

**THE EASTERN CHURCHES
AND CATHOLIC UNITY**

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The Eastern Churches and Catholic Unity

Edited by

MAXIMOS IV SAYEGH

*Patriarch of Antioch and of All the East,
of Alexandria and of Jerusalem*

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Publisher's Note

IT IS PERHAPS NOT an exaggeration to say that when an average Catholic thinks of the Church he thinks of a highly organized, highly centralized world-wide institution, with its centre at Rome; and that when an average Eastern Orthodox thinks of the Church he thinks of it in his own country, in Greece or Russia or Serbia or elsewhere, with its chief bishop at Athens or Moscow or Belgrade.

It is a mistake to suppose that this difference is due simply to a very strong feeling of nationality in religion among the Orthodox. That has its part in it; but the difference is deeply rooted in ecclesiastical and religious history and thought as well.

For a thousand years and more, until the complete estrangement between Christian East and West, the One Church was organized on a sort of federal basis. She was made up of five distinct parts, each with a bishop called a patriarch at its head. These parts were the patriarchate of the West, the bishop of Rome being its patriarch, and the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople, of which the last became the most important and powerful in the East.

It was recognized that the patriarch of the West, the pope, as successor of St. Peter, was the chief of the patriarchs, and that one of his functions was everywhere to arbitrate decisively in ecclesiastical disputes, whether doctrinal or personal. But each of the five patriarchates was administratively independent: it appointed its own hierarchy, legislated for itself, and had its own liturgy of worship. Accordingly, it was not tolerated that a patriarch should intervene uninvited in the internal affairs of another patriarchate. And ecclesiastical tension between East and West was greatly aggravated when, at the time of the crusades, the patriarch of the West permitted a Latin, Western, hierarchy to be set up in Eastern territory.

After East and West had finally drifted apart, the pope's function as patriarch of the West was unaltered. But his function as supreme pontiff was no longer effective outside the Western or Latin church. Therefore the distinction between the two offices was lost sight of in the West; it was forgotten that much of the pope's authority over the Roman Catholic Church was in his *patriarchal*, not in his *supreme* pontifical aspect. This continued to be so even when, in time, certain relatively small bodies of Orthodox were reconciled with the Roman communion. And the position was intensified when Western missionary activity among the heathen made the Latin church literally worldwide. One of the needs of Western Catholics in these days is to regain consciousness of the distinction between the pope as Western patriarch and the pope as supreme pontiff.

In the Orthodox East, on the other hand, patriarchal organization continued and was emphasized. Today, Constantinople is still the senior Eastern see, "first among equals". It is but a pale shadow of its former greatness in extent of territory and number of faithful; but its prestige remains considerable. The events of ecclesiastical and secular history have also reduced the other three ancient

patriarchates, of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, to very small dimensions.

But in the year 1589 a fifth Orthodox patriarchate was formed, when the huge Russian church became independent of Constantinople; and today, in spite of all that has happened since 1917 – partly because of what has happened – the patriarchate of Moscow is in some respects the most important of the Orthodox churches. After the first world-war the churches of the Serbs and of the Rumanians also became patriarchates, and in 1953 so did the Bulgarian church. The faithful of the kingdom of Greece do not form a patriarchate; but their church is autocephalous, independent, which virtually means that it is patriarchal in fact but not in name. It shares with the Russian church the most influential place in Orthodoxy.

Throughout their history, then, from their very earliest days, the churches of the East have lived in a state of local autonomy. And this is not a matter simply and solely of organization: it has religious and theological aspects as well. When the Orthodox look at the Catholic Church they see a mighty organization, with almost everywhere a single structure and system of discipline and administration; with a minutely developed system of canon law; with a highly systematized theology; with a central curia at Rome daily concerned in the affairs of the whole Church. And the theology and practice of papal authority have been clarified and developed, becoming more explicit and far-reaching. In a sentence, they see a church everywhere redolent of the religious history and mind of Western Europe. Not only do the Orthodox see that these characteristics of the Roman Catholic Church have steadily spread and intensified over the centuries; they see also that, in spite of official promises to the contrary, some of these characteristics have affected and marked even the small bodies of Catholic Easterners (the so-called uniats).

The Orthodox are repelled by all this. They do not ask the Westerners to alter these things: they are our affair, and Westerners are as entitled to their religious temperament and mentality, ways and customs, as Easterners are to theirs. But when the Roman Catholic Church invites the Orthodox Church to join with her in Christian unity, the Orthodox are very disturbed in mind.

What they are afraid of is that Rome would try to assimilate them into the Western system, that the age-long Orthodox tradition in these matters would be destroyed and lost.

Time and again the popes have declared that the Catholic Church has no wish or intention to change Eastern tradition in such matters as those referred to. But the Orthodox are not convinced – they point, for instance, to innovations and changes among the “uniats”. They know that the rank and file of Roman Catholics, clergy and laity, are at last beginning slowly to understand that Easterners are properly entitled to their own liturgy and canon law; but they soon learn that these same Catholics seem to balk at what may be called the patriarchal principle of local self-governing churches.

There are a number of matters at issue between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, and no doubt the theological ones are the most important in the abstract. It is arguable that in the concrete the matter of the patriarchal principle is equally important, at any rate to Easterners.

The question is insistent: “Is it possible for the Catholic Church to return in some fashion to its structure of before the separation?”

Perhaps history supplies the answer to this, as to so many other questions.

At the general councils of Lyons in 1274 and Florence in 1439 canonical communion was restored between the Eastern churches and the see of Rome (though in either case only for a very short time). The basis of these reconcil-

iations was, precisely, a recognition of the distinction between the pope as patriarch and the pope as supreme pontiff; that is, a recognition of the full respect due to the autonomy of the Eastern churches in whatever concerns their internal government. That is how it was from the beginning of their history, and it is a chief element in their tradition.

During the past four hundred years, then, certain specifically Western characteristics have been extended to the Catholic Eastern churches. From time to time Eastern Catholics have reacted against this process, both to safeguard the integrity of their own churches and to prevent the heightening of the barrier between the Catholic Church and the Eastern churches which are not in communion with her. In recent years the outstanding champions of the Eastern tradition and customs have been the patriarch of the Catholic Melkites, Kyr Maximos IV, and his bishops. Their presence and zealous defence of the Catholic principle "in matters of necessity — unity, in doubtful matters — freedom, in all matters — charity" have left a mark on the discussions of the Roman Council.

In view of today's concern with the problems of Christian renewal and unity it seems opportune to put translations of some of the statements of these Melkite hierarchs before the public, so that English-speaking Catholics may have some documentation on the subject and gain a better idea of the issues involved and their significance.

It is perhaps desirable to explain that "Melkites" is an old name given to all those Christians in the Near East who were faithful to the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451. The Catholic Melkites are Catholics of Byzantine rite in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine and elsewhere: that is, they are the Catholic "opposite number" of the Orthodox in those regions. They form only a small church; but historically and hierarchically they are of great importance: they are the only

Catholic Byzantines with a patriarch at their head, and that patriarch can claim succession from the old line of the see of Antioch.

In this book these people and their church are frequently referred to as "Greek Catholic". But it must be clearly understood that they are not Hellenes, they do not live in Greece, and their language of public worship is not normally Greek, but Arabic. It may be, too, that readers will be puzzled by the use of the terms "Latin", "latinization" etc. In the countries concerned, "Latins" is the word commonly used to indicate Catholics of the Western church, of whatever nationality.

For handy reference, the following are the existing Eastern churches:

I. The *Orthodox Eastern Church*, consisting of the following autocephalous (independent) churches: the patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow, Serbia, Rumania and Bulgaria, the Church of Greece and some smaller churches.

These represent the Eastern church between which and Rome a state of separation gradually became lasting after the eleventh century. Total of faithful, c. 75 million (assuming some 25 million in the U. S. S. R.).

II. The *Nestorian Church*, separated after the Council of Ephesus in 431. Once a far-flung powerful body, but now numbering only some 75,000 persons, in Iraq and neighbourhood ("Assyrians").

III. The *Monophysite Churches*, separated after the Council of Chalcedon in 451. They are (i) the Syrian Jacobite Church, (ii) the Indian Jacobite Church, (iii) the Coptic Church (Egypt), (iv) the Ethiopian Church, (v) the Armenian Church. Total of faithful, c. 12 million (half of them in Ethiopia).

The Nestorian and Monophysite churches are not, of course, in communion with either the Catholic or Orthodox churches.

IV. The *Catholic Eastern Churches* (the figures in brackets refer to the corresponding non-Catholic bodies).

I. The Catholic Melkite Church (under the patriarch of Antioch and All the East, Alexandria and Jerusalem); dioceses and exarchates of Ukrainians and Ruthenians in the Americas; small organizations of Byzantine Catholics elsewhere. The large churches of Ukrainians (formerly in Poland, now in U. S. S. R.) and of Rumanians in Transylvania were disrupted by the civil power after 1945 and 1948.

II. The Chaldean Church (under the patriarch of Babylon, in Iraq).

III. a) The Catholic Syrians (under their patriarch of Antioch); b) the Syro-Malabarese and the Malankarese Catholics (India); c) the Catholic Copts (under their patriarch of Alexandria); d) the Catholic Ethiopians; e) the Catholic Armenians (under the patriarch of Cilicia, in Lebanon). There is no dissident church corresponding to the Maronites (under their patriarch of Antioch). Total of faithful, over 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ million (excluding disrupted churches, which numbered 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ million in 1945).

Some relevant books

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II. The ... of ... in ...

III. ... of ... in ... the ... of ... in ... the ... of ... in ... which ... in 1942.

A. ... (London, 1917).
 M. ... (London and New York, 1927).
 R. M. ... (London and New York, 1927).
 S. ... (London, 1927).
 J. ... (London, 1927).
 Y. ... (London, 1927).
 C. J. ... (London, 1927).

Preface

NOTWITHSTANDING the smallness of its numbers and lack of resources, our Greek Melkite Catholic Church is becoming increasingly aware of its fundamental vocation in the service of Christian unity.

Everything about it points to the fulfilment of this task — our history and institutions, our background and, above all, the irresistible power of the Holy Spirit.

Christian unity has become our main preoccupation, indeed, almost our obsession. We cannot reflect on any problem concerning the Church without placing it, as though by instinct, in an oecumenical context.

Since becoming patriarch, we have revised many of our traditional views in this light and have also tried to ensure that no human interest, either our own or that of others, will stand in the way of a closer understanding with our separated brethren, or will prove a stumbling block.

Obstacles to union are necessarily human in origin. No one reproaches Christ, but Christians think they have many reasons for reproaching one another. To the extent therefore that we are capable of self-effacement, enabling Christ's message to be delivered without adulteration, the work of union will be advanced.

We have sincerely examined our own conscience as an Eastern church, fundamentally and indefectibly linked with the See of Peter. In loyalty to our vocation, we have tried to see what there is in our attitude that could hinder the reunion of Christians or prevent our separated brothers from seeing in us the unblemished features of the one Church of Christ the Redemeer.

We have not attempted to examine the consciences of others. God alone rules consciences. But we cannot fail to be aware that if we were to fulfil our vocation as unifiers by providing a true example and perfect model of what union ought to be, many obstacles not of our own making would have first to be removed. These have arisen from the abnormal situation of the Eastern communities within the Catholic fold.

Having reached this conclusion, we informed the competent authorities simply and frankly of the reforms we deemed necessary for the furtherance of union.

We believe frankness within the Church to be not only necessary but a strict duty. Nothing is more harmful to the Church than silence dictated by fear, or flattery with an ulterior motive. Far from excluding respect, frankness is necessary if respect is to exist at all.

If the note struck in some of the following contributions appears surprising, the reader should attribute this to our distress at division among Christians. We cannot remain indifferent or unmoved when confronted with the problem that provides us with the very reason for our existence as a church. Within a Catholicity that is largely Latin, we have to remain Eastern, and within an Eastern Christianity that is predominantly Orthodox, we have to remain Catholic. We do not do so out of a desire for singularity or merely from attachment to our ancient traditions, but in order to do what Christ and his Church expect of us. We owe it to Christ to maintain this twofold and equal loyalty to Catholicism and to the East and we owe it also to those

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who, believing in Christ's name, seek by tolerance and prayer to get to know one another better.

To serve this cause, we have prayed, worked, suffered and on occasions taken up our pen. What we have had to say has been developed and often enriched by our own venerable brothers in the episcopate, and by our dear children, the priests and laity of our church. It has indeed been a great joy to us to represent and sustain the effort of our church, an effort in which priests and people have worked in closest union.

Some of our Western friends, humbly calling themselves "Servants of the Eastern Church"¹, have asked us to authorize publication in a single volume of a number of contributions likely to give an international audience some indication of the main writings of our church.

¹ The "Servants of the Eastern Church" are a group of Western Christians who wish to dedicate themselves to the service of the Catholic Church in the East. This church, and indeed the land and peoples themselves, are far poorer than their counterparts in the churches and peoples of Europe and North America as a whole, and in Germany where this group has been established. The "Servants", however, are not concerned with poverty and riches in the ordinary sense. They note another and truer kind of indigence in the West as well as the East, and also see in both another and more real form of treasure. On both sides, they find a state of great spiritual underdevelopment. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit who breathes where he will, they hope to act in such a way that the Church, both in East and West, will be enriched by a greater mutual recognition of spiritual values and by a keener awareness of weaknesses. The "Servants" have no material resources, and not even an organization. They have decided to remain as they are, poor and free. Their aim is to bring their Mother the Church face to face with the gospel and spirit of Jesus Christ, hoping that in doing so they will be afforded the grace of making ever more true the words of St. Paul: "... Christ showed love to the Church when he gave himself up on its behalf. He would hallow it, purify it by bathing it in the water to which his word gave life; he would summon it into his own presence, the Church in all its beauty, no stain, no wrinkle, no such disfigurement; it was to be holy, it was to be spotless" (Eph. 5:25—27).

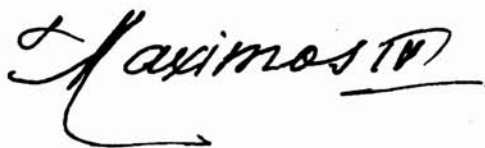
Selection was not easy. In order to keep the work within bounds, it was decided to devote this volume to the writings of the bishops of our patriarchate. In spite of this limitation, a further choice still had to be made, but the range is wide enough to give an idea of our efforts.

This publication should give the Western reader a new outlook coinciding as it does with the general Council, over which there presides the winning and evangelical personality of Pope John XXIII, who has opened new paths for the work of union.

We believe that Christians would love one another more if they knew one another better, that their mutual antagonisms are the fruit more of ignorance than of ill-will.

We entrust this book to the holy Mother of God. May she be pleased to bless this humble effort to bring about the union of all her children in Christ.

Ain-Traz, Lebanon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Maximos IV". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Patriarch of Antioch and of All the East,
of Alexandria and of Jerusalem.

1

Vocation and Destiny of the Christian East

Our Vocation as Eastern Christians¹

BY ARCHBISHOP NEOPHYTOS EDELBY

MY TASK today is to talk to you of our vocation as Christians and Catholics in the Arab Near East and in doing so I propose to leave out of account cultural, political and other questions, relating to our presence as part of the wider community, in order to confine myself solely to the religious aspect. If I were to examine the situation fully, I would have to deal with a number of other important matters, but I hope this briefer treatment will not be found to lack objectivity. In any human problem, considered against the background of a country's destiny, it is the religious features that call for the closest study because the problem of a country's religion and that of its destiny are the same. This is all the more true when we are looking at the position of a particular religious group.

Religious groups within the Church, like individual members, each have a particular mission to fulfil. Neither the State nor the Church should be regarded as a mere assembly of similar units in juxtaposition, an agglomeration

¹ Lecture given to a Catholic youth club in Aleppo in February, 1953, first published in the review *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, Jerusalem, t. III (1953), pp. 201-17.

of separate and equal members, each working out his personal destiny, divorced from the activity of the group as a whole. The Church is a living body whose members differ from one another, not merely as believers, in accordance with the amount of grace received, but also, and more especially, in the collective sense. For the good of the whole, each group has its own mission which it cannot deny without being unfaithful to itself. Failure will make it useless and indeed will quickly render it harmful, since, by continuing to occupy its place, it will bar the way to others capable of taking over more effectively.

It is said that once a people loses its sense of purpose, the nation itself crumbles. Similarly, a Christian group starts to vegetate once it no longer understands what God expects of it. Since the strength of the individual member normally depends on the vigour of the whole body, this lack of vitality threatens the spiritual health of the whole group. It is not sufficient to have an élite, fully responsive to the divine call. If we are to preserve the spirituality of the community and enjoy in return the influence the community can exercise on our own spiritual life, we must raise ourselves together to the level to which we are called.

It would be foolish to believe that we could carry on for any length of time, come what may and oblivious to the evident crisis through which our institutions are passing, closing our eyes to the origin of the trouble, or trying to palliate it with remedies that are worse than useless. "We cannot be satisfied for ever with the scent from an empty vase", says the proverb. Christians in the East must either be worthy of their mission or disappear. The situation is too serious to allow us to take things easily.

From any standpoint, the position of Christians and more especially of Catholics in the Arab Near East is a special one. We form a tiny minority in the mass of

the Moslem population and we can think of ourselves as a fine, bright-coloured thread, worked in and out through a tightly woven cloth of deeper hue. Within this Christian minority, the Catholic communities constitute a number of frail branches, as it were, united to the trunk of the Universal Church. Eastern Catholics are in a special category within this Church for they have their own rites and disciplines. They are Arab but not Moslem, Eastern but not schismatic, Catholics but not Latin. This threefold characteristic marks our difference from our fellows and also signifies the conflict that is a fundamental feature of our collective existence. We are minorities and find ourselves exceptions to the rule from every point of view. Exceptions, as I know only too well, are never popular. There is a general desire to fit everything into its own place, to have everybody marching in line and in step. In human relations, minorities are what the exception is in grammar – inconvenient but inevitable. Life cannot be expressed in geometrical terms.

The practical but superficial mind finds itself constantly tempted to eliminate the troublesome exception. It seems so much better to reduce everything to a common measure. I could give many examples in different fields of oversimplified solutions of this kind. When they are not the result of an anti-religious outlook or of all too human ambition, they reflect a fundamental ignorance of God's plan whereby, in spite of everything, these weak vestiges of Christianity and Catholicism have been preserved as a living witness to Christ in the heart of Islam, as a sign of hope and a seed of the eventual reunion of the great Christian family. They are, so to speak an effective guarantee of catholicity within the Church. The evident singularity of our position can be regarded as pointing providentially to a threefold aspect of our vocation as a religious group.

1. Witness to Christ in the Heart of Islam

It is a fact that, with the exception of the Arab Middle East, wherever Islam has taken root, Christianity has ceased to exist.

When the Arab conquerors arrived in Africa in 647 they found a large Christian Church made up of between 150 and 200 dioceses. Within a few years these had dwindled to thirty or forty. In 749 the Governor of Africa, Abd Er-Rahmân, found himself unable to raise further revenue for the Calif in Bagdad since conversion to Islam had dried up at source the taxes of *jizya* and *kharaj* levied on Christians. In 1053 only five dioceses remained and by 1075 all but one had gone. The arrival of the Almohades in 1148 wiped out all that was left of indigenous Christianity in the Magreb. Thenceforth, there were only a few slaves and foreign merchants and a few mercenaries in the pay of the sultans to carry on the worship of Christ. In present day Tunisia, there are about 175,000 Catholics against a European population of 173,000, while in Algeria there are 724,000 Catholics and a European population of 872,000. Such a close relation between the numbers of Catholics and Europeans shows that indigenous Christianity has ceased to exist in North Africa.

The situation in the South of Spain was no better. By the middle of the twelfth century, Christianity and a Christian hierarchy had already disappeared from the kingdoms of Cordova, Seville and Grenada. In 1313, the Jews were the only remaining adherents of a Scriptural religion on whom Abul Walid, King of Grenada, could exercise his choice of persecution or toleration. The only Christians Ferdinand the Catholic found when he recaptured Seville from the Moors in the fifteenth century were among the captives. It was the knights from the Northern provinces and the Inquisition who were responsible for restoring a Christian aspect to Andalusia.

Asia Minor had been the centre of early Christianity and in the period immediately before the Seljukian invasion of the eleventh century there were still no less than 624 episcopal sees in the area, forming part of the famous patriarchate of Constantinople. By the morrow of the Ottoman conquest of the fifteenth century only seventy-two metropolitan sees, seventy-eight suffragan sees and eight autocephalic archbishoprics remained. Since 1922, there have never been more than four bishops of resident sees and the number of the faithful has never exceeded 100,000.

In Mongolia, Christianity preceded Islam. Ghengis-Khan's grandson, Guyuk, was baptized in 1246 by a Nestorian bishop. Kitbuka, the general in charge of Mongol forces in the Middle East under Ghengis-Khan's grandson Hulagu, was a Nestorian and in 1260 he was found preparing to take Jerusalem from the Mamelukes to restore it to the Christians. But Christianity was already beginning to lose ground by the time of Ghazan (1295-1304) who became a Moslem, and when Tamerlane reached the throne it had already completely disappeared from Central Asia, never to return.

An explanation sometimes heard for the disappearance of Christianity from Africa is that Islam was less liberal there than elsewhere. This may be true of the later Middle Ages and would readily be accounted for by the fact that from the twelfth century, with the disappearance of indigenous Christianity, all Christians with whom African Moslems came into contact were foreigners and thus opponents in the political as well as the religious sense. Up to that time, however, African Christians like those in the Middle East, had been free to retain their religion, subject to the customary conditions of the *dhimma*. The choice "believe or die" was never offered to Christians in either Africa or the East. This does not, of course, imply a complete absence of violence or that there was no indirect

pressure, but though Jews in Africa were subjected to conditions at least as onerous, they survived the trial. Christians in North Africa, Southern Spain, Asia Minor and Mongolia suffered no greater trials than our own people, yet we are still here, fewer it is true, but active. It is the others who have disappeared.

In Iraq, there are still more than 200,000 Christians and in Syria, out of a total population of 3,177,000, Christians number 443,000 or roughly fourteen per cent. Official lists for the Lebanon show that out of a population of 1,303,000, there are 700,000 Christians or 53.7 per cent. In Israel, there are now only 40,000 Christians out of a population of over 1,500,000, making 2.8 per cent. We know, however, that there were 135,000 Christians in Palestine before the partition of 1948. In Jordan, Christians probably number up to 160,000 or eight per cent of the population. Egyptian Christians number three million out of a total of 21 million — that is about fourteen per cent.

The only way we can explain the survival of these Christian groups in the Moslem Near East is on the basis of a close providential link between our destiny as Eastern Christians and the destiny of Islam. This link has its origin in history and in number of natural affinities, which are themselves the sign of a true vocation.

A vocation is a "mission" in the highest sense of the word. We must recognize that Eastern Christianity will never completely fulfil its rôle until it becomes aware of its missionary responsibilities. Eastern Christian churches are not just historical relics whose sole function is to satisfy the curiosity of archaeologists and dilettantes. They are not to be treated with condescension as a kind of racial throwback, nor are they closed communities, incapable of further growth and condemned to inertia while everything is changing around them. Eastern Christians have a missionary rôle in the Church which, apparently, they

alone can fulfil. This is to bear witness to Christ before the Moslems.

It is easy to claim that proselytism is deplorable, outdated and dangerous. If proselytism is taken to mean a type of apostolate that violates the liberty of souls, we would be among the first to condemn it. What Christ expects of us is not so much to convert souls as to put at their disposal the means of knowing the truth. We must press for the right to impart information as well as to obtain it ourselves, for the right to enable our brothers to learn about an ideal of spiritual life of which they are so far ignorant.

But it seems that in bearing this witness of Christian friendship towards Islam, we Eastern Christians have been driven back on ourselves. An unhappy past has embittered us. Islam has given us many martyrs and, unfortunately, even more apostates. The life of the Christian in the Islamic world was never a happy one. Without accepting as history what is more often the fruit of an unfettered imagination, we can find in the works of the Arab historians and in the accounts left by the pilgrims of the Middle Ages, details of disabilities which, if they were not always in fact applied, still hung like a sword of Damocles over the heads of Christians. Among these restrictions were the prohibition of such things as riding horseback, using saddles, wearing new clothes, walking ahead of a Moslem on the road, ringing bells, holding public funerals and bringing out processional crosses. Humiliating forms of greeting were prescribed, special colours and types of clothes were obligatory for Christians and they were required to wear heavy crosses round their necks, and pay severe taxes. They were also the subject of many other affronts which would be scarcely believable had some not been continued almost to our own times.

It is not surprising that, having been ill-treated so long and so harshly, Eastern Christians should have shut

themselves in, thinking only of how to keep themselves apart and defend themselves. Persecution may be stimulating but it also leads to a shutting of the heart. The Celtic Christians in Wales and Cornwall provided us with an example of this with their refusal for years on end to work for the conversion of the Saxon conquerors, opposing the mission of St. Augustine of Canterbury and failing to understand that it was their duty to open the gates of Heaven to the fierce invaders who had devastated their country and destroyed their churches. Recent examples are furnished by the attitude of English Catholics to the Malines conversations, and by that of Poles and Ukrainians to the Russians.

I admit the existence of some real grounds for complaint. These lie in the recruitment to the civil service, the distribution of public appointments, competitive and other examinations, government subsidies, the schools question, and in many other spheres. It is evident that being Christian is a considerable handicap for us, but it is also true that in spite of reverses and outbursts of fanaticism here and there, the Arab countries are moving gently, perhaps too gently to please some people, towards a more democratic conception of the social order and towards a real liberty of conscience which will greatly help us in our providential mission. This is a long term effort which will require as much patience on our part as firmness on the part of the political authorities in each country. But however things turn out, Eastern Christianity has a vocation to suffering and humility which it must be ready to accept in advance if it is to answer God's call.

Our vocation requires us to show confidence in our own countries. We must get rid of what can be called the minority complex. This consists in believing oneself to be continually persecuted, in moaning all the time and looking everywhere for protection. It would certainly be unwise to close our eyes to the very real dangers threatening

Christianity in the Arab countries but the more clear-sighted among us have surely a duty to calm the fears of the masses by arousing their confidence in the society in which they live. It does no good to restrict ourselves to a sterile admiration of the apparently better conditions enjoyed by Christians in other countries. Each country has its own problems and ours may well not be the most difficult ones to resolve.

Our vocation implies that we should take a full part in the life of our particular countries. We must at all costs avoid seeming foreigners in them, holding ourselves aloof, and showing ourselves half-hearted citizens, lacking interest in the cultural, economic and social movements inspiring the younger generations.

The main reason for the disappearance of African Christianity was that it never put down deep roots among the local people. Christianity never became africanized; what did take place was equivalent to a romanization. The bishop was primarily the pastor of the Roman colonizers, ministering also to those natives who had decided to mix with the Romans and had become more or less latinized in the process. There was never more than one liturgy in Africa – the Roman liturgy. Nowhere have we been able to find traces of a Carthaginian or Berber liturgy. African Christianity remained an importation.

I shall not make the mistake of drawing too hasty a parallel between the situation of Christianity in Africa and the position sometimes adopted, perhaps unconsciously, in the Near East, but it must be admitted that in these countries Christianity does often wear a foreign appearance. Our Western brothers living among us tend, all unawares, to foster in the minds of our Moslem fellow citizens the suspicion that Christianity in the East is a foreign institution, politically, culturally and socially linked with Western civilization. How can the Moslems fail to think thus when they see what little attention is

still paid in various places to their culture, history and language which are as much ours as theirs? Up to the first world war, Christians were in the front rank of the Arab intellectual renaissance but since then, it must be admitted, we have dropped back. Our vocation requires a revision of our cultural standards. Western culture is necessary to us if we are to fulfil our mission as a link between East and West and we must not turn our back on it, but we must also have a proper scale of values, giving our national cultures the leading place that is their due. Christianity will never take root so long as it is presented in the guise of a foreign institution, as the hanger-on of some other culture, however great that culture may be. It will never establish itself so long as the Christian cause is linked, consciously or unconsciously, with some vested interest. The mission of Christians in Arab countries is to offer the Islamic world a Christian witness, freed from any extraneous element and from all human interests, and it looks as though, with very few exceptions, we Eastern Catholics are the only ones capable of performing this task.

One of the requirements of our vocation is that each of us should love his country as behoves a Christian. That is, without excessive nationalism, but with strength and tenderness. Our countries may be smaller, less rich, less powerful and less beautiful than some others, but they are our own countries. Moreover, the more we love them, the more readily we shall discover in them fresh attractions, for that is the law of love. A Syrian newspaper recently accused Christians of being a culture-medium for foreign imperialism. This was a calumny but some people still need convincing that the future of Christianity in Arab countries depends on its complete integration in the national life, on its sharing the fate of the country, whether this be happy or unhappy.

Our vocation also imposes on us the duty of serving our

countries, working for their development and not devaluing them in our own eyes and in those of strangers by unfavourable comparisons. We do already take some interest in our own educational and charitable institutions but too few of us are concerned about the economic and social development of the country as a whole in anything but a religious context. I should like to see more of our young doctors, nurses, social workers and teachers rising to their responsibilities in the social sphere, irrespective of the religious group to which they belong, and I should especially like to see them working among the poorest classes, generally the agricultural workers in our Moslem villages.

Venturing even further, I would say that we, as Arab Christians, must understand the legitimate reactions of Moslems and the aspirations of Islam. We must do our best to see that Islamic rights are recognized. It is true enough that in its early phases the Arab revival is accompanied by a religious xenophobia. We must wait for a clearer outlook to prevail without withholding our affection. Some people may object that all this is a waste of time but such a thought would be an offence against the blood of Christ, shed for all of us. Everybody else may despair of Islam, but not we Eastern Christians whom the Lord has so clearly preserved, to allow us to watch by the side of Islam, suffering through it and for it. If, up to the present, we have apparently achieved nothing, is this not because so far we have done little? As Maxence van der Meersch remarked, those who tire the soonest are those who have done the least.

The witness we have to bear to Christ within the Islamic world can be summed up as having faith in our own countries, taking a full share in their destiny, showing loyalty and generosity in their service, and wholehearted cooperation with our non-Christian fellow citizens and giving the example of a completely Christian way of life. This constitutes our first and most important mission.

2. *The Seed of Christian Unity*

Our second mission as Catholics is to create a favourable atmosphere for a return to the Universal Church of our separated brethren, the Orthodox. It was not until our own day that the need for unity made its full impact on the Christian conscience. Even so, many people still think of it rather as they think of world peace or atomic disarmament, things they would like to see but hardly dare to expect and, in fact, at heart they do not believe in them. We feel these things to be beyond our powers, however good our intentions. We resign ourselves to waiting without strong conviction for the day when we shall suddenly hear that the miracle of Christian unity has been accomplished.

We do not sufficiently appreciate that union is not something that will come ready-made. It is being constructed all the time, a mansion built stone by stone. Even if we do not live to see the building completed, we must realize that every piece of self-improvement, every real effort towards understanding and closer union, every act of true Christian charity amounts to placing a stone in this building and hastens the day when, through God's grace, it will be completed.

It seems to me that in the achievement of this Christian unity we Eastern Christians have a specially important rôle to play. Some superficial observers have suggested that the "uniats" in general are the least well placed to promote closer relations with those outside the Catholic fold. In fairness, it must be admitted that practical experience does sometimes seem to bear out this criticism. An example is provided by the Greek Church which, while ready to enter into discussions with representatives of the Latin Church, and while treating them with every mark of admiration and respect, pretends either to ignore the existence of Greek Catholics or to treat them as detes-

table propagandists in the pay of the foreigner, wolves in sheep's clothing, exploiting the ignorance and poverty of common people in order to steal a few innocent sheep from the Orthodox fold. To a lesser degree, and with varying differences of emphasis, this is also the attitude of Anglicans towards English Catholics, Orthodox Arabs towards the Melkites and Armenians and Copts towards the Catholic churches of the same race and rite as themselves, existing side by side with them. So much is this the case that some have not hesitated to affirm that it would in the end be simpler for those in the East who want to return to Catholic unity to forget their heritage as a group and enter the fold of Western Catholicism.

