "Fullness of Israel" — "the Twelve tribes." The Twelve were sent by Jesus to proclaim and announce "the Kingdom," to recruit followers and converts. They were given by him both a commission and "authority" or "power." They were the authorized messengers of the Messianic dawn. In brief, the very first Christian community which Jesus established already had officers, definite regulations and a Messianic dogma. It was a fellowship in belief, a fellowship in witness. The core of that witness was message, *kerygma*, not experience.

This first community of the disciples was not dispersed by the shock of the Cross. It reassembled around the Risen Master. It was quickened and confirmed by the Descent of the Spirit. And then it grew rapidly under the impact of the Apostolic witness. This is the true story of the "genuine church" which Christ Jesus has established.

The Christian Church appeared on the scene of history as a formally constituted Community, with authoritative leaders (the Apostles,) with certain binding rites (Baptism and the Eucharist,) with a strongly enforced discipline and with a "creed." The Church was indeed a fellowship in faith, i.e., faith "in the Apostles' teachings." This faith was definite, concrete and historical. The faith of the early Apostolic Community was decisively Christocentric. It was not a vague religious feeling. It was a firm belief in the decisiveness of the events which had transpired in those last days. It was faith in the Risen Lord, his Cross and Resurrection. The preaching of the Early Church — the *kerygma* —

was essentially dogmatic. To be sure, it was rooted in experience. But it was the experience of the abiding Presence of Christ. This "Presence" was not only a matter of belief, but a matter of immediate knowledge. And it implied personal allegiance and commitment. This "Presence" was the ultimate factor of Christian unity, of the "unity" in the Church. To be in the Church meant to be in Christ. This overwhelming awareness of believers' communion with the Living Lord, a *koinonia*, was powerfully summarized by St. Paul in that glorious phrase which has become almost the "definition" of the Church: *which is his Body*. Corporate consciousness was the main distinctive mark of the Early Church. But the Church was known to be much more than merely a human society in which the members are bound together by common convictions. The decisive factor of unity was the divine-human encounter, grounded in the redemptive "events" of the Incarnation, Resurrection and Pentecost. These "events" were continued in the "sacraments," the foci of Christ's presence. In this sense, the Church herself was a continuing event, in the process of growth, her existence essentially dynamic.

The Church was indeed a "charismatic society," indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Yet the Church was also *an institution*. She had definite and permanent structure, a form. This form was constituted by sacraments, creed and order. There were certain "terms of communion" in the Church. One could be Christian only through incorporation into the existing body, which was not only a body of believers but above all the Body of Christ. One could not be Christian alone, by himself, but only in the fellowship of the Community, i.e., ultimately "in Christ." *Unus Christianus nullus Christianus*. Belief in the Church is proportional to belief in Christ Jesus. For the Christians, Jesus was not just a Teacher of truth or righteousness but above all the Lord and Savior, *Christos Kyrios*. Apart from that faith there was no hope. Apart from that faith there was no Church. The Christian was grounded in the acknowledgment of Divine intervention. The climax of all the mighty acts of God was precisely the very foundation of the Church into which believers are called and in which they are knit together by God's own gracious initiative and his abiding action. The Church was God's foundation, not merely a human option. Christ and the Church were intimately bound together. This was the crucial vision of the Early Christians, and the source of their joy.²

Wieman is not a historian, nor is he a theologian. He does not claim to be a Christian theologian in any confessional or professional sense of the word. He does not pose as an interpreter of Christian tradition. And accordingly he feels himself free to dismiss any element of any tradition which he judges obsolete or irrelevant according to his own criteria. It would be idle to invoke any authority against him. All historic authorities are sorely compromised in his eyes. They are diverse and discordant, and can easily be challenged even on that score. Yet Wieman can be challenged on the basis of his own criterion for

selecting the valid elements of human knowledge. "The standard, I take it, is the adequacy of its answer to the universal religious question arising out of the nature of man." In other words, that which is able to transform man as he cannot do himself is valid and relevant. This is clearly a pragmatic criterion.³

Strangely enough, Wieman does not examine the actual life of the Christian Church under the auspices of his own criterion. He simply dismisses the whole "tradition," i.e., the whole of the historic experience of Christendom, under the pretext of its discordant variety. He does not wrestle with the fact of the enormous actual impact of dogmatic and institutional Christianity on the transformation of human life and existence, which spectacularly surpassed everything "that man can do by himself." Instead, he offers his own interpretation, which does not agree with facts. Wieman readily retains certain bits of Christian phraseology but he uses traditional terms in his own unusual and therefore misleading manner. He admits the impact of Christianity. But he refuses to admit its uniqueness. He interprets the experience of Christians in his own terms. But the effectiveness of that experience depends upon the very elements which Wieman so easily discards. The "transforming" power of the faith of the Christian martyrs depended upon their firm and radical commitment to the unique and historic Redeemer, Christ Jesus, and apart from that conviction this faith could not have survived.

The whole of the New Testament is a witness to the same. The power of Christianity was grounded in its historicity in "the scandal of particularity." To interpret the Christian achievement, which Wieman does not wish to dismiss altogether, in terms of the parity of all religions is to misinterpret it without any regard to the texture of real life. Whatever Wieman may believe himself, he must interpret the experience of others in their own terms, not in his. It is unfair to dismiss the whole structure of the historic Church as machinery without a thorough study of the transforming power of that structure which embraces Sacrament and Creed.

Wieman really belongs to the modern generation which can be described as "post-Christian." He finds himself in the world which has been shaped by Christian impulses, ideas and insights. To a great extent, this world still keeps an imprint of its Christian origin, little as this may be recognized by modern man. Yet even those elements of its fabric which can be traced back to Christian sources are now functioning in their own right, as it were, not on account of any Christian authority, be it the Bible, the Church or the personal experience of "life in Christ." Therefore, it may *seem* that these particular features possess an intrinsic validity apart from their original source. One may forget that, in actuality, they are but bits of a broken and distorted whole. One can deceive oneself into believing that the power of Christian conviction did not depend upon the actual content of the Christian faith. But nothing would be left of the radiant joy of St.

Paul or of St. Francis of Assisi apart from their belief that the truth was in Jesus in an exclusive and unique way, without any parallel anywhere. In brief, Wieman's appraisal is not derived from a thorough examination of the concrete historical evidence but is imposed upon that evidence, which is quoted very summarily and not examined in its actual structure and wealth. And for that reason, Wieman fails to observe that the Church did belong to the very *esse* of Christianity, from its first inception.

Even those who approach the Christian tradition from without, lacking actual faith and commitment, are often moved to acknowledge the Church both as a fact and as an idea, as a major and abiding contribution of Christianity to the spiritual life and welfare of mankind at large. Their vision and understanding of the Church may be vague and confused, their motives may be ambiguous. Yet their witness is no less significant and symptomatic, even if it is inspired more by philosophical, sociological or even pragmatist considerations than by genuine religious insight. It will suffice to quote here but one American witness. Wieman himself mentions, in his *Intellectual Autobiography*, the name of Josiah Royce, although he refers to *The World and the Individual* and not to *The Problem of Christianity*. Royce was not a Christian in the traditional or confessional sense of the term. His religious position was violently and bitterly denounced in his own time by theologians of various persuasions, especially among American Protestants. On the other hand, his witness has been gratefully acknowledged by such thinkers as Gabriel Marcel. Indeed, Royce's position was peculiar. He was deeply impressed by the Christian legacy, yet was strangely indifferent to the Person and teachings of Christ. As a philosopher, he was guided by the basic convictions that he discovered in the New Testament, although they appear in his system in a twisted and confused form. He was deeply moved by the vision of the "Beloved Community," the Church, which he found especially in the writings of St. Paul. He was deeply convinced that the doctrine of the Church constituted a vital and paramount part of Christianity. And he endeavored to commend to the modern mind the perennial truth of Christian tradition which for him culminated in the vision of "the Great Community," bound together in allegiance and love.