This, as we shall show later, is certainly not the attitude of the Holy See. There is plenty of evidence to show in which direction the Church wants the work for unity to proceed. The reaction just described of the communities outside the Catholic fold is not in any way abnormal. It is that of any specialized group refusing to look beyond its own borders on the ground that doing so, like any attempt at union, must mean the beginning of a process of disintegration which can lead only one way. As the Hebrews did in the past, such groups refuse to accept a death that would have opened the path to a new life. They content themselves with the treasures they already have, even though this means turning their backs on even greater riches. There is something painful in such a refusal. In *Le Mystère de l'Avent* (p. 24) Father Daniélou writes: "... when the bunch of grapes is ripe and we can enjoy the fruit, the vine shoot itself has come to have no value. All the good it possessed has gone into the fruit . . . Equally, the whole world will be able to pass away and be folded up like an old garment, like the chrysalis which, when the butterfly has developed, allows the cocoon to fall away."

The separated communities of the East would find life in the same way by making room for their own spiritual

fulfilment which will be found in their integration in the rest of Christendom. It is a mystery of renunciation and death, joined to a mystery of renewal and life. Acceptance of life means casting aside dead restrictions, just as new wine bursts the old skins. The same mystery of life affects every civilization as it does the life of each one of our souls under the influence of grace. Growth supposes a continuing death to all that has outlived its purpose.

This helps us to understand the sometimes violent reactions of the Eastern communities when certain of their number are heard to call boldly for this progress towards catholicity, when vigorous spirits are found ready to accept the sacrifices necessary in order that the community may survive within Christian unity. It is like the case of the child, warning an elder brother who is unaware of a danger that is threatening him. When brothers get on badly together any stranger is welcome, but in the long run no one can take the place of the younger brother. None are in fact better placed to understand and love the communities that resist union than those who have been bold enough, because they love them, to go a little way ahead of them on the road which they too must take in due course if they are to find Christ in all his fulness.

In the Church's internal conflicts, Christians from Arab lands have proved themselves a pacifying influence. Doctrinal disputes and separatist tendencies so characteristic of Semitic Christianity under Byzantine rule have given place, since the Arab conquest, to a breadth of mind and a search for unity which have often aroused admiration. Hardships shared have brought men together and created a desire for the closest possible contact with the rest of Christendom. It is worth mentioning that apart from translations and copies of earlier works, books dealing with inter-denominational disputes form only a small part of the Christian Arab literature of the Middle Ages.

Orthodox Christianity in Islam has never joined in the Greek quarrel with Rome. The brave refusal of Peter III of Antioch, when called upon by Michael Cerularius to join with him against the Pope, is well known. The so-called Eastern schism was in fact no more than a Byzantine, Greek, or Hellenist schism. In so far as it reached our countries at all, it was limited to the higher clergy, often Greek by race, and under the more or less direct domination of Constantinople. The people as a whole remained faithful to orthodox Catholicism, simply and without narrowness, and relations with Rome, broken off for a while by the political situation, were readily resumed with the arrival of the missionaries. Schism is a foreign importation as far as Christianity in Arab countries is concerned.

This is seen even more clearly in the history of other Eastern communities, particularly that of the Maronites who have unceasingly maintained their attachment to the Holy See. The whole history of Armenian, Chaldean and Syrian Christianity needs to be studied afresh to bring out the loyalty of the people to the concept of Christian unity, in spite of the claims of politics and the pressure of special interests of their leaders.

Where doctrine is concerned, the Semite easily becomes fanatical but he is by nature more liberal than he appears. This is borne out by experience in our own countries. What do the ordinary people make of our disagreements? To them these must seem incomprehensible, sustained only by the pride and the vested interest of ruling classes. They feel deeply the divisions between Christians over such matters as the calendar, jurisdiction, rites, and even dogmas. What interest can we expect the ordinary man of our age to show in the grievances of Photius or Cerularius against the Roman Pontiffs, in the difficulties caused by ambiguities in the philosophical writings of St. Cyril, in the bitter struggles between the schools of Antioch and Alexandria over definitions of Christ's nature and of the

hypostatic union? These will hardly seem to justify so great an evil as division among Christians. It is not surprising that as priests we often find ourselves accused of being the only ones really interested in this state of affairs.

It is not my intention to go any further into this popular attitude and see where it is unconsciously at fault. What I want to emphasize is the broadmindedness of which it may be considered a sign and which our vocation requires us to place at the service of Christian unity. This attitude of mind should protect us from excessive severity and one-sidedness in the rejection, necessary though it is, of those errors of which our neighbours are victims. But we should never shut our eyes to the truths enfolded in the error and without which the error could not persist. Generally each error will be seen to bring out certain aspects of a truth which have found no expression in our own lives. A natural broadmindedness should save us from the impoverishment resulting from a complacent enjoyment of our existing treasures.

Living as we do in an area in which divisions are the main source of trouble, we feel with particular intensity the evil, the collective sin, represented by the division within the Church. Catholics in the West, especially in those countries where the unity of the faith has been miraculously preserved, can have only an imperfect appreciation of what Christian divisions really mean. For us they are something concrete, reflected in our daily lives. Our special task is to act as the repentant conscience of Christendom, to suffer on account of this evil and, I should add, to bring others to share our sufferings.

Suffering borne in common with our separated brethren will give us a more acute appreciation of the injustices preceding and following separation for which the responsibility was, as we know, shared. It will also encourage an historical reassessment and a revision of values of a kind likely, as the Holy Father recently reminded us, to bring

people together. For our part, to avoid adding to past injustices, we shall put out of our minds any idea of reprisals, sharp words or bitterness.

Eastern Catholicism has had its own martyrs. The work of unity has often been accomplished by the shedding of blood, as witness the martyrs at Aleppo in the last century. We Catholics can perhaps best honour these heroes of Christian unity not by continuing to harp on the misplaced zeal of those who were responsible for their martyrdom and who are nevertheless our brothers, but by forgetting and loving all the more. We must not hold our contemporaries responsible for the faults of their ancestors, nor must we revive quarrels that have now lost their importance for both sides. But we should also remember that, albeit unconsciously, we have given our separated brothers many reasons for complaint. It is not for nothing that in the midst of the Eastern schism, God has preserved small but growing cells of unity. Catholics have no right to boast of the truths entrusted to them or of the benefits they derive from their attachment to the centre of Christian unity. God will expect of them an effort commensurate with so many graces.

3. Guarantee of True Catholicity

I have laid some stress on the first two aspects of our vocation as Eastern Christians and Catholics — our rôle as witnesses to Christ and as apostles of Christian unity. I shall deal with the third only in broad outline in order to complete the picture.

This last aspect, as you will have guessed, concerns the reason for our existence as Eastern Catholics within a Catholic Church that is mainly Western. The subject is delicate but I may at least be allowed to repeat in simple terms the principle that lies at the root of all papal

directives on the matter. It is that the East must remain Eastern if it would be true to its vocation.

From the time of the crusades, when a Western hierarchy was established in the East, there has been a tendency in certain quarters to press for complete uniformity of jurisdiction, discipline and liturgy throughout the Catholic Church, through the outright adoption of the Roman rite. As long as the East was united with the remainder of Christendom, the many members of the Latin rite living in the East were incorporated in the local church which readily granted them facilities for celebration in their own rite. On the basis that might is right, the crusaders were responsible for the establishment of foreign hierarchies, replacing the local hierarchy. They claimed that the clergy and faithful were under the jurisdiction of these imported hierarchies and the most they would allow, as a concession designed to avoid something worse, was the continued use of the local rite. This innovation in the Church was given the sanction of the supreme authority, all the more readily obtainable since the local Eastern hierarchy was at that time separated from Rome. Or that at least was what people wanted to believe.

The whole of this organization disappeared in the same way that it grew up, through violence. The Ayubites and the Mamelukes progressively suppressed the Western hierarchy as they pushed back the frontiers of the Frankish empire. This empire and Western Catholicism in the East were so closely interconnected that the disappearance of the one necessarily brought about the disappearance of the other. The Frankish patriarchs, installed by the crusaders in Jerusalem, Antioch and Constantinople, simply became titular prelates at the papal court and remained so until the restoration of the patriarchate of Jerusalem in 1847. The other Latin patriarchates in the East were never restored.

In more recent times, the arrival of missionaries in the Near East and the renewal of the union movement brought the old problem once again to the fore. Should those Eastern Christians who came back into communion with Rome remain Eastern in discipline and liturgy or should they go over to the Roman rite and discipline?

The attitude enjoined on missionaries by the Holy See could not have been clearer and has never varied since. In his Constitution of 26th July, 1755 *Allatae sunt* (No 33), Benedict XIV wrote: "The Roman Pontiffs have never asked of those who come back to the Catholic faith that they should abandon their own rite and accept obligatorily the Latin rite. To have done so would have meant the ruin of the Eastern Church . . . and not only has it never been attempted but it would be entirely contrary to the spirit of the Holy See."

In fairness to the Western missionaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we must admit that they were very careful to obey the popes in this respect. While keeping their own rites, they respected and revived everything in the traditions of the Eastern communities going to make up their spiritual heritage and giving these ancient churches the strength to resist. They were rewarded when they saw the union movement flourish as it has never done since. God had clearly blessed their self-effacement.

The situation changed in the nineteenth century for reasons it would take too long to examine in detail. Nevertheless, with some exceptions due to lack of spiritual stamina and to the great poverty of some areas, most Eastern Christians have, with the support of Rome, retained their Eastern character. They are now becoming more and more confirmed in this outlook and are steadily making their views felt among the more enlightened Western Catholics. The old attempts to latinize the Eastern Church have today their counterpart in efforts to

orientalize faithful of the Latin rite working in the East. In generous obedience to the oft repeated wishes of the Holy See, some hundred missionaries have adopted one or other of the Eastern rites in order more fully to take their place in the local Christian communities. Those who used to maintain that Eastern Christians would not be fully Catholic until they adopted the Latin rite are today regarded as behind the times.

But what is the fundamental reason for preserving the Eastern form of Christianity within the Catholic fold?

It is not just a trap intended to bring our separated brethren into the Church by leading them to believe that if they return to unity nothing, or almost nothing, will be changed in their way of life. That would be a fraud.

Nor do these Churches represent a transitional stage on the way to complete Latinism, a kind of temporary concession to atavistic forces in the simple soul of the Eastern Christian.

The Eastern Churches are preserved because of what they represent to the Church as a whole. While the faith itself cannot be subject to change, all kinds of differences are possible and even desirable in the ordinary details of Christian life, looked at from a social standpoint. Ecclesiastical unity is not and never can be a matter of rigid uniformity. The Catholic faith is not a theorem having no relevance to life. The Church constitutes, it is true, a single block, but in this block, it is only the angles represented by the dogmas that are sharp."²

The real reasons for preserving the Eastern liturgies are well summarized in Leo XIII's encyclical, *Orientalium dignitas*, of 30th November, 1894:

"The maintenance of the Eastern rites is more important than might be thought. The antiquity which adds lustre to

² Father Andrieu-Guitrancourt, *Annuaire de l'École des Législations Religieuses*, Inst. Cath. de Paris, 1952, p. 9.

these rites adorns the whole Church and affirms the divine unity of the Catholic faith. It reveals more clearly to the principal churches of the East both their own apostolic origin and their intimate unity with the Roman Church right from the beginnings of Christianity. Nothing, in fact, would seem to reveal more clearly the note of catholicity within the Church of God than the remarkable homage of these ceremonies of various forms, celebrated in languages made venerable by their antiquity and further distinguished by the use made of them by the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church."

But in my view the retention of these rites remains a secondary aspect. We must recognize that Christianity will never be able to fulfil its rôle in the world unless it is Catholic or universal not only in aspiration but also in strict fact. If to be Catholic implies giving up one's own liturgy, hierarchy, patristic traditions, history, hymnology, art, liturgical language, culture and spiritual heritage in order to take over the rite, literature, philosophy, theology, religious poetry, liturgical language, culture and spirituality of some other given group, even though this be the best there is, then it will no longer be possible to regard the Church as God's great gift to the whole of humanity. It will have become a faction, a human institution meant to serve the interests of a particular group. Eastern Catholics do not total more than seven million. This represents little if importance is judged numerically. There are, it is true, the 170 million of our separated brothers upon whom the example of our loyalty to Catholicism and to orientalism is bound to have an influence. But even this is not the essential point. We are here in the first place to bear witness to the effective catholicity of the Church, to proclaim publicly that Catholicism is truly universal, that it respects and assimilates everything in the most diverse civilizations that can be regarded as of spiritual value or that arises out of the particular needs of a people. We are here to show

that no group can monopolize the Church and that we are all brothers, children of the same mother. In refusing to allow themselves to be latinized, Eastern Christians are not being merely parochial or sticking to outdated traditions. They know they are being faithful to a mission, a vocation, which they cannot deny without being untrue to themselves and distorting Christ's message to their immediate neighbours.

Witness to Christ in the heart of Islam, seed of Christian unity, guarantee of effective catholicity within the Church: this is the threefold aspect of our mission as a group. The sense of this mission has given strength to our ancestors in the most tragic moments of their history. If it has not yet aroused the enthusiasm it should among our own younger generation, the reason is that it has not been sufficiently brought home to them. There are signs among these young people of spiritual escapism. Accustomed to over-estimating what others enjoy and unaware of what they themselves possess, they have not so far been able to appreciate how wide is the field open to their youthful enthusiasm. Those of them who have not become superficial through this lack of any sense of mission have concentrated on distant objectives, depriving their own countries of the service they had the right to expect from them, or else they have stubbornly tried to alter the terms of the problem in order to have the easy satisfaction of solving it in the fashion they have admired elsewhere. We must, on the contrary, have the courage to look at the problem of the gospel as it is put to us in practical terms in the setting in which God has placed us, without sterile regrets or vain hopes.

In striving to discover our collective mission as Eastern Christians we must avoid a common mistake. We must take care not to cast ourselves in the best rôle, placing ourselves with foolish complacency at the centre of humanity and thinking that we represent the beginning

and end of all progress. We must be modest enough to recognize the limitations of our own destiny and even more the limits of what we can realistically hope to accomplish. This does not alter the fact that our vocation, like any other vocation, however humble it may be, is great when it is fully understood and fully entered into.

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The Eastern Rôle in Christian Reunion¹

BY PATRIARCH MAXIMOS IV SAYEGH

WE SHOULD not depart far from the truth were we to say that the relations between the Roman Church and the various Eastern churches were not definitively broken until the day when Rome, either losing her patience or giving up hope for a union of all churches, received within her fold a number of Eastern groups, granting them a separate hierarchy and organization. Paradoxically, therefore, it was the partial union of a number of Eastern groups with the Roman See that put an end to efforts directed at an ecumenical union between East and West.

From these partial unions, following the failure of the Council of Florence, were born several Catholic communities of Eastern rite. In admitting them within the Catholic unity, the Holy See committed itself through the most solemn promises to respect their entire spiritual heritage. The Roman See thought that, while keeping their own rites and discipline, these communities now united with it would become the seed and first fruits of that unity which it one day hoped to restore with the entire East.

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The manner in which they were treated within the great Catholic family was to be, it was hoped, a guarantee and a model of the treatment held in store in the Universal Church for all Eastern Christian communities, should the union with them be restored.

Unfortunately, it so happened that these Catholic communities of Eastern rite were not always able to fulfill their mission. We must admit on the one hand that they were never fully accepted by the Western Catholics who, as a body, continued to ignore, suspect or oppress them. Some went so far as to fight them openly on their very homeground. These groups were hardly ever admitted into Catholic unity without reservations, at least on the part of the lower authorities. On the other hand, they themselves were at times so defenceless against the invasion of Western ways and customs that in the eyes of the East they often represented, not an acceptable form of union to be achieved in truth and respect, but rather an instance of hidden absorption and almost total latinization.

We can well raise the theoretical question whether the establishment of these "uniat" churches was good or bad for the cause of ecumenic union.

But we cannot deny that these churches now exist and that they are even fairly successful. If they have not yet fulfilled all the expectations centred upon them, we should perhaps raise this other question: Did the Orthodox as well as the Catholic world know them well and as they were, and did they help them remain faithful to their vocation?

In our opinion there is only one answer to this question. The Eastern Catholic churches represent a powerful and indispensable means for the establishment of Christian unity, but only if they maintain, and are helped to maintain, a two-fold and equal loyalty toward Catholicism and the East. If they are wanting in either regard, they can only harm the cause of unification.

To bring this point home, we shall first attempt to determine what we Eastern Catholics represent in the eyes of our Catholic brothers of the West, and in the eyes of our Orthodox brothers of the East. Secondly, we shall evaluate the difficulties we encounter and the possible success we can hope for in the fulfillment of this vocation of "unifiers" which we believe to be our own.

What we represent in the eyes of our Catholic brethren of the West

In times past the attitude of our Catholic brothers of the West was characterized by very widespread ignorance, very irrational distrust or paternalistic regrets; sometimes by a certain disdainful neglect, practical indifference, or calculated exploitation; and, in rare instances, even by hostility. Today, their attitude is marked more and more by respect, understanding, and a spirit of sincere cooperation.

Most often the Catholic West has ignored us. Even today, the East knows the West better than the West knows the East. With the exception of certain orientalist for whom the East is above all an object of scientific study, the Catholics of the West, as a whole, are completely or almost completely ignorant of the existence of an Eastern Christendom, of its history, special discipline, hierarchic organization, rites and spiritual heritage. We seem to be a revelation wherever we appear. For the average Western Catholic, we are still "Christians who make the sign of the cross backwards". Our rites are for him an object of curiosity or scientific interest, nothing more. As a rule, all the orientalist themselves know about the East in its past. Too often, alas, the East represents for the West nothing more than a mummy or a museum piece. Such an attitude, when affecting certain religious leaders, compels them to

adopt measures of rigid conservation, suddenly replacing the former attempts at gradual or violent absorption. But few Westerners know much about the life of their Eastern brothers, their practical problems, their immense need to remain loyal to their faith and to keep it alive, and the great mission they must carry out, despite their weakness, throughout the world.

We must add that this ignorance of the East is understandable enough. The total number of Eastern Catholics is less than seven million. The entire Melkite Greek Catholic Church is hardly larger than an average diocese in Europe. If numbers were all-important, we would be practically non-existent. But small as our numbers are, we feel that a great mission has been entrusted to us and that our first task is precisely to make ourselves known, to narrow the circle of traditional ignorance with which the West still surrounds us.

Occasionally this same ignorance gives rise to a certain irrational and confused distrust towards us, unexplained by the fact that we are "Easterners" and that the West traditionally distrusts the *fides graeca*. Nor is it that we have deceived the West. Rather, it is an uncontrolled impression born of fear of an unknown mystery and the fruit of a mutual ignorance resulting from isolation. Hence, the responsible Western leaders feel that supervision and control must be tightened more and more. They experience this fear of the unknown. The central authority maintains among us an increasing number of informants whose word, even if it is an isolated opinion, finds more credit than is warranted by their personal integrity.

It seems that many simple souls almost feel sorry that we have not yet become "entirely" Catholic; that is, Latin. For many ecclesiastics who are less simple, the Eastern Catholic Church, or, as it is more commonly called, the "Eastern Rites", represent nothing else than a concession by the Holy See of Rome to the forces of

ancestral traditions still alive among the Easterners, an act of condescension, a privilege, an exception. Since one cannot make the Easterners "fully" Catholic, that is Latin, one must resort to the clever stratagem of tolerating their presence in the Catholic Church, even though they remain "Easterners"; or, in other words, bearing with them as with second-rate Catholics. Near the end of his life, a high-ranking churchman disclosed, as in a spiritual last will and testament, that the fifty years he had spent as a missionary in the East enabled him to say that Easterners will never become fully Catholic unless they become Latin. We might think that fifty years in the East had taught this zealous missionary nothing. Alas, how many others still think as he did.

Some Latin Catholics who live among us in the East establish themselves in certain areas as if we did not exist at all. Not being able to suppress us, they pretend to ignore us. In doing so, they invoke as an excuse the good of the souls, compromised, as they say, by our narrow-minded oriental sensitivity or dangerous resistance. They think, for example, that the so-called "Oriental Catholicism" can be considered in the Catholic Church only an exception, a group of closed communities, allowed at the most to exist but in no way called to expansion. Consequently, these communities are ordered — as once in Malabar and more recently in Palestine — not to engage in any sort of apostolic activity among the infidels who, at their conversion, are supposed to become members of no other Church but the Latin. These authorities even open the way towards Latinism for non-Catholic Easterners in spite of the existing papal directives and official orders.

In other words, for many Westerners, the real reason why Eastern Catholic Churches should exist and why these uncomfortable "outgrowths" should be tolerated is the fact that, on the one hand, they are an instrument for the "conversion of the dissidents", a sort of "bait" through

a clever exploitation of the similarity of rites and external organization, and, on the other hand, their eventual disappearance would seriously hurt the prestige of the Latin Church.

In rare instances we encounter outright hostility, motivated by political or racial reasons or simply by reasons of competition. In Poland, before the second World War, the patriotism of the Ukrainian Catholics was questioned by some. Even today, some Latin authorities in America consider the existence of Eastern Catholics, with their own clergy, discipline, and rites, as an abnormal and uncomfortable thing; or, at least, as a source of problems. We must admit that by the very fact of our being Catholic without being Latin, our very presence within a Catholicism almost entirely Latin in form cannot be anything but uncomfortable. Many Westerners cannot as yet conceive of unity in terms other than of uniformity. In their opinion, that which is not yet actually absorbed falls short of complete unity. This gives rise within the Eastern Church to a two-fold tendency threatening to divide it — a massive tendency toward outright and total latinization and a more conscious but slower tendency towards complete faithfulness to the East, and this for the spiritual advantage of the Universal Church itself.

Indeed, a latinized East, while hardly causing a noticeable increase in Catholic membership, would no longer represent a valid witness in the eyes of the Orthodox. The incomprehension of our Western brothers is the heaviest price we have paid so far for our ecumenical vocation.

Fortunately conditions will soon have changed. In the Western Church, ignorance, incomprehension, and occasional hostility have been superseded, especially in recent years, by an immense desire for a more intimate acquaintance with the East, by a sincere will to understand it and by a beginning of frank and loyal collaboration.

As a matter of fact, the last few years have witnessed in the West an admirable growth of scientific institutions devoted to oriental research. There exist today many scientific or high-quality popular publications investigating the various aspects of the spiritual heritage of the East, and uncovering these riches for the benefit of their readers. Travel, meetings, conventions, and business lead to numerous personal contacts between Eastern and Western Catholics. As an Arab proverb says, "Man hates only that of which he is ignorant". A better mutual knowledge will, no doubt, soon result in mutual respect and love between Easterners and Westerners. The younger generation of apostolic workers imbued with this new spirit, identify themselves more and more thoroughly with the Church they came to serve. Many of the old missionaries sent to be helpers in the East were a terrible burden for the East through their attempts at dominating or absorbing it under the pretext of more efficient assistance. The younger generation, on the other hand, comes truly in a spirit of service, adopts the East, and identifies itself with it, without human ambition or mental reservation.

*What we represent in the eyes
of our Orthodox brethren of the East*

Considering now what we represent in the eyes of our Eastern brothers separated from Rome, we have no choice but to say that the Orthodox East, while knowing us better, remains even harder towards us than the Catholic West.

In countries where the united Eastern communities numerically represent only a small minority, the Orthodox pretend to *ignore* them.

For most of our Orthodox brothers "East" and "Roman Catholicism" are contradictory terms. It is not thought

possible to be an Eastern and a Roman Catholic at the same time.

Very often they still consider us spies and agents of the political and religious imperialism of the Vatican. The Soviet world tolerates religion in its Orthodox or Latin form but persecutes to death those who dare to be as Eastern as the Orthodox and as Catholic as the Latins while being neither Orthodox nor Latin.

The Orthodox authorities are inclined to consider us as ravaging wolves in sheep's clothing and, consequently, persecute us as the chief agents of Roman proselytism. Those among our Orthodox brethren who, knowing us a little better, refuse to believe that we are capable of such sinister designs, pity us as unwitting victims, who without realizing it, tend to strengthen the ambition for supremacy and universal domination which, in their opinion, constantly inspires the Roman Church. At any rate, it is undeniable that our Orthodox brothers feel deeply hurt by what they call our premature, unconditional union, comparable in their minds to a separate peace treaty signed by political powers without the knowledge or approval of their allies.

But let us not dwell any further upon these painful aspects. After all, what people think of us is not the most important thing. The important thing is what we truly are and represent — what we desire to be — and what God expects from us.

What we represent for Christian unity

Superficial minds were capable of saying that the Eastern Catholic — the "uniats" as they like to call them — are the least fit for promoting any kind of understanding with the Orthodox.

We must frankly admit that sometimes this is exactly the case. As an example, the Greek Church, which would

be willing to deal with representatives of the Latin Church and is very favourably disposed toward it, pretends to ignore the very existence of the Hellenic Catholics of Byzantine Rite who, it is true, are of recent origin and few in number. Often legal restrictions are imposed upon them, which is a familiar practice with all religious groups representing a great majority and united with the State.

Careful reflection, however, reveals that this reaction of the Orthodox circles is entirely normal. It is the typical reaction of all Christian groups which refuse to consider any union because they think that any step in that direction is the beginning of disintegration. Union means dying to ourselves to a certain extent. They refuse to accept this death, as the Jewish people once refused it, though it would have opened for them the way towards a new life. They fall back upon their own spiritual riches, but in isolation they are unable to increase their heritage. Some renunciation of self is needed by all churches if they are fully to be what Christ wanted them to be in unity. It is a mystery of renunciation and death, preceding a mystery of renewal and life.

With this in mind we can easily understand the sometimes very violent reaction of the churches of the East when from among their own ranks courageous voices arise calling for efforts toward this universalism, when strong but loving hands are extended to effect necessary renunciations so that the body may survive in unity. The united Easterners are like a child warning his older brother against an unsuspected danger. Now, when brothers fight, any stranger seems to be welcome. But in actual fact no one can take the place of the younger brother. No one can understand and love these communities, afraid and hesitant as they are still, like those who had the courage to precede them at some personal risk along the road we all must travel one day sooner or later, in one manner or another, if we are fully to rediscover the truth of Christ.

We must admit, as we carry out our vocation of "unifiers", that several factors work against us. First of all, our "uniatism". This false form of union is a very bad example for our Orthodox brethren. Our union has been practically an absorption that might have been but is not. Every Christian who thinks of union desires that it should not be detrimental to the spiritual riches and graces of which each church is the custodian. The advocates of uniatism have respected the East but for its rites; and in every other regard they have tried to deprive it of what was best in order to give or impose upon it what was often less good in the West. The Catholic West, as a whole, has not realized yet with sufficient clarity that, in addition to the liturgical rites, there are in the East other great riches — spiritual, artistic, theological, institutional — to be safeguarded for the benefit of the entire Church. Consequently, it endeavoured in the past to destroy everything that did not resemble its own image. We must admit that this attempt was not unsuccessful, for, except for the liturgical rites (and even there . . .) nothing could resemble the West more than this united East as we find it among the majority of the existing Eastern Catholic communities. Understandably, this model of union does not make our task any easier.

While the responsibility is not ours alone in this matter of uniatism, some other obstacles to union can be directly ascribed to us. Too often we lose contact with our Orthodox brethren. We stop caring about them. When we arrive at a certain level of organization, of material and numerical prosperity, we settle down in sinful contentedness and convince ourselves that there is no need for us to look beyond our own "dear community".

In other instances, we unnecessarily depart from them in matters which unity need not impose, such as in liturgy, discipline, spirituality, theology, outward appearances, etc. This is the way in which some Eastern Catholics like

to express the difference between them and their brethren of the same rite. They forget that by doing this they lose their usefulness to the Church because for the West they are no longer Easterners and for the East they do not represent the West. Those in the Catholic Church who are determined to latinize our institutions should understand that by bringing us so close to Latinism they do not increase appreciably the number of Latin adherents but they do lose for the Catholic Church the few Eastern members it has at the present time. It ought to be our *raison d'être* in the Church to remain at the same time deeply Catholic and deeply Oriental. The "latinizers" work, unwittingly perhaps but certainly, to the detriment of the Catholic Church. They set out to prove, indeed, that a sincere connection between these two qualities is impossible within Roman Catholicism.

Another obstacle to our ecumenical mission is our numerical inferiority. We are minorities almost everywhere, which not only makes massive action impossible for us but also gives rise in us to complexes and psychoses characteristic of minority groups. We should add that the numerical inferiority is often accompanied by a certain spiritual poverty. We have lost our Eastern spirituality while acquiring only imperfectly the spirituality of the West. Assuredly, union has been in general a cause of enrichment for us but of an enrichment that was not at the same time a revival of all the spiritual values proper to the East, with the exception of the liturgical rites.

A last obstacle hindering considerably the work of union has been a spirit of exaggerated proselytism displayed by some Catholics. In itself proselytism is an act of virtue, for it is defined as "zeal for making proselytes; that is, converts to a religious faith". We do not speak here of this legitimate and discreet proselytism but of its abuse, of that excess which we may call "conversion mania". Not being able to work towards the union of

churches or not even knowing how to go about it (we must admit that this very preoccupation is of recent origin) some Eastern Catholics, following in this the majority of Latin missionaries, have come to look upon the work of unity as exclusively a matter of "individual conversions".

Pending the achievement of world wide and definitive union of the churches, it is quite natural that certain souls, convinced of the truth, should request admittance to the Catholic Church in one form or another. Under pain of violating the freedom of conscience, we must accept those who come to us. Our Orthodox brethren do the same, which is normal. In our own patriarchate, the practice prevailing for several decades now has been the following. When groups, even small groups, ask us for admittance, we welcome them only after a long waiting period, sometimes extending to several years, and only after having referred these groups repeatedly to the Orthodox authorities. Only when these steps prove fruitless and when there are risks that these groups might be seduced by sectarian faiths which offer them attractive material advantages, do we finally decide to admit them. It must be granted that this method has not been adopted always and everywhere. We should never attempt, under the pretext that union is humanly impossible to achieve, or is far removed in the future, to ravish by all available means from the Orthodox a few particularly weak and defenceless souls or take advantage of internal discords existing among the ranks of this same Orthodoxy in order to undermine it. Precisely because the West has at times looked upon the Eastern Catholics as "tools of conversion", the latter have lost in the eyes of their Orthodox brethren some of the prestige indispensable for the accomplishment of their essential mission, of bringing West and East closer together in view of an eventual union, the manner and hour of which it will please our Lord to decide.

Fortunately, opposed to these elements hindering our

mission there are others working in our favour as so many valuable, unique assets we have in our hands.

First of all, is not the greatest source of strength in the work of union our acute awareness of the great misfortune implied by division? In countries with an overwhelming Catholic majority, such as Italy or Spain, the division of Christians is a remote evil, an evil merely thought about without serious implications in reality. Consequently, Catholics in these countries are often tempted to yield to a spirit of passivity and self-sufficiency. More than one responsible Catholic in the West must have secretly thought at one time or another that there are enough Catholics as it is, and that a union with the Orthodox Easterners would in practice be more troublesome than advantageous. As for ourselves, we could never reason in this manner. We suffer in our minds, in our hearts, in our very flesh, because of the divisions of Christians. We are filled with the desire Christ expressed at the Last Supper: "they may be one." The schisms divide the members of the same family, hinder any deep-going action on our part upon our social environment, and expose our Christians to the ridicule of their Moslem compatriots. The problem of union haunts us constantly. It is for us a consuming thirst – it is part of our very existence.

For working towards union we have certain unique advantages. We are of the same race, language, mentality, and even liturgy as our Orthodox brothers. We are brothers in the full sense of the word. Union could be only a family reconciliation for us, not a humiliating submission or an avowal of guilt. In suggesting this union, we seek no personal advantage. On the contrary, we further our own disappearance as a hierarchized community. To be exact, we are hoping that once the union is achieved, there will no longer be a united or uniat Eastern Church but simply an Eastern Church, among whose ranks we ourselves shall re-enter as if we had never departed.

Another element working in our favour is our faithfulness to the East, a faithfulness finally recovered and vigorously defended. There was a time when some Eastern Catholics thought it an honour to be able to come as close as possible to the West and copy its particular features to the smallest detail, in other words, to become latinized. We must recognize that our Melkite Greek Catholic Church has been the one to resist most strongly the latinizing tendencies that have disfigured other Eastern Catholic communities. We have said above that all the Catholic West would have wished to respect in the united East was its liturgical rites; so much so that the Eastern churches have come to be identified, in the certain official quarters, with the "Eastern rites". While the Roman Church endeavoured officially to save the "Eastern rites", some of its representatives were determined to deprive the Eastern churches of their own heritage, canonical institutions, and traditional organization in order to give them a Latin appearance.

To quote only one example, the recent code of Eastern canon law, we must unfortunately state that despite an impressive critical apparatus and a terminology inspired by Eastern sources, despite also a great amount of labour worthy of praise, the very core of the new law remains unfortunately latinizing in tendency. This has not always been the fault of the specialists doing the work but rather of the environment in which the work was done. For this environment, the closest possible similarity in substance and form with the Latin canon law remains the supreme ideal. Institutions proper to the East, such as the patriarchate, are tolerated as exceptions and confined within the strictest possible limits, when they are not skilfully emptied of their meaning and practically neutralized as a result of an excessive administrative centralization.

The efforts our Church is making to ensure that the East is given back its proper features are well known. Our faithfulness to the East must not be interpreted as a

tendency to archaism, a blind clinging to ancestral traditions, a sign of certain reservations about the faith, a narrow-mindedness neglecting the essential for the sake of the secondary, a new form of Gallicanism, or an unlawful desire for independence within the Catholic fold. We are attached to it because we love what is true and good. We are attached to it because we desire to safeguard the truly apostolic physiognomy of the Church with all the treasures and beauty this means and all the largeness of organizational concepts that render the Church capable of assimilating all nations without taking away from them the qualities that fundamentally characterize them as nations.

The continuous existence of the Eastern Catholic churches is not a trap we set for the Orthodox. They do not represent a transitional stage before final and total latinization, nor a temporary concession to the atavistic forces working in Eastern souls. The Eastern churches must be willed for their own sake in the framework wherein God and nature have placed them for their normal development. In Catholicism, the area of faith is intangible, immutable and uniform in its essential lines. But in the details of Christian life as a social phenomenon, many combinations are possible and desirable.

We must be convinced that Christianity can never accomplish its mission in the world unless it is Catholic; that is, universal, not only in law but also in actual fact. If someone cannot be Catholic unless he gives up his own liturgy, hierarchy, patristic traditions, history, hymnography, art, language, culture, and spiritual heritage, and adopts the rites, philosophical and theological thought, religious poetry, liturgical language, culture, and spirituality, of a particular group, be it the best, then the Church is not a great gift of God to the whole world but a faction, however numerous, and a human institution subservient to the interests of one group. Such a church is no longer the true Church of Christ. In resist-

ing, then, the latinization of our institutions, we are not defending any petty parochial interests or an out-dated traditionalism; rather, we are aware of defending the vital interests of the apostolic Church, of remaining faithful to our mission, our vocation which we could not betray without betraying ourselves and disfiguring the message of Christ before our brothers

We have, therefore, a two-fold mission to accomplish within the Catholic Church. We must fight to ensure that Latinism and Catholicism are not synonymous, that Catholicism remains open to every culture, every spirit, and every form of organization compatible with the unity of faith and of love. At the same time, by our example, we must enable the Orthodox Church to recognize that a union with the great Church of the West, with the See of Peter, can be achieved without their being compelled to give up Orthodoxy or any of the spiritual treasures of the apostolic and patristic East which is open towards the future no less than towards the past.

If we remain faithful to this mission, we shall succeed in finding and shaping the kind of union that is acceptable to the East as well as to the West. This union is neither pure autocephaly nor absorption, in law or in actual fact, but a sharing of the same faith, the same sacraments, and the spiritual heritage and organization proper to each church, under the vigilance, both paternal and fraternal, of the successors of him to whom it was said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."

Between Orthodoxy and Catholicism¹

BY ARCHBISHOP NEOPHYTOS EDELBY

EASTERN Christians in communion with Rome have for some time been the scapegoats of both Catholic and Orthodox ecumenicists. Though there is today more interest in them in Catholic official circles and in world Catholic opinion, through the inspiring example of Pope John XXIII, there is also within the growing Catholic ecumenical movement an attitude, similar to that within the Orthodox Church, whereby the Eastern Catholic churches are regarded as one of the chief obstacles to union and every effort is made to keep them out of the discussion between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

The present author is an Eastern Christian in communion with Rome, or if you prefer the term, a "Uniat". He is not worried by the derogatory sense attached to the words *ounia* and *uniat* by members of the Orthodox Church. In themselves, these words have no injurious content. In one sense at least, *ounia* is a useful word because it helps to prevent a confusion between the ideas of *ounia* and *union*.

¹ Previously published in the review "Lumière et Vie", Lyons, Cahier 55, December 1961, pp. 99-110.

Ounia, as Orthodox Christians understand it, is certainly not the union sought by the ecumenicists. It denotes individual union, or union through small groups, whereas, from the ecumenical point of view, union is a communion of churches. The effect of *ounia* is to increase the division of the churches by giving rise within each church to separatist movements. Union, on the other hand, aims at bringing them together and unifying them. *Ounia*, in the form in which it is often practised, is, in fact, the more or less incomplete absorption of one church by another, while union means respecting within a communion of faith, organization, grace and love, the charismata which are special to each church. *Ounia* embitters but *union* brings peace.

It should be stressed that we are here speaking of the "uniat" movement not only from a Roman Catholic standpoint but in more general terms, for the Orthodox Church has also been tempted by it and has for some time had its own uniats, few in number but not differing essentially from their Catholic brethren. There are already some Orthodox Latin groups in existence. We say this out of concern for fairness and accuracy, and having already examined our own consciences as uniat Catholics, we feel all the more at liberty to mention the Orthodox uniats.

If *ounia* does not amount to union, does it, as many people think today, constitute an obstacle to union? In the mind of its sincere advocates in East and West, *ounia* should indeed amount to union or at least prepare the way for it. When, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, we in the three Orthodox Melkite patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem, wanted to unite ourselves with Rome, the intention was definitely not to split up our church. We should have been happy had the whole of our church been able to re-enter the communion that existed before the breach. If we did not succeed in

this and if a portion only of our church came into union, this does not justify questioning the sincerity of our attempt. We were seeking union, even though we succeeded only in bringing about *omnia*, or the union of a portion only.

We have now to take account of the situation as we find it. In each of the Eastern churches, a group, generally a minority, has united with Rome, which it sincerely considers to be the centre of Christian unity. This incomplete union has entailed a number of consequences for each of the groups concerned. Some are definitely advantageous and others just as certainly unfortunate, while a third category can be taken either way. These various factors, taken together, and in their relation to the full union of the churches, provide us with a picture of the real position of the Eastern Catholic churches and determine in large measure the present position from an ecumenical point of view. The vocation of these churches, on the other hand, is more extensive than their immediate importance suggests, just as every ideal goes beyond its practical accomplishment. We must hope that their present state will not prove to be an obstacle to their vocation.

It is hard to describe the practical situation of the Greek Catholic churches in a few lines. It is too complex and we are forced to give only a brief analysis, knowing that in trying to simplify we may end by over-simplifying.

The history of the grouping of Eastern Catholics into separate organized communities has sometimes left our Orthodox brethren with painful memories. Some of the Eastern Catholic communities, for instance the Ukrainians and the Malabarese, were formed partly as a result of political pressure on the Orthodox Church, just as the present day return of certain Eastern Catholics to Orthodoxy in the countries behind the iron curtain is to be explained by political pressure in the opposite direction—a pressure that is fundamentally unjust from whichever

direction it comes. Other Greek Catholic communities, such as the Chaldeans at the end of the sixteenth century, owe their existence to disputes within the Orthodox fold². But more often the changes are the outcome of Western religious influences which have given rise among Eastern Christians to a desire to link up once again with the Roman Church and have at the same time made them aware of the state of religious abandonment in which they were left by the Orthodox clergy, at that time insufficient in number or spiritually defective. This was the case especially with the Greek Catholics or Melkites.

However, even if we leave out of account the few cases of unjust political pressure, it remains true that in general the historical circumstances leading to the union with Rome of groups originally belonging to the Orthodox fold have been somewhat unhappy. In the Orthodox view, this separatist movement cannot be other than schismatic. Moreover, when Rome decides to recognize or grant a hierarchy to each of these united groups, the Orthodox are bound to be hurt. But had Rome any choice in the matter? Admittedly she has sometimes established a uniat Eastern hierarchy when the numbers concerned were insignificant. But in most cases to have done otherwise would have meant leaving thousands of Eastern Catholics without legitimate pastors, organization or hierarchy. Sometimes, too, as with the Melkites, it was the original Orthodox hierarchy itself that split, a portion refusing union. Those who today criticize Rome for recognizing it, do not take sufficient account of the historical and pastoral situation at the time of the union.

Moreover, members of the Orthodox Church do not understand sufficiently why some of their number see the need to turn their backs. Either Roman Catholicism has nothing that Orthodoxy does not already possess and in

² We use the word "Orthodox" to indicate not only the Orthodox of the seven councils but also the Nestorians and Monophysites.

that case, there seems to them no reason to desert Orthodoxy, or else Roman Catholicism has something to offer, and it must be asked whether it is not a heretical innovation. In fact, in most cases, Catholic groups have been formed in the East mainly to answer a need for a more intense and deeper pastoral work by the clergy. The faithful who have entered into contact with Western missionaries have come to appreciate the extent of their previous abandonment in this respect. Without holding the Orthodox Church in itself responsible, they have asked themselves whether the situation was not to be explained by their ecclesiastical isolation from the West which was in a position to send them such fine spiritual shepherds. Theologians among them wondered whether the breach between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism was in accordance with our Lord's will and with the teachings and tradition of the first centuries. But the ordinary members of the faithful did not go into matters so deeply. In general, they followed the lead of the section of the clergy that showed itself the more devoted, and these were in fact the priests who took the road to Rome.

In turning to Rome, the "uniat" groups have more often than not deprived their original church of its best elements. Only a few, while feeling strongly the need for reunion, preferred to remain in their own churches, to work on them spiritually from within, sharing their temporary difficulties. Later the Orthodox Church itself formed its own élite, but by that time the break had been made and the leading figures in the two fragments of the same church were always tempted to concentrate on their little differences rather than on their immense common heritage. This tendency towards polemics has helped on the one hand to stiffen the attitude of the Orthodox and on the other to make the spiritual treasures of Orthodoxy less accessible to those united to Rome. From this both sides have suffered.

The principal stumbling block for the Orthodox remains, however, proselytism by Rome and, more particular, that of the uniats recruited into her ranks by Rome. The Orthodox Church has a long list of bitter complaints to make on this account. There may well have been certain abuses, and abuses may still be occurring among certain uniats even apart from the Latin missionaries. Uniats have often, in all good faith, given themselves the mission of gnawing their way into the Orthodox Church. Like so many other neophytes, they have suffered from a conversion psychosis. In order to "save the souls" of their Orthodox brethren they have taken advantage of charitable institutions and exploited all kinds of weaknesses. But these methods can change and are in fact being changed. Some of the uniat authorities have recently given a number of proofs of a disinterested affection for Orthodoxy and a scrupulous respect for freedom of conscience, encouraging the Orthodox élites to revivify their own churches rather than seek union at all costs and at the least sign of difficulty, without being moved by any real conviction. There is a moment of grace for which one must know how to wait. It is not often that the Orthodox Christians take note of this attitude among the uniats. The uniats, on the other hand, are aware that the Orthodox do not feel any inhibitions about snatching the weaker brethren among them. We are not saying this in order to counter one criticism by another, but simply to give the facts necessary for an objective understanding of the situation.

Apart from this, the very fact that these unions of individual groups take place, even where they are made without any political or other pressure and in complete sincerity, will always be a matter of scandal for the Orthodox. There is, it seems, nothing to be done about this. What are Eastern Christians to do when they come one day to recognize that the breach with Rome is against

the will of the Lord? Are they to remain cut off in order to please their own communities? They cannot do this in conscience. Are they to become Latins? This would imply that one cannot be Catholic without being Latin and would amount, in fact, to a denial of catholicity. One solution remains open, to unite once more with Rome while remaining Eastern. We wish our Orthodox brothers would understand that for uniats union with Rome is a matter of conscience and neither a defection nor an expedient.

Admittedly, in practice, things do not work out as simply as this. The renewal of the link with Rome does not always return the uniats to the state of affairs existing before the great separation of the churches. After centuries of estrangement, they find Rome more centralized than she was and little if at all disposed to go back over the historical development of papal rule. Their consciences, nevertheless, do not allow them to return to an Orthodoxy that refuses to accept the basic minimum of a recognition of the divinely accorded and effective primacy enjoyed by Peter and his successors. They have no choice but to accept their position as uniats which they regard as synonymous with the word "unifiers": Easterners but not separate, Catholics but not Latins. It is not a pleasant position, for it amounts to preserving equal loyalty to the East and to Catholicism. They refuse to deny anything forming a true part of Orthodox Christianity and refuse to allow themselves to be absorbed by the West. Forming a real part of the Catholic Church, they do not for a moment forget the brothers whom they have temporally outdistanced. Orthodoxy as well as the Latin West ought to understand how tragic and at the same time noble this attitude is.

But does this in fact represent the real attitude of the uniats? Are we painting an idealized picture, a picture of what they ought to be like? There are certainly some shadows in the true picture of the uniatic churches, but there

are shadows in every authentic picture, and in this instance they tend to throw into relief the true and realistic attitude of those uniats who are fully aware of their mission.

Too often, unfortunately, uniats lose sight of their Orthodox brethren and act as though they were themselves always to remain as they are today. They fail to see that their function is to scout on ahead and that they have no meaning except in relation to the army that is following. They forget, too, that their position is essentially temporary, not in the sense that they are destined to lose their identity in Latinism but in the sense that, once union comes about, they will rejoin their churches of origin, henceforth united with them as though they had never departed.

From this point of view, which is not an eschatological one, Eastern Christians united with Rome should never lose touch with the West or above all with Orthodoxy. They will keep as close as possible to those elements in Orthodox Christianity that are essentially Catholic, while shunning as far as possible all in the West that is Latin and particularist. This again is a difficult balance to strike and one which earns the amazement of the Latin West as well as of Orthodoxy. It is not surprising under the circumstances that the uniats occasionally fall away, sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left. Some turn avidly to the West, assimilating themselves to such an extent that Orthodoxy no longer recognizes them. Others emphasize so strongly their oriental characteristics that the West in turn hardly recognizes them.

These Eastern uniat communities generally find themselves in an inferior position within the Catholic fold, a fact which does not worry the Orthodox and even at times pleases them. But it does worry the uniats themselves and hinders their mission. At one time the Latin West looked upon them as second-class citizens, auxiliary troops fighting side by side with the troops from the

metropolis. They were regarded as allies or partisans. Nowadays, another argument is used to justify the special restrictions still affecting them. It is to the effect that the Eastern churches are not the same thing as the Eastern Church. Once full union has taken place, the latter, together with its bishops, will enjoy within the Catholic fold all the rights and privileges that is its due. But the uniat churches, when once set up and organized by Roman decrees, would be treated as artificial bodies to whom nothing is owed but which would be rewarded in accordance with their obedience and the importance of the services they have rendered or can be expected to render. This outlook is not in conformity either with the true historical situation or with the attitude of the popes.

It is too often forgotten that the Eastern communities united to Rome represent test cases for the Catholic ecumenical movement. Orthodoxy not only watches their behaviour closely but also watches the attitude of Rome towards them. If Catholicity does not change its present primarily Latin character and admit Eastern Christians into the fold with equal affection and without any signs of discrimination, the East in turning towards the Catholic Church condemns itself not so much to being Catholic as to a widespread and dominating Latinism. Orthodoxy will estimate what awaits it when unity comes about from the way we are treated within the Catholic body.

In the meantime, the Orthodox are hurt by an attitude characteristic of some uniats which we can sum up in three points:

(1) Complacency made up very often of borrowed superiority. The uniats pride themselves on the intellectual and moral resources of the West but often fail to enrich themselves from within by taking advantage of their own spiritual heritage.

(2) Self-satisfied indifference to the church from which they have come, accompanied sometimes by a disposition

to criticize the Orthodox and to catalogue their human weaknesses.

(3) The "integrist" of those who continually feel the need to reaffirm their loyalty to Rome, as though it were ever in doubt. The inflexibility of those who want to be more Catholic than the pope.

Where this is the state of mind, a dialogue between uniats and members of the Orthodox Church naturally becomes impossible.

Unfortunately, those uniats who show the greatest understanding and friendship for Orthodoxy still do not manage to efface the impression left by their brothers. It is as though the Orthodox had become convinced that every uniat is an enemy and that everything coming from the uniats represents a trap. How are they to be persuaded otherwise?

Against this complex background, the vocation of the Eastern Catholic churches can be seen to be as difficult as it is exalted. They are called upon to create within themselves a kind of living synthesis of Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity, linking up from within the two complementary marks of Christ's true Church. Come what may, they must succeed in renewing the contact between East and West. Within the Catholic fold they are witnesses of unity in diversity and within Orthodoxy they are witnesses of catholicity, manifested in the respect shown for particular charismata. Their function is to bring Orthodoxy as well as the Latin West to appreciate the universality of the Church.

Taking the words in their strictest sense, there can be no Orthodoxy without Catholicism and no Catholicism without Orthodoxy. If Eastern uniats are to effect a synthesis of East and West they must first of all become deeply conscious of their own Catholicism, recognizing that it is not in opposition to Orthodoxy but reaches out beyond it in a Catholic sense. Deeply united as they are

to the Universal Church and to the centre of ecclesiastical unity in the Bishop of Rome, they reject any separatist tendencies. There is nothing so alien to Eastern Catholicism as Gallicanism and other separatist tendencies of the West. Eastern Catholics have proved their faithfulness to union even to the shedding of their blood.

But Eastern Catholics will succeed in this work of synthesis only if they also show themselves profoundly Eastern. So far they have been distinguished from Western Catholics only by their attachment to the liturgy and ecclesiastical organization appropriate to the East. So much is this the case, that the West has often thought of the Catholic East as being merely a matter of different rites. The time has now come to go more deeply into the rich Eastern spiritual heritage in theology, philosophy, asceticism, mysticism, monastic life and art. All too often, Eastern Catholics have had nothing Eastern about them except their rite and their external appearance. Their Eastern rite is linked with a spirituality that is Ignatian or stems from some other Western influence. All they know is Scholastic philosophy, Carmelite mysticism or Sulpician asceticism. This has led to dangerous divisions in their religious make-up and in their efforts to fulfil their mission.

It is no easy task to renew contact between East and West. The uniats have assumed the task and it may be claimed that historically speaking the Latin West started to take an interest in the Orthodox East only through the uniats. Today the interest shown in the West for Eastern things goes well beyond any need to understand and help the uniats. In the beginning, however, uniats were seen by the West as representative of the East which was coming out to meet it. We shall never be able to pay sufficient tribute to the rôle of certain great Eastern Catholics in this opening of the West to the East, such as the first pupils of the Greek College or of the Maronite College in Rome.

At the present time Eastern Catholics still have an indispensable part to play in any serious discussion between Catholicism and Orthodoxy. True, the Orthodox representatives are not very ready to admit them to such a discussion and that is natural enough as a preliminary reaction which has to be overcome. On their side, Eastern Catholics must never lose touch with the Orthodox Church, even if they have sometimes to put up with a certain irritability. They must understand these reactions, avoid jibbing, and continue to show their affection while waiting for the opportune moment. The Orthodox should understand that the uniats remain sincere and faithful to Eastern conceptions. There is nothing realistic in regarding them as agents of Vatican imperialism or as wolves in sheep's clothing. The Orthodox, in fact, know well that this is not a true picture. Eastern Catholics are in a way representative of Orthodoxy within Catholicism. They defend it and seek to ensure that when the great day of reunion dawns it will have a place worthy of itself. At the end of a long session of one of the preparatory commissions of the present ecumenical council, a Latin theologian came up to congratulate me. "Father", he said, "all the time you were speaking, I was saying to myself that if there had been Orthodox delegates in our commission, they would have spoken in the same way as yourself." I have rarely received a more touching compliment.

The double function of Eastern Catholics is to be witnesses of diversity in unity within the Catholic fold and of universality within particularity as far as the Eastern Church is concerned.

They have to prove to their fellow Christians in the East, who share with them their race, language and liturgy, that Orthodoxy is not betraying itself in renewing the links of ecclesiastical communion with the West. If it is to be authentic, Orthodoxy must not shut itself up in a watertight compartment. Certainly if the great Fathers

and doctors of the Eastern Church were to return to earth they would find many changes in the Catholic Church. But behind this incidental evolution in Church institutions they would without doubt recognize the divinely imparted kernel which constitutes the link uniting the churches: Peter the head, perpetuated through his successors. They would certainly not approve of the existing state of division among churches. Whatever the faults of those who wield the power within the Church, however much they may at times have abused their power and yielded to human ambition, Christ wishes his Church to be one and we all have the duty to promote that unity. In spite of its faults, the uniat movement represents for Orthodox Christians a living appeal to unity.

For a Catholicism that is too completely latinized, Eastern Catholics provide an urge towards real universality. Latinism and Catholicism were regarded for many centuries as synonymous terms. How could Catholicism be accessible to other influences if it did not contain Catholics who were partially non-conformist and wished to make an opening in Catholicism wide enough for the Orthodox Church to enter and make itself at home? This, then, is the vocation of Eastern Catholics. It is one that falls to the lot of a minority, a vocation as intermediaries, buffers, shock-absorbers, forerunners, unifiers and prophets. They are bound to be a little troublesome, but they suffer even more themselves from the difficult mission Christ has entrusted to them. It weighs them down because they realize that they have practically no qualifications for carrying it out. But all this is in order that all glory shall be God's alone.

2

The Pursuit of Christian Unity

Diversity in Unity

BY ARCHBISHOP PHILIP NABAA¹

THE UNITY of Christians desired by Christ for his Church, which was the object of his great prayer, "that they too may be one", has always been a vital force, and a source of splendour and strength.

In the East, the unity of the early Christian communities conquered all the Mediterranean countries for Christ. It was responsible for the creation of new Christian empires in Armenia and Persia and extended even as far as India. Unity gave the power to withstand heresies; it was civilization's strongest support.

In the West, Christian unity brought about the spiritual unity of the whole of Europe. The Church's ability to survive the breakup of the Roman Empire and the barbarian invasions depended on its unity in faith and discipline, incarnated in its supreme head, the Pope, Bishop of Rome and Patriarch of the West.

¹ This lecture, delivered in September 1961 at the Fourth National Eucharistic Congress at Saragossa, was first published in the Bulletin of the Greek Catholic Parish of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre, Paris, 1962, pp. 2-13.

For several centuries East and West lived within this fruitful and inspiring unity. They were united in one faith in all the earlier ecumenical councils. The Eastern bishops were heard to proclaim the faith of the Roman Church and to declare at the Council of Chalcedon: "Peter has spoken through the mouth of Leo", just as the papal legates also confirmed the faith of Athanasius, of Cyril and of Chrysostom.

The union between East and West was also a communion in the same life and in charity. Monasticism, which is the perfection of the Christian life, came from the East to the West, just as did the faith itself, which was brought to Europe by the first Eastern missionaries. From these early times there has been a constant exchange of spiritual life and proof of mutual charity. There have been saints and martyrs who were and are venerated in both parts of the Church. There have been Fathers and doctors whose teaching has provided a rule of faith for both. Common struggles and victories against the enemies of the Church as well as peace and charity rendering fruitful the whole life of the Church were the results of unity. Unfortunately, unity was broken many times in the course of history. The most serious of these breaches, lasting until the present day, occurred in the eleventh century and in the West it is called the Greek or Eastern schism. In the West, other breaches followed, of which the Protestant Reformation had the gravest consequences for Christian unity.

I propose here to deal only with the Eastern church. I shall start by showing how the Eastern Christian, who is fundamentally faithful and deeply attached to all Christian traditions, looked upon the Church in the context both of its unity and its universality and how this outlook brought about breaches between Eastern and Western Christians.

I next intend to consider how we ought to set about recreating Christian unity between East and West.

How Christian Unity was Lost

The unhappy division into two groups – 500 million Catholics and 250 million Orthodox – has a number of complex causes arising from the history of the churches themselves, the peoples and their leaders. To understand the great rent in Christendom, we need to realize that Christian unity is a deep mystery, divine as well as human, and that it creates difficult problems, with doctrinal, psychological, ethnic and political aspects.

Western textbooks of Church history usually reply to the question, "How was Christian unity between West and East broken and what was the significance of the breach?", by quoting two famous names. The Patriarch Photius in the middle of the ninth century, they claim, brought out the main lines of the dispute and was responsible for the first schism. A second patriarch of Constantinople, Cerularius, again caused schism in 1054. Historians of the Eastern Church, on the other hand, throw the entire responsibility for the schism on the West.

The truth is much more complex. By the ninth century, there had already been many schisms in the East but these did not cause any deterioration in relations between the Eastern and Western churches and did not leave any very deep traces. The Photian schism lasted only a few years, after which unity was re-established, with some gaps, for two centuries. When the Patriarch Cerularius and the Pope anathematized each other, contemporaries did not regard the unfortunate matter as specially important. Indeed, the other Eastern patriarchs did not feel obliged to side with the patriarchate of Constantinople. It was not until the crusades and particularly after the sack of Constantinople in 1204, more than a hundred years later, that the breach became final. In other words, the rupture cannot be attributed either to the intransigence of Cardinal Humbert or to the

resistance of the Patriarch Photius. We need then to bring out the truth about the underlying causes of schism. This is that there were wrongs on both sides. All the best contemporary historians admit it. In pointing this out ourselves, without laying too much stress on it, we aim not only to see that truth is served but also to establish the psychological climate that is essential if we are to prepare the way for unity.

It is in order to smooth out the difficulties in the way of this reunion of brothers that we want to insist on one of the deepest causes of the schism. This is the natural development of Christianity in the East.

This development was slow and covered many different aspects. The first development was cultural, when Latin was substituted for Greek, which had been the original language of Christian literature, and a great factor making for unity. This substitution in the West paved the way for misunderstanding between the two parts of the Church. East and West were rather like two brothers who, no longer speaking the same language, come into conflict and eventually separate.

The breach in the political sphere was equally serious. The choice of Constantinople as the new capital of the Empire led to a final separation which became more acute when the Pope, freeing himself from attachment to the Basileis (emperors at Constantinople), turned to Charlemagne and crowned him in 800 as Emperor of the Holy Roman Germanic Empire. The unity of the Empire had supported and protected the unity of the Church. The division of the Empire helped to bring about the division of the Church.

Later on, the effect of this great mistake was aggravated by the behaviour of the crusaders who in 1204 took Constantinople and pillaged the church of the Holy Wisdom ("St. Sophia"), the most venerated Christian shrine in the East. Another factor was the establishment of a

Frankish empire in the East and the installation of a Latin hierarchy over the Greek hierarchy. All these things made for a breach between East and West and were a serious reflection on the papacy, to which they were attributed. The Greeks accused the popes of being hostile to the East, and regarded them simply as Latin chiefs who wished to bring them under Western domination, depriving them of their rights and glorious traditions. We can see from this that a cultural and political schism had preceded the religious schism and that the crusades had made it worse. They had even created a climate so favourable to separation that the Christian East had become accustomed to fear the Christian West and to do without it, even when it was not actually hostile to it.

In the religious field, the dogmatic differences between East and West are in themselves serious, but they are not many, nor are they insurmountable. Had it not been for the psychological climate of suspicion and hostility in which the East has too long lived, Christian unity, broken after the eleventh century, would have been quickly restored, as it had been in the first ten centuries.

It is nevertheless worth while looking at the main dogmatic reason for the separation between East and West. This arose from different conceptions of the nature of the Church.

The Western teaching emphasizes the monarchic element, having at its head Peter and his successors, the bishops of Rome.

The teaching of the Eastern Orthodox Church is more complex and less precise. Taking their stand on a tradition lasting for several centuries during which there were no definitions of the nature and extent of the primacy within the Church, the Orthodox in general teach that supreme authority in the Church is collegial, belonging to all the bishops united in council. That, they add, is why every time there is question of condemning a heresy or

defining a dogma, the bishops come together in synod or in an ecumenical council under the presidency of the pope. The Orthodox, in fact, admit the pope's primacy over all bishops, without believing precisely that this primacy confers direct and universal authority or that it is by divine precept.

Thus, they do not deny that the pope possesses a certain primacy and even grant to him, and to him alone, the first place in the Church. When it comes to defining the true nature and extent of the Roman primacy, many Orthodox writers deny that it is one of ordinary jurisdiction, applying directly and universally. Others, however, are more reticent on the point. Others again are in favour of admitting all the Catholic demands because they see the need for them in governing and saving the divided Christian Church.

Much personal contact with enlightened members of the Orthodox Church enables me to assert that from their point of view the Catholic doctrine of Roman supremacy is not the biggest objection to union with the Catholic Church. They would even be able to accept it, were it put to them in a non-controversial and charitable way and if they were allowed the autonomy in discipline and rite of which they are proud and which they are anxious to preserve.

This, then, is the cultural, political and religious background to the division between Eastern and Western Christians. Having described it objectively, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. The division of Christendom took place slowly and almost imperceptibly.
2. It is the result not so much of doctrinal differences as of the historical and psychological background on both sides.
3. It took place without Eastern Orthodoxy having any idea that it had broken with Christian tradition, or denied anything in the deposit of the Catholic faith.

4. Reunion can and must be accomplished through deeper and more widespread spiritual contacts, in charity and faith. *Per caritatem ad veritatem.*

How to Rebuild the Lost Unity

Ever since Pope John XXIII launched his appeal for an ecumenical council the whole world has been living in hope of reunion. Prayers are going up on all sides that there should be one fold and one shepherd. And those who are praying add with Christ "that they may all be one ... so that the world may come to believe". In addition to the prayers, are meetings, conferences and discussions, and there is everywhere a great hankering after unity.

In this stimulating effort to achieve unity, we must heed the lessons of history and take account of the deep aspirations of the Christian East. We must remember how close that East is to Western Christianity with which it lived for ten centuries in charity and peace in the one faith. If this deep unity was sometimes shaken and even broken, this was due to a failure to understand one another rather than to bad faith. It arose not so much from a denial of the faith as through sincere attachment to truly Christian traditions. The reasons were not so much the religious as the political and psychological factors that led to separate development in East and West. The first result was a division in charity, followed by a division in faith; all of which led to a great rent in the *Catholica*.

How are we to restore the union joining East and West in one faith and one church?

A reply to this very important question is not easy. History tells of many unsuccessful attempts to restore unity. All the arguments of the Middle Ages and modern times have served merely to irritate and worsen relations.

While the Latin missions in the East have developed and sustained Catholicism, they have given it too Western and Latin an orientation, and, to the extent that they have done this, they have estranged Eastern Orthodoxy. Methods of proselytism have offended many Eastern Christians, finally driving them from Catholicism altogether.