Professional theologians, and indeed committed Christians, will be sorely disappointed and embarrassed by the vagueness of Royce's conception, unorthodox and flagrantly inadequate. In a sense, his vision of the Great Community was no more than a dim and dreamy replica of the old conception of an Invisible Church, considerably watered down and clothed in an idealistic fog. Clearly, Royce did not believe in Christ as Savior. But he was ready to believe in the Beloved Community as the only way of salvation. Christians will dismiss Royce's Christianity as a deceptive counterfeit. But they should not ignore the validity of his

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witness and his challenge. Royce succeeded in discovering the greatness of the Church, if only in its sociological dimension.⁴

Failure to recognize the Church as a reality and as an idea should be regarded, even from an outsider's point of view, as a major gap or flaw in any attempt to come to grips with the human situation today in all of its urgency, complexity and depth.

¹WRT, pp. 126-129.

²It would be out of place to attempt here any exhaustive bibliography on the nature and origin of the Church. Wieman seems to depend upon antiquated information, tainted by the "individualism" of the last century. Modern scholarship has convincingly shown that the Church was the basic and crucial category of the Christian existence. A few books may be mentioned here: Olof Linton, *Das Problem der Urkirche in der neueren Forschung*, Uppsala (1932); A. M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, Longmans, London (1936); R. Newton Flew, *Jesus and His Church*, London (1938); J. Robert Nelson, *The Realm of Redemption: Studies in the Doctrine of the Nature of the Church in Contemporary Protestant Theology*, London, the Epworth Press (1951).

³See TIMF, p. 257.

⁴Josiah Royce, *The Problem of Christianity*, 2 vols., Macmillan (1914); "What Is Vital in Christianity," in *William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life*, Macmillan (1911). Cf. John Edwin Smith, *Royce's Social Infinite: An analysis of the Theory of Interpretation and Community*, The Liberal Arts Press, N.Y. (1950); Gabriel Marcel, *La Métaphysique de Royce*, Paris, Éditions Montaigne, S.A. (1945); originally in the *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* (1917-1918).

A REVIEW OF ZANKOW'S *DAS ORTHODOXE CHRISTENTUM DES OSTENS*

The book of Fr. Zankow was written for Western readers, for the German Protestant world. It is an answer to the question raised as to the "nature of Eastern Christianity." The author's answer is short and clear. The Orthodox Church is the "Church of tradition." It is and wants to be an ancient Church, the Church of the Apostles and the Great Fathers, the Church of Early Christianity, the Church of the Universal Councils and of indivisible unity" (p. 31). Herein lies its living beginning and focus. And along with this, it is the Church of inner freedom, freedom in unity and love. In a series of essays, Fr. Zankow affirms this characterization with an account and analysis of doctrine, Church self-awareness, Church services, piety and historical matters. He writes with a feeling and consciousness of all the significance and novelty of the times we are living through. In the nineteenth century, he maintains, a "period of early Renaissance of Orthodoxy" began. The spark of a new life is ascending, and today the Orthodox East "stands before the task of its own pure self-realization (pp. 27-8). And in this decisive time, it meets with the Protestant world. There too, in recent years, a religious restoration and mystical ascent is in progress — the hunger for Churchism and universal unity is manifested and sharpened. The author writes under the living and fresh impression of recent and increasingly frequent meeting of Orthodoxy with Protestantism. With all the differences and divergences, the author feels and emphasizes the closeness of the East and the Protestant West. The Christocentric sense and character of Protestant piety — this is what is dear and close to the Orthodox heart, and what makes both possible and desirable an encounter in unity of spirit and true love.