When we talk once more with our Orthodox brethren, it will not be sufficient to ask them to accept our Catholic faith and convince them of the truth of our beliefs. We must also meet them in great charity, showing that we respect their great Christian traditions in a Catholic spirit. We must show them that Christ's Church is truly Catholic and open to East as well as West. Our actions must show that the catholicity of the Church enables it to include all human civilizations and national cultures, all Christian traditions, liturgies and rights, without special privileges for any country, church, rite or person. There are not first class and second class citizens in Christ's Church, for all are one in Christ.

It is by the adoption of such a truly Catholic attitude that we hope to influence our Eastern brethren and unite ourselves to them in the one faith and in charity. Such a Catholic attitude in the apostolate of union is indispensable for the success of our work. This has to be understood if we are to follow the basic principles and their practical consequences.

Christ's Church is catholic. Its divine Founder destined it for all nations and all men: "You therefore must go out, making disciples of all nations." Without this universal mission the Church would not be true to the gospel and would not be divine. Abbé Paul Couturier, that great apostle of Christian unity, noted in his diary: "So many Catholics are shut up in their Church and in their faith, like others in their political party. They hanker after a totalitarian state. All this has nothing to do with the gospel."

The universal dimension of the Church lowers all human barriers to unity in faith and reconciliation between men in the one Christ. But, in establishing a certain equality between all those who believe in Christ, it allows all men and all groups to retain their own personalities and individual characteristics. Thus it is that, within the Catholic Church, it is possible to believe in Christ, love the brethren, live with them in one faith and charity, and yet at the same time preserve all the qualities and talents that distinguish man from man. Western and Eastern, Africans and Asiatics, Greeks and Latins, Arabs and Spaniards, all can share one Catholic faith, retaining their differences of origin, country, colour, language, rite and custom. Within the Catholic fold, all believers in Christ can retain their legitimate liberties, sacred traditions and glorious history. "In Catholicism", said Pius XII, "all institutions and aspects of the Christian life are inseparably involved and they make up the richness of the Catholic Church."

The popes have publicly declared these true principles of Catholicism whenever they have invited Eastern Christians to come into Catholic unity. They have especially stated that unity of faith is not only compatible with a diversity of rites but can be enriched by it.

"Each and every people of Eastern rite", said Pius XII, "should enjoy legitimate freedom in all matters pertaining to their history, their special bent and their character, provided this freedom does not go against the true and full doctrine of Jesus Christ. This fact should also be known and carefully reflected upon, not only by those who were born within the Catholic fold but also by those who are reaching out to it by their desires and wishes. All may rest completely assured that they will never be forced to change their own rites and ancient institutions for Latin rites and institutions. Both should be held in equal esteem and honour because they surround our common Mother the Church with a regal diversity. Even

more, in keeping intact and inviolable what many regard as ancient and precious, this diversity of rites and institutions is not in any way opposed to a true and sincere unity."

It is here asserted in the strongest way that all traditional and legitimate institutions must be preserved within the Catholic communion.

Among institutions in this category, to which the Eastern Christians attach particular importance, must be mentioned the rites of public worship. These rites derive their legitimacy from many and varied historical considerations. They are the expression of that special Christian genius to be found in each church and people. They have been instituted and used by great saints and eminent Fathers and doctors of the Church. They are understood and deeply loved by the people and have formed and saved the faith in difficult periods when the gospel was no longer preached. They have even given their special form to Christian nations in the East. For all these reasons, we must safeguard the Eastern rites in any work for the union of the churches.

Writing on "Diversity of rites and Christian Unity", Father Dalmais, O. P., explains this need: "A long history, coupled with a common destiny, arrived at under special conditions, often difficult and sometimes heroic, has determined the appearance of the Eastern churches. The liturgy is the highest and most perfect expression of the character, and through it of the soul, of these churches. One cannot isolate it or wrench it from its living setting. A liturgy is the sacred expression of a human community at the moment when Christ permits it to take part in the priestly action whereby he takes humanity with him to the Father. This humanity is not simply a gathering of disembodied individuals but is made up of human communities, gathered by a common destiny. The Church takes over the community concerned in order to transfigure it, and the community in turn is moulded by a

spirituality, a theology and customs all having juridical sanction. This view of what the Church's life means in concrete terms may have been somewhat lost sight of in Western Christendom, which allowed itself to be fashioned over the centuries by the Latinism of the Roman church, modified only by a variety of local temperaments and ethnic and national conditions. The historical background of the Eastern churches, inheritors and living witnesses as they are of the great cultures of the Mediterranean, has given them a deep sense of the Church's roots in the soil and in history. Diversity of rites, with all it implies, is one of the points on which they can make a unique contribution to solving the problems faced today by a Church that has outgrown the limits of its Mediterranean cradle and must show by its behaviour that it is truly catholic. That is, it must show itself capable of taking over all human cultures without favouring one against another. The point has been stressed several times over the years by Pius XII and John XXIII, as well as by the general episcopal body of the Church."

Besides their liturgical rites within the great Catholic union, the Eastern churches must also retain a certain internal autonomy.

In particular, the Eastern patriarchs must be allowed to retain the headship of their own churches with their rights and place in the enlarged Catholic Church. The Eastern hierarchy, Catholic as well as Orthodox, attaches great importance to this point, not out of vainglory or a desire to wield authority but because, from the beginning, the Eastern churches have had their own patriarchs whom the faithful have become accustomed to look upon as spiritual and temporal leaders, guides in church and state affairs.

This Eastern conception of authority within the Church does not, moreover, conflict in any way with the dogma of the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff. It recognizes

that he possesses ordinary and supreme jurisdiction, direct and universal. The wish is, however, that in practice the pope should delegate the effective exercise of this authority in the many cases which do not necessarily require his intervention.

This conception of authority within the Church, which retains the ancient rights, powers and privileges of the patriarchs, is reflected at least in part in the new Eastern code of canon law published by Pope Pius XII, and has frequently been confirmed by solemn papal declarations. It will be sufficient if we quote here that of Leo XIII.

In the apostolic letter *Praeclara gratulationis* of 20th June, 1894, marking his episcopal jubilee, the Pope invited all Eastern churches to come into union and assured them that within their refound Catholicism they would find the whole of their Eastern spiritual heritage and, more particularly, all their disciplinary and liturgical traditions. Here are the Pope's words with all their promise and attraction:

"We look with affection towards the East, cradle of salvation for the human race. Impelled as we are by a burning desire, we cannot but feel a joyful hope that the time is not far distant when these Eastern churches, rendered so illustrious by the faith of their forefathers and ancient glories, will return to their starting point. Moreover, the dividing line between them and ourselves is not very marked. Indeed, apart from one or two points, agreement is so complete that often, in order to defend the Catholic faith, we borrow from the authorities, arguments, doctrines, customs and ritual of the Eastern churches

We make this appeal to you for reconciliation . . . and our heart opens to you, whoever you may be, of Greek rite or of any other Eastern rite separated from the Catholic Church. Think well on what we ask of you, give it mature reflection before God We ask you to draw

together with us and to come into union, and by that we mean a perfect union without reserve The true union between Christians is that which Jesus Christ desired and instituted and consists of unity in faith and government. There is nothing in the consequences of such a reunion that should lead you to fear a reduction in the rights and privileges of your patriarchs or interference in the rites and customs of your respective churches. For it was and will always remain part of the intentions of the Apostolic See, as it is of its most persistent traditions, to show towards every people a great spirit of condescension and to take great account of their origins and customs."

Leo XIII did more than make promises to the Eastern churches. He laid down the main rules for the work of the Latin religious orders in the East and defined the conditions of their cooperation with the local hierarchies.

These rules are set forth in the constitution *Orientalium dignitas* (30th November, 1894) which is the great apostolic charter of the Eastern churches.

"Among Christian people who are so unhappily divided", wrote Leo XIII, "we address ourselves here primarily to the nations of the East, calling on them, exhorting them, imploring them with the most paternal and apostolic affection Everything that can be expected from the wisdom of the Apostolic See will be harnessed to eliminate causes of disagreement and distrust and produce the best conditions for a reconciliation. The most important thing in our view is to turn with care to preserving the special discipline of the East, and that, moreover, we have always done."

It is by conserving the Eastern rites, and giving the order to maintain them in the event of union, by recognizing a certain internal autonomy to the authorities in the Eastern church, that the Church will show itself truly Catholic, open to all and calling all to unity in a rich diversity.

Pope John XXIII, who has shown so many signs of

special regard for the Eastern churches, wished by these paternal gestures to give further proof of the true catholicity of the Church and if he has used the expression "separated brethren" to describe the Orthodox, it is because he knows that brothers will always end by meeting in their father's house. When he ordered the celebration of a pontifical liturgy in the Byzantine rite in the basilica of St. Peter, to inaugurate the preparatory work for the forthcoming ecumenical council, this was to stress to the whole world that the great Vatican Basilica is the central place of prayer for all Catholics, whatever their language and rite, and that they can pray or chant in Latin, Greek, Slav, Rumanian or Arabic, as he ordered that they should on Sunday, 13th November, 1960.

John XXIII went even further. He himself prayed in Greek and used the Byzantine ordination rite when he conferred bishop's orders on Gabriel Acacius Coussa, the assessor of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church. By this gesture, never before witnessed in the history of the Church, with which the present writer had the honour of being associated in the name of the Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV, the Pope was seen truly to be the head of the *Catholica*, without the Greeks being any longer able to say that the Pope was of the Latin rite and simply the Patriarch of the West.

Pope John added to his magnificent and fatherly apostolate for union by appointing Bishop Coussa as pro-secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church. This is the first time a bishop of the Greek rite has been given such a high appointment in the administration of the Church.²

Need there be a limit to our hopes after such deep understanding of the Eastern Church and after these revealing indications of the Pope's good will?

² Bishop Coussa was subsequently advanced to the cardinalate, but died a few months later, 29th July 1962.

The Desire for Christian Unity¹

BY ARCHBISHOP ELIAS ZOGHBY

THE LIFE of the Church reproduces on a large scale the life of the individual soul. The Christian Church in its two thousand years of existence has gone through the same religious experience as the Christian, the same crises and the same conflict.

I want to touch upon one aspect of this interior and intimate conflict within the Church in dealing with Christian unity.

God, himself perfectly one in the Trinity, in creating a world with elements so varied and often so opposed, intended to manifest his glory and show forth his power by placing and maintaining unity in his world. Having made heaven and earth, the vegetable and animal kingdoms, the day star and the stars of the night, he brought them together in harmony and order. This unity, realized according to God's eternal designs, is the foundation of all that is good and beautiful.

But the material unity of the universe, which consists in the harmony of the elements composing it and in the

¹ First published in *Le Lien*, April 1960, Vol. XXV (1960), No. 3, pp. 87-93 (Greek Catholic review, Cairo).

balance of their relations with each other, this unity of which God alone is the author, is destined in his divine plan to prepare the way for and stimulate that other unity which man is called upon to achieve with divine help within himself and in the great human family to which he belongs.

The unity within ourselves is provided by the relationship between soul and body, between mind and senses. It is the coordination of all our activities, spiritual and bodily, intellectual and sensory, all orientated towards a single end.

Unity within ourselves is bound to help in the achievement of unity within human society. The latter consists in a growing awareness by all people of their common origin and destiny and, consequently, of their brotherhood and interdependence in communion with the God who made them and in the pursuit of their own happiness, which it has pleased him to make the subject of his own glory. But men have failed in the attempt to achieve this double unity.

Human nature is divided against itself. The senses, given up to their own pleasures, enslave the spirit. The soul, subjected to the body, is a prisoner of the instincts. Desires of the flesh, desires of the eyes and pride in living tend, if they are not fought, to break up the unity of the human being and enthrone two men in him: "What I do is not what I wish to do", said St. Paul, "but something which I hate" (Rom. 7 : 15).

Divided within himself, threatened with the ruin of his own being, man finds it impossible to unite with his own brothers. Nothing can be built on ruins. Order cannot be founded on disorder. Beings divided within themselves cannot be brought together: "What leads to war, what leads to quarrelling among you? I will tell you what leads to them; the appetites which infest your mortal bodies" (James 4 : 1).

We find divisions within families and nations and divisions among peoples. The bonds of flesh and blood between the sons of Adam have not sufficed to unite man to his fellow men any more than the personal union of soul and body has been enough to bring unity within the individual man. The providential plan seemed thus to have failed. A restoration of the human being was necessary, and even more a rebirth, a re-creation. A new man was needed, capable of recovering his unity. A new society was also needed, above nation and race, which would be able to achieve the unity of its members, on a transcendental plane.

God gave us a new Adam and, in him, a new man, a new society, the Church, the assembly of the children of God, of every race and of every condition.

Henceforth, the Christian, born to a new life through baptism, must be able to say with St. Paul, "rather, not I; it is Christ that lives in me". With the Christian as with the apostle, there must no longer be two men but one, Jesus Christ. Nor must there be two wills, one tending to good and the other opposing it. There must be one will, God's. Living in Jesus Christ, the Christian should benefit by the harmony established in the mental and sensory faculties of the sons of God, all united in one mind and one charity.

Henceforth, too, the Church, which is the gathering together of all the faithful sharing in the same divine life and communicating in the one Bread, must, by identifying itself with Jesus, constitute with him a single mystical Body of which he is himself the head and we are the members. Nothing must be allowed to break the unity of this body for nothing must separate the Christian from his Saviour, "not affliction, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword" (Rom. 8 : 35).

And yet what point have we in fact reached? What has become of Christendom? Where is Christian interdepend-

ence in face of impiety and atheistic materialism? In our distress we cry out: "Unite us in order to conjure away the evil that afflicts the world!" . . . Yet that would be useless. It is in fighting the evil we find in ourselves that we shall be able to unite to fight the evil that threatens the world. The union of Christians among themselves depends on the union of each with Christ. There can be neither human nor Christian unity unless we are constantly reborn in Jesus Christ, unless we live by him and in him, and are "quit, now, of the old self whose way of life you remember, the self that wasted its aim on false dreams . . . you must be clothed in the new self, which is created in God's image, justified and sanctified through truth" (Eph. 4:22-24). He who ceases to be one with Christ ceases to be one with himself, his brothers and the Church.

In other words, if Christendom is disunited we must look for the cause in our human passions, in the three concupiscences and in our sins.

Individual sanctification and Christian unity go together, becoming one in the redemptive plan. The Son of God came to deliver us from sin and incorporate us in himself. To the extent that this incorporation is achieved and that we "grow up, in everything, into a due proportion with Christ, who is our head" (Eph. 4:15), to that extent will the mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church, achieve its fulness.

This explains why our Lord, when he was about to suffer his redeeming passion, seemed to forget all he had worked and preached for and make the unity of Christians, as it were, the sole object of his sorrow and his prayer, "Father that they too may be one".

During his public life, he recommended his followers to imitate God in all things, to be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect, to be merciful as their Father in heaven is merciful At the very moment when he prepared to seal his mission in blood he found but one thing in God

to imitate – his unity, the unity of the Father and the Son: “that they too may be one in us, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee”.

Redemption and Christian unity come together in the divine plan. The success of the one gives the measure of the success of the other. If the strength of the desire of Christians for unity is governed by their faithfulness to the redeeming Christ, it is important to know how strongly they are attracted to unity. If we are not united, are we at least sincere and effective in our search for unity or are we indifferent? The reply to this question will enable us to judge how far we have cooperated personally and collectively with the grace of redemption and with Jesus Christ.

Fortunately, we can claim that there is no church or Christian group indifferent to the call for Christian unity. But we have, nevertheless, often failed to take effective measures to achieve it, and have even sometimes sought certain advantages in our isolation. Whenever circumstances have brought the churches face to face with this problem, popes, patriarchs and bishops have, on the other hand, always proclaimed their hope for unity, because Christ wished it. For some time now, hope has given place to anxiety. The work of Pope John XXIII for Christian unity is not an improvisation but the culmination of many decades of work and prayer throughout the whole Christian world.

We know the Holy Spirit never refuses grace to those of good will, sincerely seeking to overcome sin, and the division of Christendom is a sin. The history of the Church, as we have said, is, on a large scale, the history of each soul. On the morrow of great decisions the devil enters with his arguments and his minions. If, like the individual soul, Christendom does not immediately resist, if it does not immediately eliminate all obstacles to the fulfilment of its good intentions, it remains in a state of sin. The moment of grace will pass and may not return for a long time.

The Church wants unity and the churches want it, but in all Christian denominations there are men who do not want it. They look on others as not sufficiently holy to be their partners. Or, wanting everything for themselves, they regard others as over-ambitious or as proud in daring to consider them their brothers. There is also another group who feel themselves sufficient for the Church, and indeed feel themselves to be the Church. To them union seems superfluous.

These people reduce Christ's Church to their own dimensions and find no place in it for others. They reduce the truth to the measure of their own spirit and, thinking that it bears a face like their own, treat as false all other faces of the same truth.

The spirit of evil spreads such men throughout Christendom. They are to be found in all churches and at all periods of history. They are not always aware of the evil they are doing but that does not make it any less real. Over the centuries they have been responsible for the failure of the various attempts at union and are about to compromise the council of unity by presenting it to the world under a different guise.

We should like to remind them that in launching his call for unity, Pope John XXIII did not set out to supply any exclusively Catholic or personal need. What he has done is to express the unanimous desire of the whole of Christendom. All churches aspire after reunion. Inter-confessional meetings, frequent contacts, ecumenical studies and the common prayers of Christians, particularly during Unity Octave, have brought this call more and more to the fore and prepared the Christian world to take account of it and give it a warm welcome.

No church has the right to resist the call for unity simply on the ground that the appeal comes from the Pope in Rome. Nor would the Catholic Church scorn the same appeal if it came from the humblest of the faithful. The

Pope did not create the problem of unity and claims no monopoly in it. It faces every soul in a state of grace who, by crying Abba, Father, opens himself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to all those who also regard God as their Father.

The Christian Church is not the private property of any one group of men. When the Pope calls for reunion, it is not his own heritage he is asking Christians to share. He seeks to unite them not to himself, but to Jesus Christ, their only Redeemer, for "there is only one God and only one mediator . . . Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 2 : 5).

Every bishop in Christendom and every member of the faithful owes it to his brothers and to Jesus Christ to contribute what he can to the realization of Christ's wish "that they may all be one".

This unity belongs to God, to our Lord, the head of the mystical Body of which we are the members, but it also belongs to each soul because each one of us is called to membership of this mystical Body and will benefit from the great influx of grace with which God will reward the reunited Church.

It follows from what we have just said that every man who opposes efforts to promote Christian unity – from whichever side these efforts come – sins against the Son of God and against the whole Christian people. He also sins against mankind, called upon in its entirety to faith in Jesus Christ, but hindered from achieving it by, among other obstacles, the sight of Christians divided among themselves. Those, Catholics and non-Catholics, whom centuries of separation have left complacent in their isolation and who for reasons of expediency, national or racial, try to hinder the progress of Christian unity, will expose themselves on the Last Day to the severe judgement of every baptized soul and of every soul who might have been baptized had he not been scandalized by divisions among Christians.

These men play the part within the churches that sin plays in the soul. The churches must repudiate them if they are to continue on the road to unity, if they want success for the appeal of Pope John XXIII, so favourably echoed by other Christian leaders, and are anxious that with God's grace the unanimous prayer of Christian peoples should be heard – the prayer for the realization of the desire so dear to our Lord: "that they too may be one ... as thou Father art in me, and I in thee."

Christian Unity Involves the Whole Church¹

BY ARCHBISHOP ELIAS ZOGHBY

WE SPEAK increasingly of Christian unity but I wonder how many people understand what it means.

Ask a Christian, even an enlightened one, and he will almost always tell you: "If the heads of the churches reach agreement, we shall have union."

At first sight this appears reasonable. We all have the impression that union would be achieved if the leaders of the Orthodox churches agreed with the Roman Pontiff on definitions of the Roman primacy and infallibility and if they solved some other largely verbal differences between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

But to reduce Christian unity to an agreement between the heads of the churches and make them the chief and indeed only agents of this unity is to reduce the Church of Christ to the level of ordinary human societies where the good will and intentions of a small group of men often decide the fate of nations. In other words, it means reducing the mystery of the redemption which Christ

¹ First published in *Le Lien*, Vol. XXV (1960), No. 8, pp. 267-70 (Greek Catholic review, Cairo).

himself, when about to enter into his passion, summed up in the prayer for unity, to a mode of Church government and to a hierarchical mechanism determining relations between the leaders of Christendom. To look at unity in this way is to substitute churchmen for the Church, which is the mystical Body of Christ, and to substitute the various activities of human diplomacy for the life of grace in the redeemed soul.

When Christ prayed for unity, he was praying for all those who would come to believe in him in order that they might be one as he and the Father are one. The prayer for unity was a redemptive prayer as we have already explained in an earlier article. By the very fact that they are cleaving to the redeeming Christ and identifying themselves with him, Christians should find themselves united to Christ in the visible Church which is his Body. In other words, the grace that unites the Christian to Christ also unites him to his brothers.

Christian unity is not, then, to be regarded as a compromise or as a plot, the success of which depends on the skill of the minority to whom our Lord has entrusted the government of his Church. It is the work of the whole of Christendom, the necessary fulfilment of the prayers and sacrifices, of the love, of those who believe in Christ. To make it the exclusive task of popes, patriarchs and bishops is to misunderstand the redeeming value of unity and to misunderstand the personal contribution of the baptized, redeemed individually by Christ and made chiefly responsible for the salvation of his own soul within the Church. It is to subordinate Jesus Christ living in the Christian soul to Christ looked at from a juridical, social and administrative point of view.

We must, nevertheless, admit that our effort is primarily directed towards this unity from above which was certainly not the chief aim of the cries and groans of our Lord. We are all convinced that if the chief members of

the Orthodox episcopate should today come to an agreement with the Pope of Rome on the place and powers to be accorded to each of the church leaders, the union of churches would not be long in coming. Christian unity seems today to depend on agreement between the main leaders of Christendom and when we invite the faithful to pray for unity what we are thinking of is bringing these leaders, through God's grace, to an agreement between themselves. But to look on unity in this way is to create between the hierarchy and the rest of the Church an artificial division that is contrary to Christ's will, as though one group could take the initiative and the other had merely to conform.

But the Church is not like a train in which the locomotive alone has power, pulling wagons which are, as it were, lifeless. Divine grace, which is the link with the whole Church, flows through the mystical Body of Christ and vivifies all its members at the same time. So much is this true that the Church is present and living in each soul in a state of grace.

It is not, therefore, a question of achieving two different kinds of union, of which one, that of the hierarchy, necessarily involves the other, that of the faithful. Christian unity must involve the whole Church to the extent that divine life penetrates souls. The rôle of the hierarchy, which Christ has established to govern and rule the Church, is to help in the increase of this divine life which, in growing, will renew both the hierarchy and the Christian people. The value of the pastoral body is thus linked to the internal vitality of the whole Church. This is perhaps what is meant when we hear it said that a people has the clergy it deserves.

This being so, the union of the churches, which is fundamentally a work of grace, must not be made dependent on the exclusive initiative of the church leaders. If the latter are today showing themselves more favourable

to union, this is thanks to the Church as a whole, called by its greater maturity to a greater charity and understanding.

We can thus take pleasure in the thought that Christian unity is not subordinated to the unity of the hierarchy, which itself depends on historical factors as well as the personal dispositions of the heads of the Church. There will always be some among them who for human and unavowed motives would prefer to hold up the advance of Christendom towards unity, but they will be overtaken by the Church which will reject them just as a torrent of fresh water hurls rubbish out of its path.

The Church is advancing. If it is indeed true, as many people seem to think, that a simple decision by the heads of the Churches would suffice to unite Christians, this is because the latter are already effectively united and, in the same way, assuming they are effectively united, the ecclesiastical authorities will have no difficulty in sealing this unity by an official "concordat", a sort of recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit, who is the source of all sanctity and all union.

There is in fact some way to go before we arrive at this degree of maturity and still much opposition and much resistance to grace and love to overcome. Victory does not go to those who are most clever, or to the diplomats, but to those who are the holiest. The ferment of unity is to be found in each Christian heart and the unity of the Church militant cannot be of an essentially different character from that of the Church triumphant. Both are the work of grace and find their fulfilment in the communion of each and every one in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Each and every one! Both the bishops and the ordinary faithful will achieve unity through their union with Christ. It is through the Church in heaven that we must look at the Church on earth, placing the problem of unity in the setting of eternity. True, the juridical and

administrative aspects have their importance in the providential plan, but they must not be allowed to overshadow the eternal realities. The Church here below will not be taken into heaven with its present institutions and rulers. These are all passing. The members of the hierarchy which Christ has placed with so much love and care at the head of the Church will, once their mission is accomplished, take their place among the faithful whose God-given rank in the kingdom of heaven will depend in each case on personal merits and Christian life.

We should greatly like to see the heads of the churches enlightening the charity of the faithful by a deep study of the truths of the faith and, in return, the doctors of the law and members of the hierarchy of the various churches recovering from time to time their close and vital link with the Christian community and taking inspiration from the simple and spontaneous reactions of Christian peoples, who regard unity as primarily a work of love. This would enable them to rise above legal and administrative complexities. Faith itself will pass away with this life and only charity will remain. Christian unity will begin and end in charity enlightened by faith.

Reflections on the Union of the Churches¹

BY ARCHBISHOP PETER K. MEDAWAR

THE ideas and suggestions I am about to outline are neither new nor particularly personal.² They may seem overbold or utopian because one does not generally raise this subject at the Roman See. For my part, I accept the risk of being considered thus, provided those responsible for the direction of the Universal Church are made aware of what many Eastern Christians, both Catholics and Orthodox, think about the vital problem of the reunion of the churches.

Everybody expects the Roman Church to take the first step. In Rome it is urged that the Holy See has more than once made the first step, since, on a number of occasions, popes have launched quite solemn and direct appeals for reunion. It is added that to each the Orthodox have replied with snubs.

¹ First published in *Istina*, 1960, No. 4, pp. 411—19; the following footnotes are by the editor Father J.-C. Dumont, O. P.

² This text was, as far as we know, produced in only a limited number of copies and has not so far been published. It is already fifteen years old. We are ourselves responsible for the annotations intended to bring it up to date by showing where the points raised by the author have been at least partially accepted and where, unfortunately, he still has not met with a favourable response.

Such general and impersonal appeals to reunion never had a chance of success and never will have, because, first, in spite of their warm fatherly expression, the general tone is of one who is offended but nevertheless condescends to pardon the guilty, provided the latter recognizes his error and repents. It is the tone of one who, in tranquil assurance of his own possession of the whole truth, charitably consents to pass it on to those who have it only in part, provided they renounce their errors and ask pardon. Supposing this Catholic attitude to be theologically justified, it is still far from taking account of the psychology of those concerned, either individually or as groups.

Nor is it really adequate to the situation in its historical context because it has been shown that on the Catholic side there may well have been as much responsibility as on the Orthodox for the sin of schism.³

Secondly, these calls for union, being general and impersonal, are not regarded by any of the heads of churches as addressed to himself. In fact, these pontifical documents, drawn up in a language foreign to the Orthodox bishops, printed and published *urbi et orbi*, have not even been sent to them. They have become vaguely aware of them from résumés, not always accurate and sometimes tendentious, appearing in the popular press, and even then only when the publications concerned have reached them. This is not

³ One of the most comforting features of the first stages of the pontificate of John XXIII is precisely the change of tone called for here. It is appropriate to quote the words of the Supreme Pontiff in the course of an audience given to the Roman clergy and reported in the non-official press: "We do not propose to indulge in an historical trial. We shall not try to find out who was right and who was wrong. The responsibilities were shared. We shall simply say, 'Let us join together, and finish with our disputes'" (29th January, 1959, at St. John and St. Paul). It is particularly desirable that the example thus given by the Pope should be widely understood and followed.

sufficient to be considered as an appeal to union, directed to the responsible heads of the Orthodox churches.⁴

To avoid offence, the papal chancellery should be willing to modify the tone and style of pontifical documents addressed to the Orthodox or referring to them. They must hear not only the voice of authority and law but also, and much more so, that of simple brotherhood.

As a pendant to my previous remarks, I should add something about the name "Orthodox" which our brethren give themselves. In the view of the Catholic Church, this name applies in the strict sense only to itself, but that is not a sufficient reason for refusing to employ it in relation to others. Surely it is normal in human relations, private or public, to call someone by the name he gives himself, without asking whether his physical and moral characteristics strictly justify it.⁵

⁴ Certain official personalities have apparently been held back by fear lest action taking account of the *de facto* existence of the separated churches be interpreted as, *de jure* recognition or that it will result in a course leading naturally to such recognition. In our view, such a scruple would be thoroughly misplaced since it is obvious that to achieve the reunion of a separated communion it is necessary, sooner or later, to deal with it as it is. The whole problem lies in persuading it to eliminate whatever in our view lacks legitimacy in its present state. If one must necessarily end by a dialogue and by taking the church concerned as it is, why not start doing so today? We can hardly conceive how deeply it hurts the feelings of our separated brethren when the Roman Church is seen to treat them as though they were not a Christian community meriting attention and consideration. This explains their bitterness when certain pontifical documents are addressed to non-Catholic populations over the heads of their own hierarchies and sometimes without even mentioning them. What is even more regrettable in this behaviour than its psychological consequence is that it deals by preterition (a method often interpreted as a denial) with certain essential elements in the theology of the Church, of which the mystery, as one cannot too often repeat, overlaps considerably the canonical framework in which, in the strictest sense of the word, it is "realized".

⁵ Pontifical documents carefully avoid using the term Orthodox in speaking of our separated brethren, often replacing it with the word

In the same way in international relations, the title each state gives itself is respected even when it relates to an enemy. In religious affairs, too, we give each group the name its members have themselves adopted. Thus, those who do not believe in the catholicity of the Roman Church nevertheless call it the Catholic Church and do not put the word Catholic between inverted commas. And when the Catholic Church speaks of various Protestant bodies, it designates them by the names they have themselves taken: Evangelical Church, Apostolic Church, Church of God, Episcopalian Church, Salvation Army, and so forth. Why then should the Roman Catholic Church wound our Eastern brethren by refusing to describe them by the name Orthodox which they have always given themselves and under which they are known in history and to the whole world, even to those who are not Christians? Are we afraid that there will be a confusion between them and us or are we afraid of scandalizing someone?⁶ Such fears are ridiculous and they some-

“dissidents”. This custom, however much to be deplored, is preferable to that of placing the word Orthodox between inverted commas. In the same spirit, we used at one time to speak of “the religion said to be reformed”. This custom has fortunately been abandoned without lessening awareness of the fundamental distinction between Protestantism and Catholicism. To appreciate the resentment aroused among our Orthodox brethren by the use of inverted commas, we have simply to ask ourselves how we should feel were the latter to call us “so-called Catholics” or if they never gave the title of our church without putting “Catholic” between inverted commas. It is not enough to say that such a way of behaving does not encourage good relations between separated brethren: it acts quite simply as an obstacle at the very start.

⁶ The question of scandal, which we are always enjoined to avoid, merits close attention. Dispensations granted by canon law normally contain the proviso, *remoto scandalo* (all danger of scandal being avoided). It is too frequently forgotten that the scandal which our attitude may give to our Orthodox brethren is no less serious in itself and in its consequences than the scandal our Catholic brethren may take from the opposite approach. It is also forgotten that there are

times amuse Eastern Christians and tempt the Orthodox to say: "Look how fanatical and narrow-minded the Latin Catholics are!"

If we want appeals for union to be heard, it is no good sending them across the world through the press and radio. They must, on the contrary, be in the form of direct communications, very discreet, personal, pleasing in form, and addressed to the leaders of the Orthodox world (both church and national leaders). And, as a start, it is good that the representatives of the Roman See, delegates and apostolic nuncios, and the Latins in general should at last decide to place themselves on terms of courtesy and charity with the Orthodox hierarchies⁷, without fearing lest they should thereby break the rigid rules relating to *communicatio in sacris*⁸ (which do not in any way refer to this type of relations) and without adopting the attitude of pharisaical scandal that makes us ridiculous and irritating, not only to other Christians, but also to Moslems.

"If the Pope wished it, union would take place without difficulty." This is what a prominent member of the Orthodox hierarchy said to me. How? Well, if the Pope, as common father, were one day to venture as far as Con-

many ways of avoiding scandalizing Catholics themselves. The best is surely to explain to them the underlying reasons for our friendly attitude towards our Orthodox brethren. Experience shows that scandal then gives place to edification. The merit of this attitude is that it is edifying, not in the pious and customary use of the word, but in its etymological sense. It is in this way that true Christian unity is built up and restored.

⁷ Happily, there has been real progress on this point in recent years, but examples of a proper attitude remain too few.

⁸ The unhealthy scruple of some more timid people consists in regarding the least community of prayer with the Orthodox as *communicatio in sacris*. This term should be restricted to the purely sacramental sphere. Moreover, both in theory and in practice the rule forbidding *communicatio in sacris* is modified in certain respects in favour of the Orthodox.

stantinople to visit the senior Patriarch of Orthodoxy, do you not think that such a gesture by the one who is greater towards one who is lesser would rock to its foundations the whole of Orthodoxy, the whole of Christianity, the whole universe even? In the eyes of the whole world, would that not be the greatest step towards union?

Many objections could no doubt be raised to this suggestion. It might be asked, for instance, whether it would not be contrary to the dignity of the Pope. Since the patriarchs of Constantinople were the authors of the schism, would it not be for them to make the first step. Even admitting that the whole fault for the schism lies with the See of Constantinople (which would not be entirely true to history), we might reply that it still cannot be said from a Christian point of view that the Vicar of Christ would demean himself by making a gesture increasing his resemblance to his Divine Master, even were it to end in a fiasco⁹.

When would be the appropriate time for such an initiative?

⁹ This idea of a visit by the Pope to the Ecumenical Patriarch must be taken on its merits. In the present international situation, it would probably cause many other difficulties besides those relating to prestige and precedence. We know, for instance, that on several occasions the Patriarch of Constantinople, Athenagoras I, has declared his willingness to visit the Pope, provided he is assured that the Pope will return the visit. The suggestion is, in any case, useful as an indication of an attitude. It is quite true that spectacular gestures from Rome towards the Eastern Orthodox Church or towards its hierarchy should lead to a complete change in psychological attitudes prevailing up to the present. On several occasions in recent years, our Orthodox brethren have themselves provided opportunities for them which have been refused in a way intended to be polite but which has never, in fact, been other than patronizing. I might, for instance, recall the invitation to join officially in the great pilgrimage in honour of St. Paul in 1951. The few Catholic priests who took part – with full authorization, moreover – would find it difficult to describe their sorrow at the thought that the acclamation

No special occasion is necessary. Any one of the days God has created is an opportunity for Christian unity, for this item remains on the agenda until unity is achieved, and even then it cannot be forgotten if unity is to be safeguarded. Two circumstances do, however, seem to favour the present moment:

First, the world's distress and anxiety, the lack of internal peace, in brief, the incurably troubled situation arising from a lack of unity in minds and hearts seems to invite a spectacular effort towards a union of Christians from those responsible for the churches. Such a union would alone seem capable of restoring peace to the world.

The Church has a heavy task at the present time in the political and diplomatic field. Its leaders need to work to restore the moral and material ruins left by the war and to repair the consequences of the extension of atheistic Communism. Would not promoting the union of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches be an effective means of furthering these other aims? Was not union uppermost in the thoughts of our Lord himself and should not all those representing him in varying degrees among men also think about it?

with which the Greeks, known for their friendliness towards foreigners, received the official representatives of the various Christian denominations at all the points on the pilgrimage was not addressed to their own church, which was officially absent. The culmination of the pilgrimage was the celebration of Vespers on the rock of the Areopagus on the evening of 28th June, in the presence of the royal family, members of the government, the whole diplomatic corps and a huge crowd. What would have been the reception given to a pontifical legate arriving in great state to take the first place (which was assured to him) in the cortège of ecclesiastical dignitaries? But, there as elsewhere, the place was empty and the feeling of gratitude that might have been provoked by an official representation was replaced by a new and deep resentment. Unfortunately, this was not the only chance missed during the last pontificate. The letter of the Athens professors to Pius XII in December, 1957, is another, but the details would be too long to examine here.

Secondly, at this moment, the Catholic Church is contemplating proclaiming the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. The cult of the Mother of God is common ground on which Catholics and Orthodox can easily meet, but if bishops of the Catholic Church are the only ones to work on the definition of this article of faith there will certainly be a painful reaction among the Orthodox, and there is a danger that it will induce many to adopt a Protestant position, breaking thus with the tradition of magisterium of the Orthodox Church and widening the gulf separating Orthodoxy from Catholicism. Even among those who remain faithful to the traditional doctrine, we must fear violent attacks against the Catholic Church which will be accused of ignoring the existence of 200 million Orthodox and not bothering to study their point of view. Could not the Roman Church, while safeguarding its inalienable rights, not seize upon this occasion to enter into contact with Orthodox bishops. Would not the Mother of God, in whose honour and under whose auspices these steps would be taken, bless the effort of the Vicar of her Divine Son?¹⁰

¹⁰ These lines were written four years before the proclamation of the dogma. We know now how far the forecast was accurate. The fear that this proclamation would induce members of the Orthodox Church to reject their traditional beliefs out of opposition to the Catholic initiative has not proved justified but we have, on the other hand, been reproached for leaving out of account the opinion of the Orthodox Church on a question that is a matter of common faith to us both. This would have been an excellent occasion to consult with our separated brethren in a field in which there is no controversy. God knows what happy developments might have followed. Such an action might have had, even more than some which have preceded it, an undeniable ecclesiological importance. It would, moreover, have been thoroughly justified from the point of view of the most strict orthodoxy. And if the advice of the Orthodox churches consulted had been against the proclamation of the dogma, what harm would have been done by waiting and even by giving up the idea?

There are other means by which the Orthodox might be shown that the Roman Church respects their position and takes their outlook into account. They include:

Determining precedence. This may seem a secondary matter and in itself it is secondary but in the general context of the life of a church made up of human beings, it becomes extremely important. History, including the history of ecumenical councils themselves, provides many examples and even today we see that the codes of canon law devote several articles to questions of precedence. If this is the spirit among Catholic prelates, presumed to be more supernatural in their outlook than others, we must not be surprised to find the same spirit among prelates of the Orthodox Church.

But according to a tradition more than a thousand years old and based on decisions of ecumenical councils, precedence is fixed thus: the Patriarch of Constantinople comes immediately after the Pope, followed by Alexandria, then by Antioch, and finally by Jerusalem. After these bishops of apostolic sees come the other patriarchs of more recent creation, the metropolitans, archbishops and bishops. The Orthodox pay great attention to this traditional order of precedence. Now what do we see in the draft of the Eastern code? Cardinals have been placed before patriarchs, not because of the importance of their dioceses but because they are, or some are, the immediate collaborators of the pope¹¹. If the Catholic Church contained only Latins and were restricted to the West, we should have no complaint about these arrangements but the Church in fact embraces the whole universe and all the peoples of the earth. At least as far as the soul of

¹¹ The draft of Eastern canon law has now been authorized. We shall return later to the difficulties raised by the promulgation of the section of the new code relating to the right of persons (*De personis*). The proclamation was made by the *motu proprio* "Cleri sanctitati" of 2nd June, 1957.

the Church is concerned, it includes the 200 million Eastern Christians. The latter ask themselves, why should cardinals be placed before patriarchs? Is it thought that on the blessed day of union, the Patriarch of Constantinople, for instance, will be willing to yield place to the cardinals of the Roman Church? In looking forward already in its codes to the precedence of its cardinals over the patriarchs of the Eastern sees, the Roman Church must surely indicate a firm intention to dominate us.

I believe that the Catholic Church should immediately start showing members of the Orthodox hierarchy what place they will occupy in the scale of precedence of a reunited and unified Church and it is one which must be in conformity with the traditional order decided upon in ecumenical council. Pius IX has already done this in relation to the Anglicans. In fact, when he re-established the Catholic hierarchy in England, he did not give the title of Canterbury or York to the first archbishop of that hierarchy, because he wished to spare the feelings of the Anglican bishops of these primatial sees and show them that when they became Catholics the precedence would be reserved for them. That was why he gave the head of the Catholic hierarchy the title merely of Westminster. Is there anything to prevent the successors of Pius IX from following his example and sparing the feelings not of a few million Anglicans but of 200 million Orthodox, very much closer to us than the Anglicans?

It may be objected that I am making out a case for my own little parish and that my pride as an Eastern Christian leads me to hope that my own insignificant patriarch will be given a rank superior to that of the *eminentissimi* who, under the guidance of the pope, look after the interests of the Universal Church. Although I have not the intelligence of a phoenix, I am not sufficiently foolish to believe that my patriarch, in spite of his high-sounding title of Antioch and All the East, Alexandria and

Jerusalem, is a particularly important hierarch in the Church of God, having as he does only 200,000 souls within his patriarchate. But I am speaking for the 200 million Orthodox who watch us closely and, in spite of everything, wait to see what we are going to do.

The Conclave. All I have said about precedence applies equally to the conclave. Without being given the title of cardinals, the patriarchs should be members of the conclave that elects the pope.

The cross on the Pope's slippers. This is a matter that will surprise Romans. The cross embroidered on the Pope's slippers? But that is for visitors to his Holiness who, on kissing the feet, kiss rather the cross. That is what we have always been told in the East to justify this custom but the explanation does not satisfy everybody. It is surprising in any case that the popes should stretch out their feet to be kissed by the faithful, and Eastern Christians have too great a respect for the cross to accept the practice. They show the utmost veneration for this instrument of our redemption, glory of churches and states and standard of the victory of salvation. For fourteen centuries, Christians in Islamic lands have suffered all kinds of affronts and persecutions on account of the cross. They love and venerate the cross as much as the Moslems scorn and insult it and they consider that the normal place for it is the summit of the crowns adorning the heads of pontiffs and sovereigns. They cannot understand that the chief symbol of Christians should be placed on the feet. A member of the separated Armenian Church once said to me: "How can you expect me to accept as spiritual chief someone who shows as great disrespect for the cross as the Moslems, by placing it on his slippers?"

I do not suppose anybody has so far brought these points to the attention of the Holy Father or of those responsible for arranging pontifical ceremonies. I sincerely hope these things will be heard and understood in Rome

in order that those who work for the union of churches will take account of the outlook of Eastern Christians.

Finally, some further measures seem necessary in the interests of a rapprochement. Each would be worth expounding at length but I will confine myself here to simple indications.

We should ensure that the instructions given by Leo XIII in the encyclical *Orientalium dignitas* (1894) are sincerely observed by Latin missionaries. Their actions should not be allowed to give the Orthodox an excuse for saying, "You see Rome promises but does not keep her promises"¹².

The Latin missionaries and other Catholics in general should be expected to take more account of the need for charity and courtesy and of the good of souls in applying the rules relating to *communicatio in sacris*¹³.

In drawing up canon law relating to the Eastern Catholics, the marriage of a Catholic woman, contracted

¹² Nothing is so disconcerting for our Eastern Catholic brothers as this discrepancy (not to use a stronger word) between the solemn promises of popes concerning the maintenance of all their legitimate traditions and many of the measures adopted by the Holy See in their regard, the effect of which is a growing latinization in Eastern parts. It is greatly to be hoped that the Fathers of the Council will reflect seriously on the grave consequences of this kind of behaviour, which amounts to counter-apologetics by deeds. It would of course be untrue to suggest that nobody in Rome has proved ready to defend the honour of the papacy on this point. We cannot pay sufficient tribute to Cardinal Tisserant and to the services he has rendered the Eastern churches and in consequence the Church as a whole, by his special study of it and by all he did during the long period in which he was head of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church.

¹³ In some places at least and on the part of some people, there has fortunately been a marked improvement on this point for a considerable time. We must hope that the attitude will become more general, governed of course by prudence and also by the deep and true charity that leads to a right judgement.

in the Orthodox Church with one of its members, should not be regarded as invalid and the woman concerned should not be dealt with by excommunication¹⁴.

When we speak of these things in the East and I say I should like to see them brought to the attention of Rome, I am told: "It is useless. Rome will do nothing. You will only annoy the Romans."

But I am an optimist. Finding myself in Rome, I wanted before leaving to say what I have in my mind and heart. In this I am following my conscience, but the Holy Spirit, who guides the Church, will inspire its heads infinitely better than anything I can say in what they have to do, and will give them the appropriate means.

Rome, 15th November, 1946.

¹⁴ This problem of mixed marriages causes real bitterness. There seems little doubt that it will be discussed in the Council, since current legislation has led to complaints from so many sources and has certainly been responsible in some countries for losing to the Church more of the faithful than it has helped to retain. This was clearly not the intention of the legislator. It also seems unjustifiable that in this as in many other cases, canon law should make no distinction between the Orthodox and Protestants. It should, however, be admitted in fairness that in this field canon law does give wide latitude to ordinaries to dispense from its requirements, but fear of creating a precedent all too often prevents them from exercising their discretion.

3

In Defence of Eastern Catholic Rights

In Defense of Eastern Christian Rights

The Cairo Synod of the Greek Catholic Church, February, 1958¹

BY ARCHBISHOP PETER K. MEDAWAR

IT IS WORTH recalling that the patriarchs of the East have always been accustomed to holding synods of their bishops either for episcopal elections or to deal with questions affecting spiritual welfare or the general interests of the Church. From the appointment of our present Melkite patriarch in 1947, synods have been held annually each summer at Ain-Traz. For a week in each case, the bishops have combined a spiritual retreat with the study of various problems relating to liturgy, administration, canon law and their pastoral charge. They have often been joined in this work by the superiors general of the three Basilian orders in the patriarchate and by the superior general of the Paulist missionary society. After each of these synodal

¹ This talk was originally intended for a private gathering of priests of various rites. It was later published to meet the widespread lack of understanding of the synod, which had convinced the authorities of the patriarchate of the need for clarification. A duplicated edition of 300 copies proved insufficient and it was decided to reprint the talk in *Le Lien* published in Cairo, and in *Le Bulletin*, which appears in Alexandria.

gatherings a communiqué has been issued to the patriarchate religious press or pastoral letters have been published in the same way in accordance with the decisions of the synod.

We held an Extraordinary Synod in Cairo in February, 1958. Why was it summoned? Our patriarch answered the questions in his closing address in the cathedral on 9th February.

“In deciding that the present synod should be held, not as usual at Ain-Traz, but in this capital of Egypt, we were moved by a number of considerations. First, we wanted to show that our church is not linked with a particular country. Ecumenical both in origin and development, it is as much at home in Egypt as in the other Arab countries and is, in fact, at home throughout the world, for more and more churches of the Byzantine rite are being built. We were pleased to be able to give all the honour possible to Egypt, which acts as a centre of attraction for Arab and Eastern peoples, to show our loyalty to the country and to give expression to our confidence in the spirit of justice animating those responsible for its destinies in their task of safeguarding the welfare of all its citizens. Finally, we wished to bring comfort to our own children in Egypt in order to strengthen in them a spirit of peace and confidence. We sincerely hope that this country will always remain a land of justice and peace and that all its children, whatever their religion, whether they are influential or humble, Moslems or Christians, will be able to develop their natural aptitudes in complete equality. Our venerable brethren from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine are happy to join with their Egyptian colleagues as well as with ourselves in the expression of the sentiments to which we have just given voice.”

Defeatist Campaign

As soon as it became known that a synod had been convened in Cairo a hidden campaign was started against it. The rumour was first spread that the Holy See was opposed to it but, when there were no signs that this was the case, people began to say that the bishops invited were reluctant to come. But fourteen came to Cairo. Those who excused themselves — the Patriarchal Vicar of Damascus, the Bishop of Tripoli and the retired Bishop of Paneas — did so on grounds of serious illness. Disappointed once more, the authors of this defeatist campaign turned to alleging that the Egyptian government would refuse entry visas to some of the bishops and particularly to Archbishop George Hakim of Galilee. However, on being officially approached by the patriarchate, the Ministry of the Interior replied that it had no objection to his presence

The Synod's Aim

The Patriarch continued:

"The Holy and Apostolic See of Rome published in 1917 a code of canon law applicable to the faithful of the Latin Church. But its sollicitude extended also to Eastern Catholics of the various rites in the Arab countries, Eastern Europe, and the rest of the world, where they form numerous colonies. A codification of Eastern law was therefore decided upon and started. Several sections of this work have already been published. That concerning the sacrament of marriage was promulgated in 1949 and the section concerning the procedure of ecclesiastical tribunals came out in 1950. The canons relating to members of religious orders and those dealing with the administration of church property were published in 1952. The

chapters dealing with persons — that is to say, the section referring to communities, rites, ecclesiastical authorities and the extent of their jurisdiction in relation to their rank in the hierarchy — came out last summer. Some important sections remain to be published, particularly those dealing with the regulation of divine worship, the sacraments and holy places, and the sections laying down the sanctions to be imposed for breaches of canon law.

“The texts published set out standards to which Eastern Christians in general are expected to conform. Some dispositions, however, govern cases in which it is appropriate to apply the ‘particular law’ in force within the different rites. After the publication of each of the sections of this new code of canon law, we have made a study in synod in order to see which particular laws of our church are applicable and to help ensure that these laws are known and applied. This was specially necessary with the sections concerning marriage and ecclesiastical procedure. Synods held at our summer residence at Ain-Traz have thus decided what articles of our special law remain in force under the new code and in 1951 and 1952 we made these the subject of special pastoral letters.

“When our last annual synod was held at Ain-Traz towards the end of August, we had not received the parts of the code concerning persons, published on the 15th of the same month. Since this legislation is due to come into force on 25th March this year and envisages circumstances in which our own ‘particular law’ applies, we set some of our canonists to study the sections concerned and report to us with recommendations. We have ourselves also studied these canons, particularly those laying down the jurisdiction of the various spiritual authorities within the Catholic Church. They concern the exercise of authority either in collegiate form, as in, for instance, ecumenical or particular councils, or in a personal manner, as by the

pope, patriarchs or bishops. Following this examination, we have called upon our venerable brothers the bishops to gather round us."

To give some idea of the work imposed on the synod by this problem of "particular laws", I want to refer to two documents. The first is a list of forty-five cases in which the canons of the *motu proprio* "*Cleri sanctitati*" refer back to this legislation and the other is an analysis of the eight important innovations introduced by the same *motu proprio*. The subjects touched on include honorific titles, celibacy of the clergy, the obligation of the divine office, clerical dress, voting by correspondence or proxy, the jurisdiction of the patriarch over the faithful living outside the patriarchate, certain of his privileges, the election of bishops, the celebration of Mass *pro populo*, return to Catholic unity, precedence and the permanent synod

The Work of the Synod

In a single synod lasting only a few days it was impossible to deal with such a long list of important questions — questions, moreover, which have been eighteen years under study in Rome. Some selection was necessary and the synod concentrated on the following points:

1. The regulations concerning the clergy due to come into force on 25th March, 1959. — The bishops had to deal with these questions as a matter of urgency. Priests will be notified of their decisions and provided with explanations as occasion demands.

2. The return of non-Catholic Christians to Catholic unity. — Since the publication of Leo XIII's encyclical *Orientalium dignitas* in 1894, canon law has made the natural, just and reasonable stipulation that in returning to the Catholic Church these Christians should retain

their own rite. On the other hand, everybody knows that this rule has been systematically and even violently opposed by advocates of latinization, who think that to be truly Catholic a person must belong to the Latin rite. The many occasions on which this law was flouted did not prevent it from remaining part of the Church's legislation and we were able to refer to it in defending ourselves against encroachments. It has now been abrogated by the new code, which lays down that a non-Catholic returning to the Catholic Church may belong to whichever rite he wishes (or rather, whichever rite is chosen for him).

What makes this new measure all the more irritating is that it implies an inadmissible distinction between Catholic rites. It acts to the detriment of the Eastern rites and in favour of the Latin. For instance, para. 1 of canon 11, which confers this freedom to choose a rite, relates only to "Catholic baptized people of Eastern rite". It would seem to follow that Protestants, not being of Eastern rite, cannot choose the rite they will adopt. On becoming Catholics, they must accept the Latin rite. Why this blatant inequality, this intolerable bias?

The provisions of para. 1 of canon 11 are a serious blow to the development and even the continued existence of an Eastern church within the Catholic fold. The problem is too important and delicate to be dealt with in the small space at my disposal. Suffice it here to say that, in reply to our representations, Rome told us that the new law was adopted at the request of the American bishops. We were also informed that it would not be applied in the East where the rule contained in *Orientalium dignitas* would remain in force. The point is, however, that in America as well as elsewhere the Eastern church should be on the same footing as the Latin church. There should clearly be no discrimination between rites.

3. The fathers of the synod also considered the place the Eastern church should occupy in the Catholic fold against the background of the position reserved for it in the new code of canon law.

I shall need to deal with this question at some length because a number of people have either failed to understand it or have misrepresented it.

There are more than 460 million Catholics in the world today, of whom less than ten million belong to the Eastern rite. The Orthodox of Eastern rite, the great majority of whom are Byzantines, number more than 250 million. Among the rest are ten to twelve million Copts and Ethiopians, three to four million Armenians, and at most a million Syrians, Jacobites and Nestorians. At the moment chosen by Providence all these Christians are destined to be united in the one Church, in accordance with the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our task in working for this union includes not only the supernatural means provided by prayer and the intellectual preparation afforded by study, but also psychological preparation. We must clear the road of all kinds of obstacles. These consist particularly of prejudices, failures to understand and definite misunderstandings on both sides. The best way of demonstrating the good will and right intentions of the Catholic Church is to show Christians how Rome intends to organize the reunited Church and what place she has reserved in it for the East.

There is no question of making a place for the Eastern church. It is already there, dictated by a tradition more than a thousand years old, and by the decisions of ecumenical councils and bilateral agreements concluded between different sections of Christendom. It is also guaranteed by the solemn promises of different popes and by written promises made to us during the codification of Eastern canon law, started between 1929 and 1930. Finally, we have the official declarations of the Cardinal

President of the Pontifical Commission for the Codification of the Canon Law. These, made to our patriarch in 1939, conveyed the assurance that when the Orthodox came to see the new code of canon law they would not hesitate to accept it as their law and the voice of their Fathers. This place of the East in the Catholic Church is a special one because the apostolic patriarchs in the East are considered to bear a direct responsibility with the pope, though after him, for the government of the Church. The pope's very special personal authority is not in the least questioned. This recognition of the first place in the order of precedence is not an end in itself but is simply the consequence of the position held by the Eastern patriarchs in the hierarchy of the Universal Church.

But instead of indicating to the Orthodox world the place to which it has a right in the one true Church, the new code of canon law promulgated by the *motu proprio* "*Cleri sanctitati*", shows its patriarchs reduced in rank and granted merely a few historical privileges, the most important of which are subject either to previous authorization or subsequent confirmation. Such a conception of the patriarchate makes it natural to assign to patriarchs a place in the table of precedence very far from that of the pope. What place in the hierarchy of the Church does the new code of canon law reserve for these venerable representatives of authentic apostolic Christianity? We must remember that they are the pastors of the first flocks to bear the name of Christian. With St. Ignatius in Antioch, it was their children who first used the word Catholic. These patriarchs are the successors of Fathers of the Church and confessors of the faith, descendants of martyrs who suffered all sorts of persecution and insult for the name of Christ and for his cross. They are the heads of the mother churches which spread the light of Christianity throughout the world long before

the creation of the cardinalate. They are living symbols of Catholic unity in faith and morals and unity in a necessary diversity of customs, disciplines and rites. They are the representatives of Christian resistance and of the continuance of a Christian presence in the Islamic world. But without taking account of all this heritage of holiness and honour, of all that it represents in the past of the Church and the promise it holds for the future, the new code of canon law not only places them after the seventy-two Roman cardinals in the order of precedence, but after the hundred apostolic legates, some of whom are simply priests. The patriarchs are even placed in some cases after ordinary bishops of the Latin rite. Why? Simply because they are united to Rome. While the separated churches enjoy, in fact, all the honours due to them, and necessary for their continued existence and for safeguarding the rights of their children in this East which has become Moslem, Catholic patriarchs suffer more and more from a *capitis diminutio* which continuously reduces their rôle in the Church and the community. These can hardly be deemed the proper means of promoting Christian unity.

How many different ways there are of looking at this desire for Christian unity! I should like to repeat at this point a remark of our own patriarch. "Every year", he told me, "when I realize that the period we call unity week is approaching (19th-25th January), I am ashamed that our misunderstanding of what it means is so great that while we recite prayers for unity and listen to fine sermons, we are all the time acting in such a way as to widen the gulf between the churches."

Those who do not as it were have flowing through their veins the tradition we have just been describing, who are not linked in a thousand different ways with the 250 million Orthodox, cannot appreciate as we do how great is the pain caused to Eastern Christians by such legislation. Nor can they understand how much it does

to keep them away from the Catholic Church. We, however, the Greek Catholic Melkites, cannot be oblivious to this evil. We cannot fail to react and in fact our synod showed that we did so.

Let me quote once more the allocution of the patriarch at the service of 9th February:

"We have given this subject great attention, though not out of any personal pride, for we recognize our unimportance and that we shall be here only for a time. We have not taken account either of our own community, which is small in numbers, but have acted to serve the general and permanent interest of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. This Church of Christ should embrace in fact and not just in theory all Christians without any distinction and 250 million of these belong to the Eastern apostolic tradition. Our interest, then, is the higher one of Christian unity and it is free from any temporal or merely human considerations. This is a subject which should arouse the deep interest and enthusiasm of every Christian. It is this need to promote the gathering together of Christians into one fold that induces us to proclaim the eminent place that the patriarchs of the apostolic sees in the East must occupy in the one true Church, a place which is, in fact, theirs by right."

"We have undertaken this study in the spirit of faith, love and respect that should inspire all examination of church matters and we have full confidence in his Holiness, the Father of all Christians, the Supreme Pontiff, Pius XII, Pope of Rome. We wholeheartedly confess his primacy and universal jurisdiction. From one point of view, then, we are Eastern Christians, firmly attached to our own traditions and customs and to the spirit of the Eastern Church which was the first to spread Christianity in the world. From another point of view, we are Catholics, firmly united with the see of the Roman Pontiff.

We trust absolutely in his promises and in those of his

predecessors, in all the promises that have been lavished on us, particularly from the time of the Council of Florence. It is inconceivable that our union with Rome should itself lead to a decline in our importance. We believe that divine Providence has entrusted our Church with the mission of forming a natural bridge between the Christian East and the Christian West. Providence, as St. Paul tells us, manifests its own power by using weak means to bring about great things. Notwithstanding our own weakness, we want to be true to this clear and very necessary mission. When we come across anything at all that conflicts with this vocation, we have no right to remain silent. Our responsibilities make it imperative for us to call attention to the need for a reform."

We have in fact sent a synodal letter to his Holiness, entrusting it to a special messenger, Archbishop Hakim, of Galilee, who went to Rome to deliver it. All we can say today is that the Pope is truly the common father, dispensing justice to those who address themselves to him. Our requests in the past have not only received a sympathetic and encouraging hearing but have been examined under happy auspices and we can therefore await the outcome with confidence.

The unanimity on this point shown by those taking part in the synod is worthy of note. During all these labours there was not only a perfect union of minds and hearts but complete agreement on all the points studied.

Campaign of Calumny

What was happening to us during this dramatic period, and particularly while the meetings of the synod were taking place? I am ashamed to say that Catholic priests whose duty it is to help one another and whose mission among us is to work *in auxilio orientalium* were going

into the houses of Greek Catholics and telling them that their hierarchy was in the process of becoming schismatic. They said, too, that the Greek Melkite bishops were taking over into the ecclesiastical sphere the anti-Western spirit of independence of the Moslem Arab states. They did not even scruple to ask nuns to call upon their pupils to pray lest the Greek Catholics should separate from Rome. And they have lost no opportunity of spreading the story that through pride – *superbia Graecorum* – and encouraged by the narrow-mindedness of their patriarch, the Greek Catholic hierarchy, instead of concerning itself with the difficult situation of Catholics in the East, was worried about a miserable question of precedence and was trying to put its little patriarch before the representatives of the Pope.

We have heard many bitter complaints and unjust criticisms as a result of all this. The Greek Catholics were told that pride and narrowness were also the explanation of their patriarch's absence from the funeral ceremonies for the Catholic Coptic patriarch. The same reason was assigned for the Greek Catholic clergy's failure to take part in the joint prayers of unity week.

Absurdity has even been carried to the lengths of alleging that the pride and narrowness of our patriarch led him to insist that there should be several bishops round him at the pontifical Mass he was invited to celebrate at St. Peter's in Rome in the Pope's presence during the Holy Year of 1950.

In saying all this I am reproducing what I myself heard during my pastoral visitation to our people in Heliopolis. Archbishop Elias Zoghby heard similar things during a pastoral visit to our families in Zamalek and Garden City. We have had a difficult and painful task explaining matters to our worried and excited children in Christ.

While we, with our feelings deeply hurt, were working for the glory of the Catholic Church, the authority of the

Pope, the extension of his prestige and the cause of Christian unity, and were striving to protect the interests of Eastern Christians, others were inciting the faithful against us, representing us as men in the grip of pride and as promoters of schism.

May God forgive them.

Nevertheless, it should be generally known that we were working not just for our own little Greek Melkite Catholic community, but rather for the whole Eastern community and through it for the Universal Church. Mind and feeling combine to convince us that we are not just members of any little group. We have, rather, been members from the beginning of the one Universal Church and our duty is to work for its welfare.

Let us have confidence in our holy father the Pope, turning to him in filial respect as we have done in the synod. But let us not be more Catholic than the Pope. If we love him we shall follow his example. He has received our requests with paternal affection and promised to study them with sympathy. Although he is accurately informed about the nature of what we are asking, he has not hastened to judge and condemn us, or accused us of showing a spirit of schism Moreover, high Roman dignitaries in constant contact with his Holiness have not only encouraged us but have asked us to continue our researches in order to find the best solutions to our problems. Once more then: charity, justice, prudence.

The Rights of the Eastern Church¹

BY ARCHBISHOP PETER K. MEDAWAR

The Eastern Patriarch and his Powers

IN THE discipline of the Universal Church the patriarchal institution of Eastern Christianity has a special dignity. The patriarch is a high prelate at the head of his church, his bishops in divers eparchies (dioceses), priests, religious, and the community of faithful thereto attached. He exercises the power of real government in virtue of spiritual and paternal authority, and of the true jurisdiction which ancient tradition and the ecumenical and local councils recognize in his person. This power extends to the election of bishops, the constitution of eparchies, the exercise of legislative, judicial and executive power in disciplinary matters, and in all other matters relative to the spiritual and temporal administration of the church. The patriarch enjoys an autonomous power within the limits of canons and tradition, subject to the rights of other patriarchs and the necessity of union with them, and

¹ Part of a report presented in Arabic to the Greek-Catholic Synod of Ain-Traz (Lebanon) in October 1958, concerning an outline of a patriarchal ordinance on the work of the two synods held in that year. The ordinance was actually issued on 7th March, 1959.

first of all to the Pope of Rome, the Patriarch of the West, who is at the same time the head of the Universal Church as successor of the Apostle Peter among the Twelve appointed by the Lord, to whom Christ promised that he would be with them until the consummation of time.