Fr. Zankow had to speak of many things and he therefore could not, of course, say everything. Perhaps his Western listeners and readers did not and do not understand him correctly in everything. First and foremost, it is hardly worthwhile to say, without accurate and clear-cut explanations, that "Church dogma is really not wide in scope" (p. 37, p. 62, app.81). There is a certain ambiguity in the usual and customary definition of the notion of "dogmata" and "dogma." In the strict and narrow sense of the word, "dogmata" inseparably links doctrinal features and canonical ones. In this sense, dogmata is not only the "truth of faith," but the definition of faith established and recognized by the universal consciousness, and the universal will and power of the Church. In it, form and content are indivisible, and therefore not only the "sense" but also the logical and lexical structure, the very manner of enunciation, is unalterable and unchanged. And not only in meaning but

also in letters are the Symbol of Faith and the *oros* of the Universal Councils unchanged and obligatory, and the development of "dogmata" is impossible even in a "subjective-formal" regard. In addition, it is completely incorrect to allow that beyond the borders or "fences" of dogmatic definitions, the area of 'the doubtful' begins, in which unity is not obligatory and "freedom" is impossible — *in dubiis libertas!* Dogmatic formulæ are not confined to and do not cover all the completeness of the "articles of faith" (*credenda de fide*), they do not cover the entire completeness of "the necessary" in Church jurisdiction. The "truth of faith" is greater than "dogmata." In Church experience there is immeasurably more given and revealed than is expressed and enunciated in the inviolable words. And the necessity of this experience, God-given and infallible, is not lessened by the fact that it is not fitted out and provided with the verbal armor of dogmatic definitions. For example, can the living self-awareness of the Church, revealed and confessed liturgically, be considered only "probably" and subject to arbitrary selection and measures? "Liturgical theology," Archbishop Theodore correctly pointed out, "that is, the theology of the entire assembly of Church songwriters and writers, in most cases renowned by the Orthodox Church and reckoned among the saints, expressed by them in Church-service creation and accepted for use by the entire Orthodox Church, truly should be seen as an unceasing (over the course of whole centuries) and living confession of the faith-consciousness of the entire Orthodox Church throughout its history and life; this is theology in the proper sense of the word of the entire Church, and not of one particular era, person or theological school." The chaste silence and reticence of the Orthodox Church in the West is often taken for dogmatic minimalism. And namely to this were related, for example, the difficulties encountered by the question of the rapprochement of the Russian Orthodox Church with German Old Catholicism and the Church of England. Great accuracy and strictness are therefore needed here in definitions. And more than anything else, one must remember that dogmata and truth of faith are testimony of experience, in which everything is given simply, even though it can be known and described in words to various degrees.

Fr. Zankow touches upon the important and difficult question of the boundaries of the Church, and takes the view that Christians of other faiths should be recognized as part of the Church, the One Christian Church (pp. 73ff). To this question he could spare, unfortunately, only a little more than three pages. Meanwhile, therein lies the entire meaning of the meeting of the Orthodox with the Western world. In the judgment of Fr. Zankow there is a certain truth. In this connection one recalls the perceptive words of Khomiakov regarding those who are bound to the Church by ties which Our Lord did not allow her to untie. The reality of baptism, performed in the name of the Holy Trinity, even if beyond the canonical boundaries of the Church, is a great and

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prophetic mystery. The gates of the Church are opening, and in truth are being opened by people who are foreign to her. And in the unity of baptism, in a certain respect, everyone belongs to the one body. This is difficult to translate into the language of dogmatic ideas. There is a certain enigma of the mystical Church court. But this does not mean that the Church wall "does not rise up to the heavens." This means that the Spirit manifests itself according to its Will. And Christ does not chase away those who come to him, but embraces even their very intention. It is time to think seriously of this. And perhaps then, "Eastern" and "Western" souls will open to one another.

Translated from the Russian by

Linda Morris