The patriarch is one of the most eminent guardians of the deposit of faith in the world and mainly responsible for its loyal and integral diffusion in his sphere of jurisdiction².

He watches over the discipline and the private and public morals of his entire territory. He is the spokesman of his church and people in all circumstances.

In the ecumenical councils, the patriarchs of the Apostolic sees occupy the first rank after the Bishop of Old Rome, Patriarch of the West and successor of St. Peter, first among the Apostles.³ These patriarchs have the right and possibly also the duty, in accordance with the old law, with the Pope – more eminently and more formally than the other bishops – to carry out the government of the Universal Church. More than once, the Bishop of Rome recognized in them these rights and obligations. St. Gregory the Great⁴ even wrote to one of them that St. Peter, who founded the apostolic patriarchal sees, still occupies them himself in the person of those who

² Each bishop is a responsible guardian of the faith and of its proclamation. The patriarchs, major bishops, are more so. The pope is supremely so.

³ The first ecumenical councils defined the rule of ecclesiastical government and the priority of the great sees. Resuming these decisions, the eighth ecumenical council held in Constantinople in 869 prescribed, in canon 21, that the first rank belongs to the titular of the see of Old Rome, after which come immediately according to their order, the patriarchs of Constantinople, of Alexandria, of Antioch, of Jerusalem. It is the same order that was reaffirmed in the Council of Florence in 1439 (the last council in which the Orthodox East met the Westerners). This was applied to the only patriarch then present, who died in Florence.

⁴ Born in Rome about 540. Pope from 590 to 604.

succeed him in these sees, as if they formed only one single see and as if their titulars were one person.⁵

Under the Byzantine Empire—the later Roman Empire—the temporal power recognized these rights and privileges of the patriarchs of the East. The Moslem state added to them a legal jurisdiction in new matters of personal law as well as other powers and privileges.

The Weakening of these Powers

As long as the two branches of Christianity, the Eastern and Western, were united — that is to say, the churches which owe their historic origin to the Apostolic See of Rome and those which owe their origin to the other sees equally apostolic by their foundation⁶ the patriarchs were in peaceful possession of their powers. Without anyone disputing their evident, natural, inherited right, they held first rank after the pope. But the misfortune of the centuries imposed harsh trials on the apostolic churches of the East. There were the Persian, Arab, Seljuk, crusader,⁷ Mongol and Turkish invasions, with civil wars, feudal clashes and many other disturbances. Each inva-

⁵ P. L., t. 77, col. 890—891, Letter to Patriarch Eulogios of Alexandria. Previously, he had recommended him, as well as Anastasius of Antioch, to preserve their churches in the state in which they had received them, in order to show themselves as being real holders of authentic patriarchal power (t. cit., col. 774).

⁶ The East is not only the place where the divine Christ became man, where he lived and his voice was heard; it is also the land of the apostles. It is not only Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria — patriarchal sees — which claim apostolic foundation. Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Damascus, the Hauran territory, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, almost the whole of Palestine, Asia Minor, continental Greece as well as its islands (Cyprus, Crete), a good part of Syria and of Lebanon are lands of the apostles, while in the West only Rome has the apostolic link.

⁷ The reader must not be surprised that we name the crusades at the same time as the wars provoked in our countries by non-Christian nations, which ended by weakening Christians and their patriarchates.

sion and conflict reduced the number of Christians, lowered and reduced their prestige, weakening at the same time the power of their patriarchs. Although there might be found here and there some eminent personalities in the religious or social realm, their churches, in a general way, especially in the Arab south, continued to lose ground.

Under such difficult conditions and in the midst of decadence, the Christians of the patriarchates called "Melkite"⁸, isolated from the rest of Christianity, longed to communicate with other Christians in free countries and to feel their union with them. They were also particularly influenced by the councils which concluded the union at Lyons in 1274 and subsequently at Florence in 1439. They had always welcomed with joy the Latin priests sent amongst them, zealous, active, bearers of help and of protection as they were.

Partition of the Patriarchate of Antioch, in 1724

Eventually, a certain number of the faithful of the patriarchate of Antioch, later of Jerusalem and Alexandria, in

Whatever were the intentions of the crusaders, and exception made for the spiritual, moral and material benefit that would have accrued here and there, the practical result of the crusades in the East was on the one hand, to confirm the hatred between the Moslems and the Christians, and on the other hand to increase the ill-feeling between the Byzantines of the Orient and the Latins of the West, because of numerous injustices committed by the crusaders against the Byzantines, which contributed to weaken the Christians of the East in face of Islam. In that, the expeditions of the crusaders resemble other invasions.

⁸ The "Melkites", in the historic sense of the word, are Christians of the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, of whatever language or race, who remained faithful to the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon (451), which was also the faith of the Emperor at Constantinople, the *Malek* for the Arabs. The Arab Moslem sovereigns and writers called all the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon, in East and West, by this name, referring to the Pope of Rome as their chief hierarch.

spite of persecutions of all kinds, thought of rejoining the more powerful communion of the Apostolic See of Rome, from whom, with all the Orthodox, they had been separated more materially than formally, by the mishap of divided responsibilities, by dogmatic developments that had not been synchronized. They thus succeeded in consolidating the links between a certain number of their bishops and the Roman see. When the see of Antioch became vacant, they succeeded in getting one of their number elected as patriarch. But the patriarch of Constantinople, the protothrone of Orthodoxy, excommunicated the elected patriarch who had joined the Roman communion, ordained another in his place, who was sent to Damascus, provided with firmans (edicts) of the sultan and supported by the majority of bishops, clergy and people of the patriarchate. That was in 1724. Since then, the community of "Roums" (Greeks) of Antioch has had two patriarchs: one Catholic⁹, in communion with the Holy See of Rome, but separated from the Great Church of the East; the other Orthodox, of the Eastern ecumenicity that is separated from the First See of apostolic Rome.

Restoration of Union

In taking this step, our forefathers meant to preserve all the rights, privileges, rites and customs of the Eastern church. That is what the Roman Pontiffs have also stated in numerous official and non-official documents. There can be no doubt that if our forefathers had thought differently there would be no Greek Catholic Church today.

But divers factors have acted in a contrary direction. The most important is due to the state of numerical,

⁹ When the faithful, at first few in number, increased appreciably, his jurisdiction was extended to the two patriarchates of Alexandria and Jerusalem.

material and moral weakness in which we found ourselves at the time of the restoration of the union with the church of Rome. This weakness became more pronounced in the wake of internal quarrels which took place amongst us at the beginning of our union, a condition which invited the Holy See of Rome to intervene frequently in our affairs, in response to our own requests. The Roman See helped us to overcome the crisis. But it could do so, of course, only with the assistance of Western clergy entrusted with the duty of attending to our affairs. These priests were men and behaved like men. The ideas, the principles, the mentality which guided them in their relations with us were the ideas, principles and mentality of their time and of their own countries. Eastern matters were then less known and their study was not as widespread in the West as it is today. The ideal of these men was that everyone should share their ideas and their mentality; union of Christians was regarded as authentic only if the Latin rite were adopted, or if, at least, an attempt was made to imitate it as much as possible. Under the influence of such ideas, a great number of them laboured – contrary to repeated orders from Rome – to latinize the Easterners. When they were not able to latinize them, they worked to reduce the rights and privileges of their churches. The patriarchal institution was unknown to them since the Roman Catholic Church had been reduced to the Western Patriarchate only and the title of patriarch was, in their church, simply an honorary title granted to some of their archbishops.¹⁰ They thought it was best if the Eastern patriarchs too could become like the honorary patriarchs of the West, who are distinguished from other bishops only by the title which they hold.¹¹

¹⁰ Such as the archbishops of Venice, Lisbon and Goa.

¹¹ This difference of mentality and of points of view has always been the first reason of tension and misunderstanding that we have had to

It is regrettable that this attitude became widespread among Western canonists and later among many high officials in the administration of the Church. Furthermore, a great number of contemporary Western theologians, more and more anxious to concentrate ecclesiastical authority in the person of the pope, confused their divers jurisdictions. They thus considered that the manner in which the pope exercises his power as patriarch of the West must be applied equally to his other attributes in his position as pope of the Universal Church. This meant the integration of the Eastern churches in the Western patriarchate, and their suppression almost down to their rites. This way of dealing with the Orientals was certainly easier than to delve into the sources of Eastern canon law, to recall the birth of the Church, her life, development, and the existence of the Orthodox (and even of the Anglican) world. Accordingly these theologians and canonists tended quite naturally to neglect these sources and traditions, to conduct themselves towards us in the same manner as towards their own churches. Moreover, through the education they gave to our children, they led a certain number of these unconsciously to accept their outlook.

However, a majority of our bishops, and above all our patriarchs, have resisted this powerful trend. Every time a propitious occasion has presented itself, our pastors have defended the rights of the Eastern church, that is to say, of one essential living aspect of the Universal Church. They were told these rights were but an outer

deplete at times between certain of our patriarchs and certain representatives and dignitaries of the Roman Apostolic See. The most striking example is the history of Patriarch Maximos III Mazloum. Despite his great attachment to Catholicism and to the Roman Pontiffs, in defence of his Greek Catholic community (for which he obtained civil emancipation), nothing prevented him from opposing energetically whoever wanted to latinize his subjects and his community or to treat them without respecting their Eastern traditions.

shell and that it was necessary to consider only the substance. But they knew well that the bark of the tree protects its substance and life, and that the bark and the tree form a whole. They knew and felt deeply that the Eastern patriarchs and bishops, united by Providence to the Roman See, were in duty bound to make of their church the link of a general union between the two apostolic branches, the Western and the Eastern. In this way, one might say that the Greek Catholic church would represent truly the future status of the Easterners born of the apostles in the Church, finally reunited. But we are far from it, and through actions that are weighing on other consciences than our own. In spite of our small numbers, our numerous weaknesses, penury and abnormal dependence imposed upon us by circumstances, we have the ambition to understand this mission which has been entrusted to us and to work towards its realization. As the Lord said, "My grace is enough for thee; my strength finds its full scope in thy weakness"¹², "God has chosen what the world holds foolish, so as to abash the wise."¹³

Latinization

Those who blame us for our attachment to these traditions and rights sometimes claim that our little church of today is no longer the great church that it had been in the first centuries of Christianity which preceded the Moslem conquest and the schism. They conclude, therefore, that it should not enjoy its primitive rights in view of its present weakness and its loss of these rights through long separation from Rome. They thus claim that our present patriarchate is not the legitimate successor of the ancient patriarchates, but a new institution ruled by Roman authority, to which actually it pertains

¹² 2 Cor. 12 : 9. ¹³ 1 Cor. 1 : 27-29.

to develop or diminish the rights that it is willing to grant, which therefore are only privileges.

This claim cannot be admitted for two reasons. First, the rights of a church are not related to the numbers of her adherents. It is not permissible to apply to the Church the principle of human politics which gives right to the mightiest. Let us suppose that a world war were to destroy the Vatican, drive great numbers of Catholics into apostasy and force the Pope to seek refuge in a small locality in the centre of Asia or Africa, with only a few followers of his own obedience, the separated churches, on the contrary, progressing considerably. Such a catastrophe surely could have no bearing on the mission of the Pope in the world, on his position within Christianity, for the church of Rome would still remain, in St. Peter, the real mother of all churches, the Roman See would not be any less the First See, and the Bishop of Rome, although a refugee far from his city, would remain Pope of the Universal Church, enjoying all the rights and privileges, general and particular, which are recognized as his, derived as they are from Christ, in virtue of apostolic traditions and ecumenical councils. This should equally apply, relatively, to our Eastern patriarchates. The trials which have weakened them should therefore make no difference whatever to their essential rights. It is not appropriate to practise the principle of might before right within the Church.

Secondly, we refuse categorically to credit an opinion devoid of any historical basis, according to which our patriarchate is a new institution created through a favour of the Holy Roman See. This opinion can be conceived only by non-Catholics. By our acceptance of the primacy of the pope we should then have been deprived of our patriarchal rights and privileges, recognized by the Holy See as preserved by Orthodoxy. No church historian doubts that our patriarchs are today the authentic succes-

sors in the catholicity of the legitimate patriarchs who have occupied the see of Antioch since the Apostle Peter, its founder. It is useless to appeal, for example, to the historian Mgr. Duchesne. The Roman Pontiff knew it well in any event and has recognized it implicitly and explicitly. In fact, Patriarch Cyril Tanas, in renewing officially the union with Rome in 1724, did not start a new patriarchal line, but was received by Rome as Cyril VI. He presented himself and was accepted as continuing the lineage of the apostolic patriarchs of Antioch. The act of 1724 was, from the Catholic point of view, but a return to the legitimate position in which we had been formerly, under the same conditions as previously. In other words, our ancestors did but repeat on their part the act of their predecessors at Lyons in 1274 and at Florence in 1439. Their reunion was, once more, a bilateral agreement and not unilateral. Every bilateral act binds two parties who may not, each on its own initiative, violate it. Therefore, the principle by which it is permissible for the one who grants a privilege to extend or restrain it, cannot be applied to us. And in point of fact, our Patriarch Gregory Joseph, in subscribing to the Vatican definitions of papal infallibility and jurisdiction, did so with the Florentine clause, "all the rights and privileges of the patriarchs being safeguarded". And it is with this clause that his signature was given and received.

Of course, we will not go so far as to believe that ecclesiastical institutions are not subject to the laws of historical change. The patriarchal autonomy cannot be exercised today, in all its phases, exactly as in former times.¹⁴ The

¹⁴ The Orthodox Churches, attached as they are to the principle of the autonomy, are complaining today of the inconveniences of that very autonomy in the manner in which it is applied at the present time. All this shows the evident necessity, recognized by all, to make some changes in the application of ancient rules, while safeguarding their spirit and essence.

universal power of the pope himself can no longer be brought back to the narrow limitations within which his authority was exercised in the first centuries. But what we must maintain and insist upon is the preservation of the ancient institution in its essence and spirit. It is in this sense that we speak of the "protection of the rights of the Eastern church".

Motu proprio "Cleri sanctitati"

These remarks were indispensable for an understanding of our attitude to certain points of the new Eastern canon law promulgated by Pope Pius XII in the motu proprio "Cleri sanctitati" of 2nd June, 1957, published in the "*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*" on 15th August, 1957; it came into force on 25th March, 1958. For the sake of additional clarity, we must first say a few words about the importance of the new codification and of its bearing on the life of the church.

The Code of Eastern Canon Law

The Roman Apostolic See had published in 1917 a code of canon law for the Western Catholics, of the Latin rite. But it deemed fit also to undertake to codify the law for Eastern Catholics of all rites, residing in the Arab East, in the countries of Eastern Europe and the numerous settlements established by them throughout the world.

This code was not published all at once. In 1949, the section regarding the sacrament of marriage was published; in 1950, the section relating to procedure in ecclesiastical tribunals; in 1952, one regarding the rights of religious and the administration of the properties of the church; in the summer of 1957, the portion regarding persons, that is to say the discipline of communities and rites, the discipline and the powers of the clergy and the different degrees of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Other sections are due

to appear, such as those regarding the regulations of worship, the discipline of the sacraments and of holy places, later on, laws on ecclesiastical offences and penalties.

This legislative whole comprises the general laws which rule Eastern Catholics. However, here and there, it refers to "particular law" still in force in each community. Therefore, after the publication of each portion of the Eastern code, our patriarch and bishops examined its contents in order to declare what were in each case the prescriptions of particular law in force in our church and to facilitate its knowledge and application. That is what was done notably for matrimonial law and procedure. Our synod meeting in the patriarchal residence at Ain-Traz clarified these norms of our particular law and the patriarch promulgated them in two patriarchal ordinances appearing respectively in 1951 and in 1952.

Likewise, when the last part of this codification appeared, our patriarch entrusted certain canonists of our church to study it and to submit to the synod the necessary information with a view to determining the norms of our particular law in the matter. On his part the patriarch studied minutely what concerns specially the rulings of different authorities of the Universal Church: authorities acting as a body such as in ecumenical councils, or individual authorities like those of popes, patriarchs and bishops. It is within the scope of these preoccupations that our synod held two sessions in the course of 1958, the first one in Cairo in February and the second at Ain-Traz in October.

The Eastern Church in the Universal Church

The declaration of our particular law on certain points was not a difficult matter. The delicate part was to point out precisely the position due to the apostolic churches of the East in relation to the patriarchate of the West and

to the clergy of Rome in the One and Universal Church, at the head of which is St. Peter in the person of the Pope, primate of the Apostolic College. Now, for us, the basis of such an order is precisely the patriarchal institution as it was established by the ancient traditions and the decisions of ecumenical councils. The basis also includes the equality of rights of all Christians. The Roman Pontiffs in fact have often proclaimed that the Church of Christ is neither Latin nor Greek nor Slav, neither Eastern nor Western, but Catholic, that is to say, universal. Let us therefore examine whether in regard to us the new code protects these conditions. Moreover, we are in possession of promises of the popes, some directed to all nations and peoples, others addressed to the Easterners and finally others to our community in particular. In order to avoid lengthy quotations, we are content to reproduce a few of the more recent texts.

Here is what Pope Leo XIII, said, addressing the Orthodox people: "The true unity amongst the Christians is the one which was instituted and willed by our Lord Jesus Christ, founder of the Church. It consists in the unity of faith and government. There is no reason, then, for you to suppose that we ourselves or our successors could diminish or lessen in the least (as a sequel to your reunion with the Holy Roman See) your rights, the privileges of your patriarchs, or the liturgical customs of each church. So much so that it has always been and will always be in the mind and in the conduct of our Apostolic See to grant equitably, with benevolence and generosity, to each people, all that is expedient to its genius and its customs."¹⁵ And elsewhere, "It is thus evident that nothing at all is lacking to patriarchal power amongst the Catholics, of that which constitutes its prestige and dignity amongst the non-Catholics."¹⁶ And again elsewhere, "We

¹⁵ Encyclical "Praeclara gratulationis" of June 20th, 1894.

¹⁶ Encyclical "Auspicia rerum" of March 21st, 1896.

do not want anything to be revoked or diminished of the rights, privileges, positions and powers of the patriarch."¹⁷

Pius XII said later: "History attests that the Roman Pontiffs have had much affection for all the Eastern churches The mystical Body of Christ and each of its members can but benefit greatly from this perfect union. On this occasion, we observe that the Eastern Christian must not fear that, as a sequel to the restoration in the unity of faith and government, they must give up their rites or their legitimate customs. That is what our predecessors have declared and widely proclaimed more than once, in saying to them : "There is no reason, then, for you to suppose that we ourselves or our successors could diminish or lessen in the least your rights, the privileges of your patriarchs or liturgical customs of each church."¹⁸

When Pope Pius XI desired to form a commission for the codification of Eastern canon law, the patriarchs were asked on 5th January, 1929, by the secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, Cardinal Sincero, to meet their bishops and agree on the best way to go to work, taking into consideration the needs, desires and opportunities of their own rite, as well as the customs, traditions and privileges of their communities. In agreement with his bishops, Patriarch Cyril IX Moghabghab replied declaring their attachment to the rights and privileges recognized *ab antiquo* (from ancient times) in the Eastern patriarchates. The cardinal-secretary wrote on 7th January, 1930, that the Holy Apostolic See had already anticipated this declaration. The secretary of the Codification Commission, Cardinal Gasparri, wrote on 15th September, 1930, that the commission would only establish the general rules and leave the synod of each

¹⁷ Encyclical "Omnibus compertum" of July 21st, 1900.

¹⁸ Encyclical "Orientales omnes" addressed to the Ukrainians in December 1954.

community to deal with the points connected with their particular law. He added: "Although this might be superfluous, we want, nevertheless, on this occasion to note and repeat that the Codification Commission, following the policy of the Holy See, insists upon the distinction between the East and the West; consequently, such a distinction must appear manifestly in the codification, which must be Eastern not only in form and in translations which will be authorized later, but also in substance."

Besides these written promises, we might reproduce here the statement by Cardinal Massimi, president of the Codification Commission, to the late Patriarch Cyril IX Moghabghab and his bishops on the occasion of a meeting in Rome in 1939 when the proposed codification was discussed. The cardinal told them: "When this code appears, every Orthodox who sees it will be able to say: Yes, truly, this is our code, this is our law, this is the voice of our Fathers."

Has the recent codification fulfilled these promises and satisfied these hopes?

Advantages of the new Code

We must, first of all, express our gratitude for this work of codification in general. It is a work which demanded profound studies, long research, spread over many years, in which great scholars participated who examined the historical, canonical and liturgical sources with great care, exchanged amongst themselves the result of their research and consulted together at length. This immense effort truly arouses admiration and gratitude. The benefits of the new code are obvious. The need was generally felt for a better organization of the pastoral ministry, so that each category of the clergy would understand its rights and its duties. The new code proposes to the

clergy a firm pattern of conduct for its apostolic task, and at the same time indicates to laymen their status and action in the Church. Great benefits and possibilities of general reform which the code implies for the church and the faithful are bound to emerge when eparchies and pastors have studied it seriously and applied themselves to carrying out its prescriptions in the scope of their own work.

On more than one point attempts have been made to approach the spirit and traditions of the Eastern church, as well as to restore certain of its ancient institutions, neglected or fallen into disuse. If it appears in Latin, it is because this is the official language of the Roman Holy See and because it was difficult to choose another among the many ancient and modern languages of the Christian East¹⁹.

It pleases us especially to note that the new code has done some justice, although insufficiently, to certain important claims often presented by our church. It tends to safeguard certain of our major important spiritual interests in the East, such as to permit us to be somewhat

¹⁹ As official language of the Holy Roman See, Latin is also a Byzantine language, the language of Justinian's Code, edited by men from Beirut and Asia, the official juridical language of that Roman Empire whose centre for more than a thousand years was Constantinople, where emperors were acclaimed "the beloved of Christ". Latin, therefore, is not an ecclesiastical foreign language to us, to us "Roums" (Greeks), nor to our Hellenic cousins who call themselves so often "romaiyi", "romyee". St. Gregory the Great, who spent six years in Constantinople, with the one who, at that time, was his emperor and ours, did not have to learn Greek. Constantinople has been the capital of Roman civilization for Eastern and Western Europe, of Latin as well as Hellenic "romanity". And especially, it is from two of our men that England and Germany received their basic ecclesiastical organization. One is St. Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury, a son of the patriarchate of Antioch, the other the Syrian saint, Pope Gregory III, who was the protector, counsellor and master of St. Boniface.

less worried about those of our faithful living dispersed in numerous emigrant settlements outside the patriarchal territory.

Disadvantages of the new Code

Having thus recognized the benefits of the new legislation, we can indicate three important points which appeared to us as contrary to the ancient rights and privileges which the code, as we had been promised, was to have safeguarded. We are obliged to defend these vigorously, not through pride, as some would say, nor through the pursuit of vain personal glory, or even in order to set the prestige of our little community above that of other Christian groups, but for a more noble end, which is the general and permanent interest of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. This Church must, in fact, embrace effectively, and not in theory only, all Christians without distinction, including the 250 million souls which Eastern Christianity numbers today. This supreme interest, apart from all temporal human consideration, ought to inspire every Christian heart.

The Place of Patriarchs in the Hierarchy

The first of these points relates to the rank of the Eastern apostolic patriarchs in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Their rank, we said, has been and must be the first immediately after the titular of the Holy Roman See. But the new law has placed the patriarchs after the 70 cardinals (now increased to 86), major officials of the diocese of Rome, deacons, priests, local ordinaries who help the Supreme Pontiff in the general government of the Church by collaboration or counsel. The new law has placed the patriarchs after the representatives of the pope, nuncios, internuncios

or apostolic delegates, even those who are not bishops, whose number is, at the present time, not less than 70, and may increase continuously. Moreover, this new law which recognizes in the patriarch the right of precedence over all the Eastern prelates to whatever rite they may belong and even within their own churches, has excluded the Latin prelates from the scope of this elementary rule. The Eastern patriarch – an apostolic patriarch in the Universal Church – has no precedence over them in their own jurisdiction, and this even in the East and on his own ground. How then can we avoid the impression of segregation?

What of the rights, privileges, traditions that we must preserve and which were promised to be preserved? What of the duty of the Eastern hierarchies to “preserve their churches as they have received them”? What of the promise that our Orthodox brethren should be able to see in our law an authentic image of their own law and to hear across its enactments, the echo of the voice of their Fathers? Are thus to be treated representatives of venerable churches which have given to the Universal Church her saintly Fathers and ecumenical doctors, have laid the basis of her theology, brought whole peoples to Christ, filled the desert with hermits and founded religious orders, which have undergone and are undergoing all sorts of persecutions and outrages for the faith, crushed for thirteen centuries under the yoke of non-Christian government, but yet continue to live when so many Western churches, placed under much less unfavourable conditions, have ceased to exist? Is this done to show the Orthodox churches that the Catholic Church is the apostolic, universal church, heir to the entire Christian patrimony, and that they can find their own essence in her?

We repeat here to those willing to hear us that we are insisting on the dignity of the patriarchs, not in order to honour their persons, but their apostolic see, the dioceses

born directly of Peter, Paul, John, Andrew, Mark, Thomas, and, although autonomous, associated actively and spontaneously with the Roman See in the establishment of Christianity in the world. Thus every honour that is bestowed upon them, redounds on the person of the pope who appears no longer only as Bishop of Rome and Patriarch of the West, but manifestly as Universal Primate. Moreover, to safeguard this patriarchal dignity is to honour all that the East has produced, all that it contained and contains of holiness, learning glory and spiritual values that cannot be forgotten, that every Christian ought to remember and cherish with pride and gratitude.²⁰

This patriarchal institution is, incidentally, not only a principle of diversity, of catholicity, but also of unity. Indeed, towards this institution, or something akin to it, many Western nations today fallen into heresy seem to have leaned in the past. Their better esteem of the patriarchal principle would doubtless have held them back. In different forms, more or less openly, they still tend towards this patriarchal institution. What, for example, is the bi-annual meeting of the cardinals and archbishops of France, or the meeting of the bishops of Latin America, but in practice a sort of "holy synod" of a church which is neither a collection of scattered dioceses nor the Universal Church, but something else, an organic part within the Unity?

²⁰ In his Epistle to the Romans 11 : 11-24, St. Paul reminds the Christians converted from paganism of the gratitude they owe to the Jews who gave them Christ and his gospel of truth and salvation. He recommends to them not to pride themselves because of the gifts bestowed on them by God. Is it not proper today to make this same recommendation to certain forgetful Christians of the West and to remind them of this same duty of gratitude and respect towards their brethren of the East who brought to them the light of the Gospel?

Powers of the Patriarchs

Our second point concerns the powers or authority of the patriarchs. We have praised the new code because it has thrown light upon several dispositions regarding the powers of the patriarch, caused controversies to be avoided, extended certain of these powers and regulated their exercise. But the exercise of the most important powers has been made dependent on necessary recourse to the Roman curia which has to give its authorizations beforehand or subsequent confirmations. These restrictions constitute a grave and substantial decrease of the traditional patriarchal power, which the new code was intended openly and formally to confirm, in order that Catholic patriarchs should continue to enjoy "all that makes the prestige and dignity of the patriarchal institution esteemed amongst the non-catholics", according to the words of Leo XIII. These restrictions in reality constitute a tutelage imposed upon the patriarchs, a guardianship which denigrates them and certainly suggests mistrust of them, their synods, and their people.

It might be objected that the Holy Roman See treats the Latin bishops and archbishops in the same manner, even though they be cardinals, and their dioceses count more members than all the Catholic patriarchates put together. This argument is irrelevant as far as we are concerned. For these dioceses are offshoots of the patriarchate of the West and subject to its centralized institutions. It is Rome which has created these dioceses and supported them from the outset by teaching, sacraments, her knowledge and civilization, accompanying their progress step by step. But this centralization and the institutions which depend on it have not been made for us. We have entered into communion with the Holy See in the situation in which we were formerly, that is to say, bringing with us the different institutions of our church,

apostolic and Catholic as they are in the same degree as those of the Roman patriarchate. If the evolution of the situation requires an evolution of the law which governs the relations of the patriarchs with the pope regarding the exercise of his supreme power, this evolution must respect the substance of things, not distort them and thus violate pledges solemnly given and often reiterated. Only in this way could our Orthodox brethren come closer to us and then unite with us. While they are on their guard against Roman ecclesiastical centralization, linked as it is with a religious, political and social history different from theirs and often antagonistic to it, they will be reassured and marvel if they see Rome treating the Catholic East according to its autonomous traditions. The papacy will appear to them what it is by right and institution, and not as they see it, as a patriarchate wanting openly and with definite intent to dominate the other apostolic churches, and to humiliate them in the name of Christ. For there is and there has always been a Roman patriarchate entangled forcibly with contingent racial, social and political interests, and this must not be confused with the pope who as such belongs to all.

Choice of Rite

Our third point concerns the choice of rite at the time of acceding, as individuals or in groups, to Catholic unity. In Paragraph 33 of his encyclical *Allatae sunt* published on 26th July, 1755, Pope Benedict XIV summarized the policy followed by the popes against the efforts of certain missionaries to latinize the Easterners. He affirmed that the Roman Pontiffs have never required of those who entered Catholic unity to give up their rite in order to embrace the Latin rite, for such action would be equivalent to destroying the Eastern churches and their rites. This he declared to be absolutely contrary to the desire of the popes.

An instruction of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith of July, 1885, set forth that those amongst the Easterners who wish to enter Catholic unity must be admitted to their corresponding Catholic rite and not to the Latin rite, except by special authorization of the Apostolic See of Rome. In order to adopt the Latin rite certain Catholic Easterners had tried to circumvent the law by having themselves accepted beforehand by a non-Catholic community or a foreign sect, in order thence to pass into the Latin rite. In its instructions of 7th April, 1859, and 15th July, 1876, the congregation condemned this procedure and forbade their admittance to the Latin rite, obliging them to return to their original rite.

Finally, Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical *Orientalium dignitas* of 30th November, 1894, reaffirmed the customary norm followed by the Roman See: "The Eastern non-Catholic in joining the Catholic Church must remain in his rite." At the same time, the Pope provided very grave sanctions against any Latin priest who induced Easterners to embrace the Latin rite. Easterners living in countries where there are no priests of their own rite should remain faithful to their rite, whatever the length of their absence; on the other hand, Easterners who, for whatever reason, might have followed the Latin rite, could, at any time, return to their original rite by a simple request addressed to the Roman See.

Nevertheless, many priests and Latin educational institutions have persevered in their policy of latinization. They have always succeeded in circumventing the law and have always avoided the anticipated sanctions. But at least, up to now, we were satisfied with the legislation in force upon which we could rely to defend ourselves against the latinization condemned by the Roman Pontiffs. We did not imagine that the new Eastern canon law would abolish this norm of principles.

Now, canon 11, paragraph 1, of the new law has come

to dissipate our last illusions. According to this canon, baptized non-Catholics of Eastern rite who join the Catholic Church can choose the rite they prefer; the paragraph contains no more than a wish that they will keep their former rite.

Certainly, freedom is all very well, and so is equality. Every one must seek them but above all Christians, whom St. Paul wanted to see free, with the freedom of the children of God and equal among themselves. But, it is neither conceivable nor proper to take freedom and equality as a pretext to arm the strong against the weak, the rich against the poor. Experience has abundantly proved that, at the time when the law makes Easterners remain in their rite, the moral and especially material advantages with which Latin ecclesiastical and religious institutions are richly provided, have brought into the Latin rite many weak persons from among Eastern Catholics or non-Catholics in search of moral or material assistance, or simply because of snobery; and this in spite of Rome's repeated admonitions to the contrary. What will happen now that the new law has abolished this norm, natural and just as it was, which assured at least some sort of protection to our churches against the force of latinization? Henceforth the promoters of latinization will have free rein. For, if the gravest sanctions could not stop them in the past, a platonic wish, inserted as if parenthetically, will scarcely hold them back either. And thus, the makers of the law will have arrived at the very opposite result of what they stated they were aiming at in proposing the new code; wanting to strengthen the Eastern Catholic church, they will have caused it the gravest injury.

The most astonishing and deceptive element in this matter is that the law, which permits Westerners to accept whom they want amongst the Eastern non-Catholics, forbids Eastern Catholics to accept any Western believer.

Should the Church thus practise the policy of two weights and two measures?²¹

Reaction of the Greek-Catholics

These points, and others which we pass over in silence though nothing but harm can come to the unity of the Church from them, have made a profound impression upon the patriarch and upon the Greek-Catholic bishops, both in their responsibilities towards their own little flock and glorious heritage and towards their non-Catholic brethren. We have studied these points in the spirit of faith, charity and respect incumbent upon those dealing with matters of the Church. We have studied them with the complete confidence we have in the Supreme Pontiff, Pope of Rome, whose general sovereignty and supreme jurisdiction among his brother bishops, co-responsible for the Church of Christ, we recognize affectionately. We, Eastern Christians, are attached by providential destiny through our apostolic traditions, to the Church, which, in its Eastern incarnation in our ancestors, was the first to spread the light of Christian faith in the world. In the same way, we are united to the see of the Roman Pontiff in its papal aspect. Trusting until the end in the repeated promises – not gratuitous promises, but expressing a situation of catholicity – of so many popes, we cannot conceive the fact of our union to be the reason for the

²¹ We have recently heard in high circles that this prohibition does not exist, because canon 11 forms part of a *motu proprio* made *pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus*, as its printed title indicates on the cover of A.A.S. of 15. 8. 1957, and this consequently does not concern the Latins. We admit this argument, but we should like the Latins also to admit it: unfortunately we know of Latin bishops who prohibit in their dioceses the accession of Protestants (Western non-Catholics) to Catholic churches of Eastern rite.

forfeiture of our rights. We believe, on the contrary, that divine providence, as the Apostle Paul said, shows its perfect strength by using weak means to produce great things. We believe then that it has established our church as a natural link between the Christian East and the Christian West. And we want, however weak we may be, to remain faithful to that mission and to work sincerely to fulfil it. If anything seems to us to thwart it, we should not keep silent. Our responsibilities demand that we call attention to necessary reforms.

We accomplished this duty in a request dated 10th February, 1958, and addressed to Pope Pius XII. This request was signed by the patriarch and bishops of our church, following the synod held in Cairo, in February 1958.

In May 1959, this same request was supplemented by a number of "Observations" presented to Pope John XXIII.

We have done this in all liberty and frankness, not only as is proper amongst loving brothers who honour their eldest brother as a symbol of their father, but also as is proper among loving sons who honour their father and are subject to him—without losing their own responsibility—and having at heart his honour as harbouring in his person the honour of the Universal Church, the honour of Christ.

We have done this, trusting in the justice of our cause — the cause of the Church — and in the justice of the Holy Roman See. History will record with gratitude what Rome has done in the recent past to enhance the prestige of Christian churches recently founded almost everywhere in the world and to secure their autonomy. It is not conceivable that, after having done so much for the dignity of churches which have just been won for the gospel, this same Roman See should do just the opposite in appearing to disparage the most ancient churches, those which spread the light of the gospel over the world. With

us, it is the entire Christian East that is affected by the blows of the recent so-called Eastern codification.

We have spoken because we do not want history to say one day that we saw the danger which threatened our church and our existence and that we closed our eyes, through weakness, negligence, selfishness or servility and that we had thus been unfaithful to our flock, to the Universal Church, to the Pope himself, to Christ our Lord.

as it is the entire Christian East that is affected by the blows of the recent so-called Eastern codification. We have spoken because we do not want history to say one day that we saw the danger which threatened our church and our existence and that we closed our eyes through weakness, negligence, indifference or apathy and that we had then to be reminded to our shock to the Universal Church of the East, that we were in Christ our Lord.

4

Against Latinization

Against Laminaria

A Plea for Unity¹

BY PATRIARCH MAXIMOS IV SAYEGH

IN 638 OUR predecessor St. Sophronius, patriarch of the apostolic see of Jerusalem, reached an agreement with the Arab conquerors by which Christians were able to live in peace and tranquillity. Now, St. Sophronius, as we know, was "Melkite", which means faithful to the Council of Chalcedon. He was a Syrian by origin, having been born in Damascus.

The political events and religious and civil upheavals inside and outside the country have had a great influence on the succession to the patriarchate of Jerusalem over the last thirteen centuries. Empires have disappeared, thrones have changed hands, kingdoms have been born and there have been periods in which the patriarchal see has been vacant. This is not the place to speak of them. Let us recall simply that in 1849 the Patriarch Maximos III Mazloum, our predecessor of sacred memory, held a synod in the Holy City which brought together the bishops of our community and had important effects on the life of our church.

¹ This address was originally delivered in Arabic at the Synod of the Greek Melkite Catholic Church, held in Jerusalem, in July 1960.

Today we are happy to be able to hold here a further synod in which even more fathers have taken part than in the first. This assembly has brought together the hierarchy of our community, bishops and superiors general, gathered to study our internal affairs and relations with the outside world, to lay down directives concerning our duties towards God, the Church, our countries and our dearly beloved peoples. We are met in serious times which require all our efforts to serve the common good.

We are happy that this gathering should take place just when his Holiness Pope John XXIII, guided by the Holy Spirit, has announced the calling of an ecumenical council, which will be entrusted with the task of examining the affairs of the Universal Church and of working for the reunion of the dispersed children of that church in accordance with the pressing word of Christ: "That they too may be one." There can be no doubt that the Church will adopt the ideal way to achieve this aim; that it will bring hearts together in charity, humility and mutual understanding.

It was on the college of the apostles, under the presidency of Peter, their leader, that our Lord founded his Church and he sent them to the whole world to preach and evangelize. Did he not say to them before ascending into heaven: "You, therefore, must go out making disciples of all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all the commandments which I have given you and behold I am with you all through the days that are coming until the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:19)?

The apostles therefore went throughout the world, preaching the gospel, founding churches, instituting bishops, but differences of culture, origin and background quickly made themselves felt among the converts. It was thus that some, Pharisees by origin, preached the need to maintain the prescriptions of the ancient Judaic law.

Others, coming from Greek families, taught on the contrary that it was necessary to liberate oneself from these laws. To resolve this problem the apostles held a gathering in Jerusalem which can be considered as the first council of the Church (Acts 15 : 6-12). The Acts of the Apostles recounts what happened in these words: "When the apostles and presbyters assembled to decide about this matter there was much disputing over it, until Peter arose and said to them, Brethren, you know well enough how from early days it has been God's choice that the gentiles should hear the message of the gospel from my lips and so learn to believe. God, who can read men's hearts, has assured them of his favour by giving the Holy Spirit to them as to us. He would not make any difference between us and them; he had removed all the uncleanness from their hearts when he gave them faith. How is it, then, that you would now call God in question, by putting a yoke on the necks of the disciples, such as we and our fathers have been too weak to bear? It is by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that we hope to be saved, and they no less. Then the whole company kept silence." Peter's words were the decisive ones, for the whole company kept silence to show its assent.

This new law of Christ abrogated, or to be more exact completed, the ancient Mosaic law, since the New Dispensation directly embraces not just a single nation but all people spread over the surface of the earth. This new law is intended for all men so that as the Apostle Paul declared in it there is neither slave nor freeman, nor man nor woman, nor Jew nor Greek, but all are one in Christ. Christ's Church is thus the Universal Church which embraces all her sons with an equal love whatever their origin, and clasps them with the same warmth whatever the colour of their skin, whatever their culture or customs. She holds them all to her heart in order to fuse them in the fire of her love into the fulness of unity. If the Western

patriarchate, whose head is his Holiness the Pope, head at the same time of the Universal Church, has rites, disciplines and customs that have been formed over the centuries, and if its canonical institutions have reached an admirable perfection, the Greek Eastern church also has its apostolic patriarchs who have enriched it with their divine teaching. Drawing from this pure source, the Eastern church has armed itself with a spirit of piety penetrating to the depths of the soul. While, over the centuries, many circumstances have enabled the Western church to prosper, becoming stronger and more stable, more influential and more rich, so that the representatives of the whole world come to her to gain her favour and to be enlightened by her, the Eastern patriarchates, whose lustre has been dimmed in the same period by many catastrophes, still have the credit of being the region in which Christianity began. It was from these lands that the light of the gospel first shone, they saw the birth of our divine Saviour, his immaculate Mother and the holy apostles. From these lands also came the Fathers and the first doctors of the Church. The Eastern patriarchates have always enjoyed such spiritual riches, their rites and the teachings of their Fathers have so reflected the apostolic traditions, that it will always be necessary to return to them to learn the first authentic Christian thought. These Eastern churches are a precious mine from which new and old treasures flow unceasingly. They are a source of light, reviving and sustaining piety. Anyone, whether from within the patriarchates or from outside, who seeks by whatever means to weaken or diminish the prestige of these patriarchates, which continue and represent in so true a manner the ancient Church, must be deemed guilty towards the whole Church.

We are happy to take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude for the efforts of the Western patriarchate, represented by its head, who is at the same time head of

the Catholic Church, his Holiness the Roman Pontiff, in coming to the aid of our patriarchate in the difficulties through which it has passed and is still passing. In the first days of the Church in Jerusalem, some claimed to restrict the Christian religion in practice to a particular group of Jewish converts whose narrowness of mind led them to see everything from the angle of out-moded legal observances. Today once again, we find those in the Church who would like to limit her to a single group – their own – which they claim to be the origin and foundation of everything. As for the rest, they do not see it as having any place in the heart of the Universal Church, in her essence. It is something, as it were, accidental, to be tolerated in order to avoid a greater evil.

These false claims are generally not advanced openly but are, as it were, whispered. Sometimes, nevertheless, they come out in clear terms and the least that can be said of them is that they show ignorance and narrowness. They are wretched and at the same time overweening, and would deprive the Church of Christ of its catholic, universal and ecumenical aspects, to reduce it to what is a mere group or fraction, however numerous its members and however great its strength.

We sons of the Greek Melkite Catholic church strive with all our might to oppose these false claims in order to preserve the catholic and universal aspect of the Church and, just as the first Council of Jerusalem Peter got up to speak, so in our days his successor in the primacy has risen to declare before the whole world, with a charity, faith and humility that have won him all hearts, that the Church of Christ is not East or West, European or American, African, Asiatic or Australian. She is simply the Church of Christ, one, catholic and universal, embracing all men without distinction and discrimination. She brings them together in perfect union in everything relating to the faith and everything relating

to morals that is not simply contingent on the times. She brings them together, in short, in all things founded on eternal truth, of which God is the source. But within this authentic unity of faith, which makes up the Church's personality and essence and gives her a lustre extending to the ends of the earth, there is a place for difference of rite, discipline and customs and a liberty that is to be safeguarded. Our Eastern rites, disciplines and customs, inherited from the greatest antiquity and providing a spontaneous response to the needs of souls, draw their spirituality from the very lands and Christian populations that are the source and historic cradle of the world's faith. This is the authentic seal of the true Church of Christ. Anything said to the contrary is merely the expression of private opinions which disfigure the image of Christ and of the Church, and are the fruit of ignorance, passion and human ambition. May the holy Fathers of the first ecumenical councils of the Church, whose memory is celebrated by our Church today, intercede for us with God that we may walk in their footsteps, our hearts overflowing with joy, open to the light, and letting the truth shine forth to the ends of the earth.

We could not fail to recall on this same occasion the duty, imposed not only on the rulers of the Church but also on all Christians, of working with all their strength, each in his own sphere, to remove obstacles to the realization of our Lord's wish: "That they too may be one." The Holy Spirit will afford his grace in response to prayer, charity, humility, sacrifice and good example, but the spirit of conflict, scorn and pride poisons hearts and prevents God's blessings from coming on us. This wicked spirit was once the main factor in schisms, bitterness and strife, but that, thank God, belongs to the past. We have entered, and must go deeper and deeper into, a new epoch, that of charity and peace. This is our great wish and we are convinced it is also yours.

AGAINST LATINIZATION

With God's help and with that of your prayers, and with the support of our venerable brothers and bishops who have undertaken long journeys to be with us in this holy city, we hope to be granted the ability to work with all our strength to ensure to the patriarchate of Jerusalem its rightful status. Its prestige is the prestige of all of you, for the patriarchate works for the general good without distinction or discrimination between the various elements of the population of this holy land. The patriarchate esteems you all whoever you may be, and is defending your rights to the best of its ability. It wishes to spend itself in the service of all. The patriarchate is of the country and for the country.

Latin or Catholic¹

IN JUNE 1961, the Greek Melkite Catholic patriarchal authorities learnt of a brochure of thirty-five pages, published by Father Pierre Médebielle, of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Betharram, professor at the Latin patriarchal seminary of Jerusalem.

Entitled "Concerning the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem", it was presented as an appendix to a study of "The Catholic Church in the Holy Places" and although it is marked *pro manuscripto*, it has nevertheless had a wide diffusion.

In this booklet, published either on his own initiative or at the request of his superiors, the author sets out to justify the continuance in the East in the twentieth century of the Latin patriarchate, created by the Frankish conquest of the Holy Land in 1099, disappearing with it in 1293 and restored by Pope Pius IX in 1847, though with very different aims, and becoming since then, against the wishes of the popes, the principal instrument of latinization in the East.

In spite of all it has suffered from this Latin and lati-

¹ These extracts are taken from a brochure published by the patriarchate in 1961 in reply to a booklet by Father Pierre Médebielle, professor at the Latin patriarchal seminary of Jerusalem.

nizing restoration, our Greek Melkite Catholic patriarchate has so far kept silent, confident in the final triumph of truth and in the justice of the Church.

But this work comes as an addition to many other writings in which the Eastern Catholic church – the local church – is violently criticized and our patriarchate has the painful duty of refuting the allegations and of setting out the truth by dealing point by point with the arguments of the writer. We do this in absolute respect for those who make up the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem and are our brothers and might have been our partners. What we criticize is not their persons, which are worthy of all respect, but their work: the latinization of the East.

Latins in the Holy Land

The writer uses following arguments to justify the presence in the East in the middle of the twentieth century of a foreign Latin patriarchate:

- 1) There were Latins in the Holy Land from the beginning.
- 2) A Latin patriarchate lasted in Jerusalem from 1099 to 1293, during the whole period of the occupation by the crusaders.
- 3) This meant that the Latin rite was in fact celebrated in Palestine four centuries earlier than the Byzantine rite properly so-called, that rite being in fact foreign and coming late to Syria and Palestine since it followed the Turkish conquest of 1516.
- 4) Though from 1293 to 1847 there was no Latin hierarchy in Jerusalem, from 1333 onwards the Franciscans were there to maintain the presence of the Catholic Church in the Holy Places.

Conclusion: We thus see how unfair it is to regard the Latin rite as a foreign importation into the Holy Land.

Let us deal with these arguments one by one.

Latin Guests in the Holy Land

The Latins, or Catholics adopting the Roman rite, says the writer, were present in the Holy Land from the early days of Christianity. As proof of this, he cites St. Jerome's monastery and the convent of St. Paula at Bethlehem, the houses of Rufinus and of St. Melania at Jerusalem in the fourth and fifth centuries and those of the Benedictines in Jerusalem and on Mount Tabor, in the time of St. Gregory.

These details are correct. Westerners were certainly living in the Holy Land right from the fourth century and perhaps even before, either as individuals or in monastic communities. They conducted divine worship in accordance with their original rite. The Holy Land, more than any other place, attracted and still attracts devout Christians wishing to live in the shadow of Christ's Holy Sepulchre.

What conclusions are we to draw from this? That the Latin rite of these Fathers preceded the rite of the local church? That the Latin rite should supplant the local rite? That the Latin foreigners should be the religious leaders of the country? Obviously not.

Moreover, these Latin groups in the Holy Land were not the only ones nor the most numerous. There were others, considerably more compact, of Copts, Ethiopians, Armenians, Georgians and Asiatics Are we to conclude from this that Jerusalem should have Coptic or Ethiopian patriarchates which would exclude the local patriarchate and impose the Coptic or Ethiopian rite on the Holy City? Admittedly, the Copts and Ethiopians have not had a chance to establish a politico-religious domination in the Holy Land by force of arms, but, with this single exception, the analogy is complete. The Ethiopian rite is no more foreign in Jerusalem than the Latin rite.

Occupation of the Patriarchal See by the Franks

"It was in 1099", says the writer, "on the arrival of the crusaders, that a Latin hierarchy was established in the Holy Land with the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem and it lasted until 1293." He is right that the patriarchal see of Jerusalem was occupied by the Latins as a result of Frankish domination in the Holy Land and that the occupation lasted as long as the conquest. The "Greek" patriarchs of the country then lived in exile.

It is interesting to recall the beginning and end of this Latin occupation of the see of Jerusalem. With the arrival of the Franks, the legitimate patriarch of Jerusalem, Simeon, was the sole occupant of the see and was styled indifferently, Greek, Orthodox, Catholic or Melkite patriarch, each term amounting to the same thing. Fearing Moslem reprisals when the crusaders besieged Antioch, he had fled to Cyprus and from there sent presents and good wishes to the Frankish barons on a number of occasions. The chroniclers of the crusades have reported his friendly attitude towards the Franks and for a time some of the leading crusaders even played with the idea of a Greek patriarch co-existing with a Frankish monarchy².

Unfortunately, this solution, which would have seemed normal to present-day Catholics, did not commend itself at a time when religion and state were so closely linked. *Cujus regio, ejus religio*, as it was to be said later. A Frankish domination meant a Frankish (i. e. Latin) patriarchate. That was the attitude of the period and it was not restricted to the Franks. Jerusalem was taken on 15th July, 1099. On the 17th, the crusaders' leaders assembled to organize their conquest. The Greek patriarch, Simeon, had just died in Cyprus, leaving the patriarchate

² R. Grousset, *Histoire des Croisades*, Book I, p. 165, note 1.

vacant and giving the Franks the satisfaction of being able to feel they were acting legally when they proceeded to elect one of their own people. They would not have concerned themselves about the effects of their actions on the Church as a whole and on the interests of the local Christians and we are sufficiently aware of the outlook of the times not to bear them any grudge on this account.

Unhappily, the papal legate Adhémar de Monteil, Bishop of Le Puy, had died on the way. The Latin clergy, left to themselves, pressed the barons to elect a patriarch before electing a king, in view of the strongly affirmed primacy of the spiritual over the temporal. This attempt at ecclesiastical government, initiated by Arnoul Malecorne and the Bishop of Maturano, in Calabria, failed and Godfrey of Bouillon was elected king of Jerusalem without assuming the title. The intriguing Bishop of Maturano, nevertheless succeeded on 1st August, 1099, two weeks later, in having his friend Arnoul Malecorne, chaplain of the Duke of Normandy, elected as patriarch. The election scandalized contemporaries. The Roman see had been neither obeyed nor consulted and was soon to invalidate the election. The pious Raymond d'Agiles reports³: "*Ille (Arnoul Malecorne) nec canonum decreta reveritus, tanta ambitione tentus, nec generis nec conscientiae infamiam, contra bonos populum concitavit atque se cum hymnis et canticis in sede patriarchali, magno populorum plausu, elevari fecit.*" The policy of turning a deaf ear to Rome had thus already come to be adopted in this Latin patriarchate.

William of Tyre passed even more severe judgement on this election: "It was against God and against all right"⁴, he wrote. And this was without taking account of the low moral reputation of the elected candidate: "Son of a tradesman of so evil and filthy a way of life

³ R. Grousset, t. cit., p. 171, note 2. ⁴ Op. cit., p. 172.

that the boys throughout the camp made him a subject of their songs.”⁵

“The new patriarch”, says Grousset⁶, “immediately set himself to despoil the clergy of the various local Christian communities who held posts and privileges at the Holy Sepulchre. Such measures . . . were not designed to make the new Latin patriarch popular with the Greek and Syriac communities.”

Consequence as it was of the Frankish conquest, this Latin patriarchate naturally disappeared with that domination. On Friday, 18th May, 1293, the last Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, Nicolas de Hanapes, a Dominican from Rheims, was drowned in the waters of Acre harbour when trying to escape with others from Moslem troops attacking the town.

We must repeat that it is not our intention to condemn the Frankish chiefs for acting in this way. They were of their own generation: but why should we want to retain the same outlook in the middle of the twentieth century and why pretend that it represents a true Catholic mentality? The fact that the Frankish conquest led to the installation of a Frankish patriarch can hardly justify the maintenance today, against the rights of the local church, of this Latin-Frankish patriarchate when the Frankish conquest has been over for centuries.

Chronological Precedence of the Latin Rite

“In fact, this establishment of the Latin rite in Palestine in 1099”, continues the writer, “preceded by four centuries the use of the Byzantine rite properly so-called, for which priority is often claimed. The Byzantine rite – that of Constantinople – is in fact foreign and came later than

⁵ Op. cit., p. 167. ⁶ Op. cit., p. 172.

this in Syria and Palestine. It is only after the crusades that it seems to have supplanted in the patriarchate of Antioch the earlier local rite or rite of St. James of Jerusalem. This latter rite, the Syriac liturgy, was celebrated in Syria in the majority of towns and villages of provinces under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Antioch and was celebrated in Greek in one or two towns and townships founded by the Greeks or hellenized by them, particularly along the coast. At Antioch, substitution of the Byzantine rite for the original rite of St. James was the work of a patriarch from Constantinople, Theodore Balsamon⁷ (who died some time after 1190).

"But this substitution did not take place in Jerusalem until much later. After the crusades, Jerusalem remained for more than two centuries under the rule of Egyptian Mamelukes, hostile first to the Byzantines and then to the Turks. During this period the Holy City had only native patriarchs, often in relations with Rome. A change of regime and rite followed the Turkish conquest in 1516 which brought to Jerusalem the influence of the Byzantine patriarchs from Constantinople.

"Indeed, it was only a few years later that Germanus, patriarch of Jerusalem from 1534 to 1579, who came from the Peloponnese, succeeded in the final and complete establishment of Hellenism. We can certainly date the imposition of the Constantinople rite in Jerusalem from this period."

Incredible though it may seem, the writer tries to maintain that the Latin rite came to Palestine well before the Byzantine rite and that in consequence supporters of

⁷ Balsamon has been a stumbling block for some time even to the most alert of the latinizers. He did not come to Antioch from Constantinople. He was Patriarch of Antioch but was resident in Constantinople because the crusaders were in possession of the see of Antioch. See remarks of Father Darblade on this subject in *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, Bk. X (1961), pp. 44—8.

the Byzantine are not justified in complaining about the Latin rite, implanted in Palestine some centuries before theirs.

The argument, plausible though it seems, is nothing more than a lamentable piece of sophistry. It is based on a confusion, unfortunately too widespread among Latins, between church and rite. In the strict sense of the word, a rite is the form given to liturgical worship. We thus speak of the Roman rite, the Ambrosian rite, the Armenian rite, the Byzantine rite and so forth. The particular church or community in the Pauline sense of the word is, on the other hand, a hierarchically organized group of the faithful such as the church of Corinth, the church of Greece, the Russian church, the Ukrainian church, the Church of England, the Melkite church, the Latin church and so on. These ideas are clearly similar but not identical. A liturgical rite can be adopted by different churches and one and the same church may have several rites. Thus the same Byzantine rite is common to different churches or communities such as the Greek church, the Russian, the Ukrainian, the Melkite, etc. One church or community can, nevertheless, have several different liturgical rites. This is the case today, for instance, with the church of Toledo (Roman rite and Mozarabic rite) and in the dioceses of Lungro and of Piana degli Albanesi in Italy (Roman and Byzantine rites).

Once these distinctions are pointed out, it becomes possible to understand more readily our disapproval of the writer for his assertion that the Latin rite in Palestine had priority in time over the Byzantine rite. In the liturgical sense, the Latin rite came after the Byzantine in Palestine and the argument applies even more strongly when we consider the churches. It is here that we come to the writer's sophistry.

Even taking the word "rite" in the liturgical sense, as the author does, it is not true to say that the Latin rite

was adopted in the church of Jerusalem before the Byzantine rite.

First, the Latin rite, implanted hierarchically in Palestine in 1099, was never strictly speaking the rite of the church of Jerusalem. From 1099 onwards it became the rite of the Frankish community in the Holy Land, but the Franks were only a part and never constituted the whole of Christianity in the Holy Land. They were never the whole church of Jerusalem. The other rites did not disappear. The most that can be claimed is that from 1099 the Latin rite came into official use by the Frankish community of occupation and continued for as long as the occupation lasted, having hitherto been used privately in the Holy Land by a few foreigners or Western monastic communities. It remained, however, a foreign rite, used by foreign rulers. The crusaders did not even attempt to convert the people of the country, Greeks, Syrians and so on, to its use.

Secondly, the Byzantine rite – still taken in the liturgical sense – is not, as the author seems to believe, a foreign rite in Palestine imported as a novelty from Constantinople and imposed in a single step on the orthodox Christians of the Holy Land, as happened later with the Latin rite. The writer is not a specialist in the Eastern liturgies and he has misunderstood some of the Eastern historians who assumed their readers' acquaintance with the history of the various rites.

In the course of a development covering several centuries within the orthodoxy arising from the Council of Chalcedon, the Byzantine or Constantinopolitan rite came to represent the peak of the interpenetration of all the Eastern rites. Those of Antioch, Asia, Caesarea and Jerusalem all made their contributions to the formation of the Byzantine rite, without forgetting the part played by Sinai and Egypt. The two Byzantine liturgies of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom were derived from the liturgy

of Antioch and the Syro-Palestinian liturgy of St. James, through the link of the Cappadocian tradition. In turn, once the Byzantine liturgy was formed, it helped in the development of the orthodox practice of the liturgy of St. James which, in its most ancient manuscripts, already reveals Byzantine influences. The slow but progressive "Byzantinization" of the Hierosolymitan liturgy had been a spontaneous manifestation of interpenetration and internal development, not the imposition of an entirely foreign rite, such as the Latin rite, in relation to an Eastern community.

It is true that this "Byzantinization" of the liturgy of the Orthodox churches became more marked in Antioch as a result of the Byzantine conquest of the tenth to the eleventh centuries, but in Jerusalem it started well before the crusades. We might point out that the process of "Byzantinization" is not yet entirely complete, for many Hierosolymitan details persist today, among them the fact that the liturgy of St. James is still celebrated annually in the Byzantine church of Jerusalem.

What we have said about the Eucharistic liturgy applies even more strongly to the Divine Office. The office called "Byzantine" is much more Hierosolymitan than derived from Constantinople. The facts are that the most important *typikon* in the Byzantine rite is the one named after St. Sabbas, who was of Palestinian origin; that the most important part of the poetic compositions of the Byzantine office comes from Jerusalem; and that the Byzantine office gives prominence to St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, St. Andrew of Crete, St. John Damascene, Cosmas of Maiouma, Peter the Blind, Stephen the Sabaite and so on. All these were Palestinians by birth or adoption. Again, the Byzantine offices for Holy Week, Eastertide and the octave of the Resurrection were, as far as their most important parts are concerned, Hierosolymitan. In the light of all this, how can one maintain that the

Byzantine rite is a foreign importation coming late to Palestine and dating back only to the sixteenth century, or that the Latin rite preceded it by several centuries?

To make the point clearer still, we will take an example from the Roman rite, which is more familiar to Western readers. We know that this rite, after having influenced the "Gallican" rites, was in turn strongly "gallicanized" by them during the Carolingian period, just as the Hierosolymitan rite, after having influenced the Byzantine rite, was itself gradually "Byzantinized". Surely it could not be claimed from this that the Roman rite is a foreign importation in Rome, coming late and dating back only to the ninth century.

The truth in the writer's assertion – for there is always some truth in such circumstances – lies in the contention that the rite used at the time of the siege of Jerusalem has undergone a slow change over the centuries, bringing it closer to the other Eastern rites, particularly to the rite of Constantinople with which it was finally assimilated.

This development was not entirely completed by the time the Latin rite was admitted into the Holy Land as the rite of a foreign community occupying the country, a position it retained for nearly two centuries (1099 to 1293).

Moreover, whatever the position may be on this score, a liturgical rite is one thing and a church another. Milan, Lyons, Toledo, the Dominicans, the Carthusians, all these have their own non-Roman rites, without being thereby any less Latin, less members of the Latin patriarchate and of the Latin Church.

Rome herself used Greek for worship until about 250. In ancient times and in the early Middle Ages, a number of popes were Greeks. Much of Italy (Ravenna, Naples, Calabria and Sicily) was for several centuries Byzantine. But that hardly entitles us to maintain that Italy is Greek or that it should today employ the Byzantine rite and that the Latin church is an intruder.

If the Maronites or the Melkites were established in Paris some time after the year 1800, and before the complete romanization of Gallican particularities by Dom Guéranger and the Holy See, that would not entitle us to say that the Maronites and the Melkites had priority there over the Roman rite and the Latin church.

We do not claim jurisdiction in "the Gauls" because St. Pothinus and St. Irenaeus (Greeks) were bishops of Lyons or because there was a Syrian bishop in Paris in the sixth century.

There were many Latins throughout the East from the beginning, just as there were many Easterners throughout the West. In particular, there were Latin churches in Constantinople under Michael Cerularius. The Benedictines were later established at Athos and later still they came to Sinai. Many more examples could be given, but we do not claim that these Latin presences have made Athos, Sinai or Constantinople into Latin churches or Latin dioceses, or that the monks in these places, together with the local populations, belonged to the Latin church.

Though the priority of the East and of Byzantium in Palestine may be denied by certain Latins, it is "cried out by the stones themselves". Is there a crusader's shrine anywhere, below which there is not some Byzantine basilica?

Before the arrival of the Franks, there was undoubtedly a church in the Holy Land. It was not Latin. What then was it? To which church did the Patriarch Simeon belong whom Malecorne proposed to replace? Common sense tells us that it was the same church as that of his predecessors and the one to which his successors belong to our own days—the "Eastern", "Orthodox", "Catholic", "Melkite" church. That the predecessors and successors of Simeon should have celebrated divine worship with variations of text and rubric more or less Hierosolymitan, or deriving from Antioch and Constantinople, concerns only liturgical

historians. The church of Jerusalem has not changed and is certainly not represented by the Latin patriarchate, which was a result of the conquest by the Franks and passed away with that conquest.

Presence of the Franciscans from 1333 to 1847

"But the Latin rite", says the writer, "eliminated in 1293 with the fall of Acre, returned to Jerusalem as early as 1333 with the Franciscans and was never again to leave. It must be remembered, too, that during these iron centuries the Latins alone represented the Catholic Church in the Holy Places. We see then how little the Latin rite can be regarded as intruder and foreigner in the Holy Land."

From 1333 to 1847 the Franciscans did, it is true, provide a Western Catholic presence in the Holy Places.

But this presence was a foreign one, having nothing to do with the Christianity of the country. The Franciscans in the Holy Land no more represented the church of the country than did the Latin religious houses of St. Jerome and St. Paula at Bethlehem in the fourth century. The local Christian community continued to have its own hierarchy, clergy and religious, and its native patriarchs, often in relations with Rome, as the writer himself admits. Thus, the custodians were not the church of the country but a foreign representation of the Latin West within the Holy Land. So little did the Franciscans regard themselves as belonging to the country that for a long time they did not feel it in any way their duty to exercise a direct apostolate on the population. They were there to guard the shrines of pilgrimage in the Holy Land in the name of and for the use of the West. They acted nobly and heroically but, unlike the Latin patriarchate, did not pretend to replace the church of the country.

When the author concludes, "We see then how little the Latin rite can be regarded as an intruder and foreigner in the Holy Land", his conclusion goes well beyond his premises. The Latin rite does not become the rite of the country because there were some Latin Christians in the Holy Land in the fourth century, because the Frankish military conquest imposed a Frankish hierarchy on Palestine in accordance with the mentality of the Middle Ages, or because there were Franciscan friars in Palestine who were strangers to the country and whose whole mission was to guard for the West the great shrines, just as the Armenians did for Armenia and the Ethiopian monks for Ethiopia. It is a foreign rite and the Latin church is a foreign church which the country, being hospitable, is good enough to welcome on condition, be it said, that the foreigner does not claim to be master and expel those who receive him.

Obstacles to the Return of the Dissidents

"There are some ill-informed or malevolent people", says the writer, "who allege that the Latin rite would be an obstacle to the return to the Church of the dissidents in the Holy Land. They claim that the restoration in 1847 was a serious tactical error on the part of Rome."

We readily admit ourselves to be among those whom the writer gratuitously describes as ill-informed or malevolent. True, it is not the Latin rite itself that is an obstacle to union, but the latinization of the East. The two things are entirely distinct.

In the first place, latinization provides an opportunity for identifying Catholicism and "Latinism", the Catholic faith and the Latin rite, the Catholic Church and the Latin church. The sound doctrine of the Catholic Church demands that these ideas be kept entirely distinct. A

member of the Catholic Church can be Roman, Byzantine, Maronite, Armenian, etc. The Latin rite is only one of the rites of the Universal Church, with exactly the same claims as the others, though today it happens to be that with the greatest number of adherents. If in calling our Orthodox brethren to unity we impose moral conditions, or constrain them in all sorts of ways to abandon their original rites and make themselves Latins, will this not confirm them in their mistaken view that Catholicism is ultimately no more than a widespread and conquering latinism? And will that help in the work of union?

Secondly, the popes have repeatedly stated, in the most solemn language, that they want the reconciliation of our Orthodox brothers with the Church and not the adoption by them of the Latin rite. Some of them, Leo XIII in particular, have threatened Latin missionaries with the most severe penalties should they dare, by whatever means, to induce Eastern Christians to make themselves Latins. All this is very good, but when the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem is seen to be showing contempt for all these declarations and adding to the latinizing process, what are Eastern Christians expected to think? They will either conclude that the popes have been making fools of them or that they are unable to prevent the missionaries in the East from acting against their will. In fact, both conclusions have been drawn. A Latin religious in the East told us that whatever the official declarations of the Pope might be, Rome had in fact given secret instructions for the latinizing of the Easterners, the papal directives being merely for popular consumption. He even dared to quote words alleged to have been addressed by a pope to one of the custodians of the Holy Land: "Latinize, latinize. As long as the Easterners are not Latins, the roots of schism will remain." We are sure these assertions are untrue and protest strongly that such an accusation of duplicity should be levelled against the Holy See, but we cannot

fail to note that the contradiction between the desires of Rome and the practice of the latinizing missionaries paves the way for this charge and also for the widespread belief that Rome does not want to deal, or cannot deal, severely with the latinizers. Leo XIII had envisaged severe penalties against the latinizers, extending even to deprivation of office. Nevertheless, since his time, as before, latinizing has continued and not once has a latinizer been troubled. Father Korolevsky remarked humourously that if the penalties outlined by Leo XIII had been applied, "we should have witnessed a whole flood of ecclesiastical charges against the Latin hierarchy of the East". The blame for this inability to apply papal instructions is to be attributed in the first instance to representatives of the Holy See on the spot who on this point, we regret to say, have failed in their mission. Not having themselves sincerely accepted the outlook of the popes, they have allowed the latinization to proceed even if they have not been responsible for encouraging it. This has been no help to union.

Union, as we see it, must amount to a reconciliation. Responsibility for the breach in Christendom, as Pope John XXIII has said, is a shared one.⁸

In essence, our Orthodox friends have nothing to disavow and nothing to deny. Doctrinal difficulties were not responsible for the breach. What we need to ask of the Orthodox is to be ready to resume the old relations with the rest of Christendom, forgetting their complaints, forgetting any wrongs for which they may themselves have been to blame and any they may have suffered. The Orthodox East, and even more the Catholic East are not missionary lands. The task is not to convert but to reconcile. The East, in particular, has never denied its rite, that is to say, its liturgical cult and its own special organi-

⁸ Speech on 29th January, 1959, to the parish priests of Rome.

zation, discipline and past, its martyrs and its art, in sum, its soul. When you press it to latinize, you do not reconcile but destroy; you do not unite, you absorb; you do not serve, you dominate, and that again is no help to union.

We say, therefore, to the latinizers that they are taking the wrong road. We are not ill-informed or malevolent. We love only the Church and seek its unity and for a century we have been saying that they are harming the Church by reducing it to the status of a particular group when it is the great gift of God to humanity, the house in which all, in their full variety, are brothers.

Canon Eleven

The writer sees "a clear sign of this change of attitude in the progressive development of the Church's legislation, which tends all the time to afford greater liberty to the faithful". "From now on", he adds, "the new approach will be found enshrined in the latest part to be promulgated of the Eastern code of canon law, canon 11 recognizes in each Eastern Christian and canon 12 in each infidel the fundamental freedom of choosing his rite on entering the Church."

Some explanation is needed, as this is a specialized question of canon law on which many of our readers are probably not sufficiently informed.

Canon 11 of the *motu proprio* "*Cleri sanctitati*" of 1957 authorizes Eastern Catholics who enter Catholic unity to select their rite, including the Latin rite. The canon nevertheless expresses the hope that they will remain within their own rite and by this provision it introduces a new element into the discipline in force up to the time of its promulgation. This authorized Eastern non-Catholics to choose whichever Eastern rite they preferred, but not the Latin rite, except in special cases.

The change naturally favours the Latin rite at the expense of the Eastern rites. The new canon, it is true, does not oblige Eastern non-Catholics to enter the Latin rite but it is sufficient that this should be permitted for the latinizers to redouble their efforts to deprive the Eastern Catholic churches of all new converts.

There is obviously nothing to prevent the Holy See from taking account of the particular needs of some souls and authorizing them in exceptional cases to go over to the Latin rite, either at the moment of reconciliation with the Catholic Church or later. But in present circumstances, taking account of the extra means at the disposal of the latinizers, to allow the Latins, as a matter of principle, to admit into the Latin rite Eastern non-Catholics who want to return to unity amounts to condemning the Eastern Catholic churches to arrested development. The equality that the new canon is claimed to establish is false, since it amounts in practice to delivering the weak to the mercy of the strong.

Leo XIII, as we have seen, decreed severe punishment for those who tried to induce Eastern Christians to adopt the Latin rite.

But these instructions became a dead letter, through the fault of those who should have applied them. The latinizing movement continued as before. Is it to be believed that what the severest sanctions have been unable to prevent will be arrested by a simple wish introduced almost as an after-thought at the end of a canon? When the popes formally forbade the latinization of the East the Latin missionaries disobeyed them. Is the wish expressed in the new canon that the latinization should cease any more likely to be obeyed?

Finally, in its present form, this canon results in the introduction of a double standard. While it authorizes Eastern non-Catholics to adopt the Latin rite, it continues to forbid Western non-Catholics (Protestants and others)

to go over to the Eastern rite. This is termed in legal parlance an inequity.

Which is the most expressive Liturgy?

Under this heading the writer sets out to eradicate "an equally detestable popular misconception", according to which the Byzantine Mass is richer and more expressive than the Latin. The faithful of the Latin rite in the Holy Land would smile at the assertion that the Eastern Mass is more expressive, adds the writer.

There is not much point in smiling or in comparing the beauties of the Latin rite with those of the Byzantine rite. The Latin rite is beautiful and the Byzantine rite no less so, but that is not the question. What matters is whether there should be an attempt to impose the Latin rite on the faithful of the Byzantine rite. Why, in reconciling them with the Roman Church, should you wish to remove not only the schism but also all they possess that is most Catholic and most splendid, the whole of their liturgy, spirituality, traditions, discipline, art and so on — all the things that are included in the term rite? Why should you wish to make new creatures of them when their Christianity dates back further than your own? Why should you seek to mutilate and impoverish them and make them foreigners to themselves, renegades to their history as a church? Is their rite heretical or schismatic that you should want to take it from them?

That is the question. All the expedients subsequently employed to make the Latin rite a little less foreign to the faithful of the Holy Land are merely camouflage. It means nothing to us that you should read the gospel in Arabic, or chant the *Introit, Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Pater* and *Agnus Dei* in Latin "without prejudice to popular Arab hymns". Whatever you do, even if you

celebrate the whole Mass in Arabic without a word of Latin, your rite will remain foreign, imposed on a population who might well have preserved its own rite on becoming Catholic

The General Perspective

However worthy of interest the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Greek Melkite patriarchate of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem may be, the details of their existence taken out of their universal context are not likely to stir up world Christian opinion. Yet the great aspiration of the moment is the reconciliation of Orthodox and Catholic Christianity. Outside this perspective opened for us by the Holy Spirit, the various problems, wheter it be of Latin-Melkites of Palestine, Latin-Byzantines or Latin-Easterners, are liable to distortion. With this perspective of a general reconciliation in mind, the need for which must never be forgotten, we would like to stress several problems concerning the sacred land of Palestine.

First, there is the question of the Holy Places, which have to be preserved for the devotion and the evangelical and biblical instruction of Christians of the whole world, of whatever rite or nation.

Some thought should also be given to the local Christian population, its spiritual welfare, its preservation and welfare from the ordinary human point of view. Finally, and still with the union of Catholics and Orthodox in mind, there is the question of the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem

Taking these problems one by one, and concentrating for a few moments on the first, we should like to express our own satisfaction, and also to a certain extent that of the Orthodox, that the Latin community is solidly estab-

lished among us, present in force at the Holy Places which are shared by the whole of Christendom. May it prosper more and more. We love St. Francis and his sons and all the houses they have built. May God send us many more like Père Lagrange and the Little Sisters of Charles de Foucauld and preserve all the Western religious communities which so admirably lighten and purify the spiritual atmosphere of our countries. We know the benefits of the brotherly help they have so unceasingly given us. The Latins who are in touch and living with us, the Fathers of St. Anne of Jerusalem in particular, but others as well, are aware of our feelings.

The local Christian population owes its baptism to the Eastern church It is necessary to insist not only that the Eastern church does exist here, but also that within it is the church of Jerusalem founded directly by the apostles. This church remained entirely within the orthodoxy of the Council of Chalcedon after the monophysite division without any split in the hierarchy such as occurred in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. It is a church predominantly of Greek language, though there are Semitic elements in its tradition. These came from many sources. Its bishop St. Cyril was, for instance, a Semite and so was St. John Damascene, the great Byzantine liturgist, whose mother tongue was Arabic though he was bilingual, and who was a monk in the monastery of St. Sabbas. The Byzantine East calls it "the mother of all the churches". In particular, it is the mother of the ecumenical Byzantine church to whose formation it contributed in company with the church of Antioch. Later, the church of Jerusalem was itself to feel the influence of its daughter church of Constantinople, in common with all those churches in the East, Catholic and Orthodox, that had accepted the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon. "The great Church of Christ", as Byzantium was styled, had in general been satisfied to pass to the rest of the Christian

East (accepting like itself the universality of the Christian message with its transcending of local boundaries) those liturgical treasures that had been brought by the provinces to the capital of the Roman world. All that Constantinople had itself added was the lustre of its imperial name. The Christian population of Palestine is, with rarer exceptions than are sometimes admitted, Orthodox in origin. It is a Christian community retaining its Orthodoxy and its original Byzantine characteristics, which are the same as those of the Arab-speaking Christian communities, or Melkites, of Syria and the Lebanon. It is a Melkite Christianity to which the present day Arab Catholics, their Palestinian Orthodox brothers and we ourselves, Greek Catholics of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem, also belong. In its Orthodox part, it should not be disturbed and proselytized but helped in Christ and reconciled as opportunity occurs.

When for a legitimate reason part of this Christian group wishes to accept papal authority with the object of gaining a more effective clergy, by what right is it to be deprived of all that is most authentic in its spiritual heritage? By what right is it to be made a stranger to its own ancestors and nearest relatives so that its Eastern Catholic brothers, not to mention the Orthodox, are deprived of its company? The popes have traditionally opposed this, particularly in Palestine. When there were only very few latinized natives, Leo XIII published the encyclical *Orientalium dignitas* (1894), following an eucharistic congress held in Jerusalem in 1893. The whole historical context of this solemn papal intervention shows that, however general it may have been in principle, it was in practice primarily addressed to the Eastern Orthodox Arabs and particularly to those of Palestine. What has happened since? The competition in latinization is such that it is now a boast that there are about 45,000 latinized Arabic-speaking Christians and 45,000 Melkite

Catholics. It is not Moslems or Jews or pagans who have been converted but authentic Melkite Christians, who had no need to be converted but did need to be reconciled to Rome and who have been turned from their true direction. Thus, to obvious injustice has been added a demonstration to the whole world of the curious way in which the missionaries, the successors of the crusaders, obey the solemn injunctions of the Roman Pontiff. Their action has laid the pope and his curia open to a charge either of duplicity or of dangerous weakness. It has seemed to reveal a bias which, though not admitted, appears clearly enough in its effects to influence the pope's children in the West, particularly those who are colonizers. Such suspicions are all the more easily entertained since there has never been any question of entrusting leading posts to these latinized Arabs, or at least the leading post that alone counts. The situation is such that if there were ever question of a "Latin-Arab-Eastern-Western" patriarch of Jerusalem ... many people would hasten to remind these Eastern-Latins of Palestine - we know well in what terms - that they are merely Byzantines, Melkites and sons of Melkites, received into the Latin church merely in order to give it the numbers it needs.

We now come to the question of the Latin patriarchate in Jerusalem. Why is it there and what did it come to do? The crusaders had taken Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople but had been checked in Egypt. They had chased John IV from Antioch and brought the line of Greek Melkite patriarchs to an end with Simeon of Jerusalem. Whatever their actual race, these patriarchs were the true successors of the apostles and, in taking their place, the crusaders widened the gap between Orthodoxy and Rome. It is difficult to see in this anything in which we can legitimately take pride, especially in the present climate of opinion. These Latin patriarchs are an outrage to members of the Orthodox Church the world over whom

it is our task to reconcile with Rome, and an outrage to the Moslems for whom they are a reminder of the Frankish conquest. They offend Eastern Catholics, too, particularly the Melkites, since they indicate that the place reserved for them in Catholicity—in their own home in other words—is that of “poor relations”. The Christian Arabs of Palestine, whether of the Latin rite or of the rites from which the Latins draw their adherents, are all Chalcedonian Christians, having the same origins and formation as the Greek Catholic Melkites.

This is a dire warning to the whole of Orthodoxy on the look-out for signs of an ecumenical spirit and also a warning to Christians among the coloured races. If their elders, those who were the first to know Christ and bear his name and the first to have transmitted his message, those who are the closest to the Latins by their origins, their history and type of civilization, are treated thus, how will they be treated in the long run when they begin to develop their own personality? Will they be tempted to imitate the Germans and the English and develop a form of Protestantism or Anglicanism in order to escape the Western pride of Latin Europe, of which St. Basil himself already complained, a sense of superiority even more to be feared than the proverbial pride of the Greeks, who at least make no claim to universal jurisdiction?

There must, it is true, be a distinguished Latin representative in the Holy Land. We Melkites ourselves fully recognize the advantage and even necessity of a strong Latin presence in the Holy Places, to guard the shrines and give added Catholic witness to Christ in his own land; but a nuncio, a vicar apostolic, a cardinal delegate or, as for so long, a custodian of the Holy Land would suffice. The patriarchal title of Jerusalem is a Greek title, preserved in Orthodoxy and among Eastern Catholics, who have the promises of the popes that nothing will be done to diminish the rights and privileges of their patriarchs.

These promises were revealed in action many times before the Council of Florence, and were given formal expression at the council and afterwards, particularly by Leo XIII (*Praeclara*) and by Pius XII, who repeated them in the encyclical *Orientalis omnes*. Apart from this, as we have seen, the local Christian population in Palestine, which is the one having a right to a bishop, is Byzantine and Melkite and its pastor is traditionally the patriarch of Jerusalem. Indeed, there is no need to press the point. A Latin patriarch of Jerusalem is not only useless and meaningless but is a real obstacle to the unity of the Church, to the very necessary reconciliation of Catholicism and Orthodoxy which is the most important thing for Christianity today.

In this spirit we turn to the 45,000 latinized Palestinians and tell them that, as sons and daughters of the East, they remain our own. They remain part of ecumenical Orthodoxy, in its branch already united, happily, with Rome. They owe, in fact, to the Eastern Church the baptism without which the Latins could not have usurped that church's place. Unable to achieve success among the infidels, the Latins turned to Christ's Eastern sheepfold where they found an easy prey. As they were Christians separated from Rome, they had wanted to recognize the successors of Peter. Was that a reason for taking them from the East?

They might realize that until they return to the East they will appear as "the most uniat of all the uniats", a major scandal to the Orthodox, confirming as it were that Church in its dissidence, and acting as a brake on its progress towards Rome. It is their very existence which checks Orthodox impulses of the heart and of the Holy Spirit towards Peter who has remained alive in its pastorate of love. "Peter . . . lovest thou me? . . . Feed my lambs . . . Feed my sheep . . ."

5

A Living Liturgy

The Byzantine Liturgy in the Vernacular¹

BY ARCHBISHOP NEOPHYTOS EDELBY

"I AM IN the body of Christ. I am in the Church of Christ: if the Body of Christ speaks all languages, I also speak all. Mine is the Greek language, the Syrian, the Hebrew. Mine is the language of all nations because I am in the unity of all nations" (St. Augustine).

In a communiqué issued on 2nd May, 1960, the Greek Melkite Catholic patriarchate published an important decision taken by the Holy Office in its plenary session of 31st March, 1960, and approved by Pope John XXIII on 1st April, of the same year². In substance this decision concedes the use of vernacular, even, non-oriental, languages in the celebration of the Byzantine Mass, excepting only the major part of the anaphora³.

The text of the decision reads as follows:

"We grant the use of the vernacular tongue in the celebration of the Holy Mass according to the Byzantine rite

¹ First published in *Proche-Orient chrétien*, 1960.

² Cf. POC., 1960, p. 134. The present study takes up and develops a note appearing in *Le Lien*, the Greek Catholic review published in Cairo, May number, 1960, pp. 119—26.

³ The anaphora is the equivalent of the canon in the Roman Mass.

with the exception of the anaphora properly so called, which starts with the words 'Lift up your hearts' before the consecration and ends with the words 'world without end' after the consecration. Moreover, in view of a very ancient custom, the commemorations of the Blessed Virgin and the Sovereign Pontiff inserted as intercalations in the Great Eucharistic Prayer may also be recited in the vernacular".⁴

The patriarchate's communiqué adds that only some months earlier the Holy Office had issued a provisional decision forbidding even the partial use of a living language in the celebration of the holy liturgy. This prohibition had provoked diverse reactions particularly in Byzantine church circles. The Greek Catholic patriarch, Maximos IV, the leading Catholic dignitary of the Byzantine rite, had immediately brought this matter to the attention of the Holy Father. Less than two months later the Pope put an end to this new "dispute about tongues" with a decision respecting the authentic Byzantine discipline, which admits the use of all languages for liturgical purposes. The history of this second decision of the Holy Office, which clearly shows the personal intervention of the Holy Father, is worth recounting here, at least in general outline.

The repercussions of these two successive decisions of the Holy Office make it possible to examine more deeply both the Byzantine discipline on this point and the attitude

⁴ It may be useful to quote the original Italian text of this decision as communicated by the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches to his Beatitude Patriarch Maximos IV in a letter of 8th April, 1960, (Prot. N. 134/53): "Si concede l'uso della lingua volgare nella celebrazione della S. Messa di rito bizantino, eccezione fatta per l'Anafora' propriamente detta che inizia con il *Sursum corda*, prima della Consecrazione, e termina con il *Per omnia saecula saeculorum* dopo la Consecrazione. Tenuto poi conto della antichissima tradizione, anche le due Commemorazioni della Beata Vergine e del Sommo Pontefice che a mò di embolismi sono iscritte nella grande preghiera eucaristica, potranno esser recitate in lingua volgare."

hitherto adopted by the Holy See. A reminder of the basic principles involved will clarify the discussion. It should also be recalled that the position of Catholics of the Byzantine rite who pressed for the use of the vernacular in the liturgy raised administrative and pastoral objections from the point of view of the Catholic Church as a whole, which is in majority Latin. We will try to make these objections clear.

In conclusion, it will be helpful to submit the recent decision of the Holy Office to a close study. It seems to us that we should with due respect make one or two reservations from a liturgical as well as from a pastoral and canonical point of view. But we will also suggest a number of disciplinary measures, indispensable in our view if we are to avoid many abuses in the application of this important decision, destined to have considerable influence on the life of the Church, even in the West.

The new "dispute about tongues"

As far as we are concerned, the history of this episode starts in December 1959. The Apostolic Delegate to the United States, quoting instructions from the Holy See, asked the bishops of that country, or at least some of them, to prevent the priests of the Eastern rite in their respective dioceses from making even partial use of English in their liturgical celebrations.

In a letter to the Bishop of Birmingham (Alabama)⁵, for example, he wrote: "I have received instructions from the Holy See to prevent the celebration of the Holy Mass in English, partially or totally, and the instruction applies wherever this custom has been introduced. Priests of the

⁵ This passage is reproduced by Mgr. T. J. Toolen, Archbishop-Bishop of Mobile-Birmingham, Alabama, in his letter to Father Joseph Raya, dated 14th December, 1959.

Eastern rite are certainly permitted to celebrate divine office in the Eastern language of their respective rite, even when in the West, but they must avoid causing confusion by introducing a vernacular tongue into the Mass, since by so doing they provide an opportunity for those in favour of the abandonment of Latin in the holy liturgy to quote as an example and precedent what these Eastern priests are doing among them."

One Greek Catholic priest was particularly affected by these measures. He was Father Joseph Raya, parish priest of St. George's, Birmingham (Alabama), who was ordered by his bishop to stop immediately all use of English in the Mass. Father Raya is well known as an advocate of the use of English in the Byzantine liturgy in the United States. He is the author together with Baron José de Vinck of a remarkable Byzantine Missal, published by Desclée in 1958. This book met with a warm reception in all Byzantine circles as well as among those in Great Britain and America interested in the East. In his parish, Mass was said or sung entirely in English and this not only attracted the younger people who no longer knew Arabic but was also beginning to make an impression on Protestants of all kinds, drawn towards Eastern Catholicism because of these celebrations in the vernacular. Father Raya was the first to write to the Apostolic Delegate in the United States to explain the Eastern church's attitude. In his reply, the Apostolic Delegate insisted on the instructions he had given and maintained that use of the Eastern language of origin would do far more to preserve the Byzantine rite than the introduction of English into the liturgy.⁶ Nevertheless, as a special favour, Father Raya was given three months in which to return gradually to the exclusive use of Arabic and Greek. In the meantime, under the orders of his patri-

⁶ The letter from the Apostolic Delegate in Washington to Father Joseph Raya, 22nd January, 1960.

arch, Father Raya had ceased intervening personally and put the matter in the hands of the patriarchal authorities. The patriarchate had already set about gathering the relevant legal and historical information in order to submit the matter to the supreme jurisdiction of the Holy Father.

Questioned on the subject, the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church had replied⁷ that certain restrictive norms had been given on this question by the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office to the Apostolic Delegate in the United States. But, in spite of many attempts, it was impossible to obtain the actual text of these instructions of the Holy Office. They are, in fact, rather mysterious, for on the one hand the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church⁸ declared that the Holy Office had delegated entire competence in matters relating to the use of the vernacular and allied questions to itself, and that it was therefore to the Congregation for the Eastern Church that the whole of this subject must be referred. On the other hand the Sacred Congregation declared a little later⁹ that the steps taken by the Holy Office "were not exclusively addressed to the Melkite church or to the Eastern churches . . . but concerned even Latins, wherever they might be", and that these measures were under examination.

Contemporary historians are unlikely to succeed in elucidating the affair completely, but at least we know that the Catholic patriarch took the initiative of bringing the matter to the notice of the Holy Father and of outlining the basis of the Byzantine discipline. He also recalled the previous attitude of the Holy See on the subject, explained the spiritual advantages of the Eastern practice and replied to objections that might be raised to the continuance of it.

The patriarch's letter was dated 5th February, 1960. On the following 31st March, the Holy Office came to the

⁷ Letter to the Melchite Patriarch, 7th January, 1960.

⁸ Letter to the Melchite Patriarch, 13th January, 1960.

⁹ Letter to the Melchite Patriarch, 28th March, 1960.

important decision quoted above. Thanks to the warm affection of Pope John XXIII and the understanding attitude of the Holy Office, and also, it should be said, to the quick and confident intervention of the Greek Catholic patriarch, this new "dispute about tongues" had lasted only two months. It was ended by the solemn recognition of the Eastern usage.

The Eastern Usage

It is a fact admitted by all historians that the Eastern rites, and particularly the Byzantine, which is a universal and supranational rite, have in principle always and everywhere been celebrated in a language understood by the people.

This liturgical use of different national languages in the East is due not to heresies or schism, as some wrongly assert, but to the entirely logical principle that since the liturgy is a communal act of worship, no public celebration should be held in a language not understood by the people. A crowd is not united by addressing it or having it speak in an unknown tongue. The Eastern church has celebrated the liturgy in the language of the people just as it has always been ready to translate the scriptures into the language of the people. God revealed the Holy Books and the Church instituted its liturgy so that people might understand them and have direct and live access to them. This has been the universal and unchanging view in the East. The point applies even more strongly to the Byzantine liturgy which is, in its very constitution, a continuous dialogue between the clergy and the people. The people cannot take their part unless the liturgy is celebrated in a language they understand. "If thou dost pronounce a blessing in this spiritual fashion (i. e. speaking an unknown language), how can one who takes his place among the uninstructed say Amen to thy thanksgiving?"

He cannot tell what thou art saying. Thou, true enough, art duly giving thanks, but the other's faith is not strengthened . . . but in the church I would rather speak five words which my mind utters, for your instruction, than ten thousand in a strange tongue."¹⁰

All the arguments in favour of the opposite view yield, it seems to us, before the apostle's common-sense reasoning.

We must also remember that as far as Eastern law is concerned, and Byzantine law in particular, no provision of the natural law, of positive divine law or church law restricts the use of living languages in the liturgy.

In fact, the Christian East has always celebrated the liturgy in as many languages as it has conquered peoples for Christ. Up to the thirteenth century these included Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Geez, Old Slavonic and Arabic.

When the Eastern missionaries extended the reign of Christ beyond their own countries, they never hesitated to adopt the language of the people they were evangelizing, both for the liturgy and for Holy Scripture. It was in this way that, besides the eight languages mentioned, Persian, Chinese, Turkish and later Rumanian were brought into liturgical use.

Applying the same principle, the Orthodox Church began to celebrate in Chinese, Japanese and Korean in the last century and celebrates today in Ukrainian, Albanian, modern Russian, the provincial Russian dialects, English, French, Italian, German etc.

In the same way, Byzantine Catholic priests serving emigrant congregations, who tend to forget their original language, have gradually come to celebrate in the languages of their countries of residence in French, English, Spanish, Portuguese. It never occurred to them that any given language should not be allowed to serve for the public praise of God and the edification of the faithful.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. 14:16—19.

This uninterrupted tradition of Eastern Christians, whether Catholic or Orthodox, has inspired the principle which provides the foundation of the unchallenged Byzantine discipline. Among those who formulated this principle was the celebrated Byzantine canonist of the twelfth century, Theodore Balsamon. He was asked by the canonist Mark, Patriarch of Alexandria, whether it was permissible for Orthodox Armenian and Syrian priests in Egypt who did not know Greek to celebrate in their own national languages. Balsamon replied: "Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles too?" (Rom. 3:29) Those who are Orthodox in everything but are completely ignorant of the Greek language may celebrate in their own language, provided they have faithful renderings of the customary prayers translated from clearly written Greek rolls."¹¹ We may conclude from this that the centuries' old usage as well as the written code of the Byzantine church recognize unreservedly the use of all languages in the liturgical celebration.

The Roman Attitude

It should first of all be noted that Latin was not always the liturgical language within the Roman Church. It was no doubt in order to fulfil the spiritual needs of Romans that it finally replaced Greek during the third century.

It is also relevant that in the ninth century Pope John VIII had to intervene to recognize the legitimacy of the use of the Slav language, even, it appears, in the Roman liturgy. This had been strongly contested by German bishops and gave rise to the famous dispute over languages in which St. Cyril and St. Methodius were at the same time champions and victims. In the same order of ideas, we might mention that Rome looked favourably on

¹¹ P. G., t. 138, Col. 957.

versions of certain of her liturgical books in Croat and Albanian and that the seventeenth century pope Urban VIII, showed an equally liberal attitude concerning Persian and Slav.

These are precedents that Western advocates of the use of the vernacular in the liturgy can well cite. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, the Holy See adopted a generally passive attitude on this point as far as the East was concerned. It allowed each Eastern church to apply its own discipline and, although aware of the Eastern custom which was the opposite of that in the West, did not intervene either to permit, approve or blame.

Each time an Eastern group sought to restore unity with the Holy See, it was granted its own discipline and the use of its own liturgical language. It is also clear that the restrictive decisions of the Council of Trent¹² do not apply to the East. In fact, the popes never applied them in the strict letter.

The first Roman reaction did not come until 1896. In that year, the Holy Office intervened to forbid the liturgical use of Hungarian by Eastern Christians in the diocese of Hajdudorog. But this temporary exception in the attitude of the Holy See had a number of causes, largely political, and they are too complex to be examined here. The decision, moreover, remained without effect, in spite of seven successive condemnations, and since 1922 the Holy See has not renewed it. In 1929, it even tacitly abrogated it, as we shall see, and recently, with the disappearance of political pressures due to the existence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it has consciously and willingly allowed celebration in Hungarian to increase. Thus the Holy See returned to its wise and customary attitude of permitting Eastern Catholics to celebrate in their own living languages, whatever these might be. The interven-

¹² Session XXII, ch. VIII and Can. 9.

tion of the Holy See on 2nd September, 1896, inspired by largely political motives, had been unfortunate and was the cause of considerable trouble to the Holy See itself, right up to its tacit withdrawal.¹³

When the question of the liturgical use of Estonian was referred to the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, Pius XI, in his rescript of 2nd February, 1929, not only approved the use of this language for priests of the Byzantine rite but added a *mens* which provided a significant indication of his own broadminded attitude. The Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church had decided "that priests of the Byzantine rite should be entitled to the use of the Estonian language in the celebration of the sacred Liturgy". Pius XI personally added that "this must not be understood as a restriction of principle in the faculty that the Easterners have of using in the liturgy those languages that are best adapted to the greater good of the faithful, if the Holy See approved their use". On the precise point whether on request a priest should be allowed the use of Estonian, Pius XI not only gave the necessary authorization but added that the grant could be used as a precedent in similar cases.¹⁴

In harmony with the spirit thus shown by Pius XI and with the attitude of the Congregation of the Eastern Church, the Melkite patriarchal authority countenanced the adoption by its priests in America and elsewhere of a gradually increasing use in the liturgy of English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, according to the needs of the community concerned. Eventually these languages were used more or less exclusively. After close examination the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church decided to raise no objection, preferring to take account of current developments rather than to intervene by decrees.

¹³ For details see C. Korolevsky, *Living Languages in Catholic Worship* (London & New York, 1957) pp. 23—45.

¹⁴ C. Korolevsky op. cit., p. 54.

Advantages of the Eastern Practice

The Eastern custom of celebrating the liturgy in the vernacular according to need has spiritual advantages which it might be worth-while to enumerate:

1. As we have already said, the structure of the Byzantine liturgy requires celebration in the language of the people. It is a continuous dialogue between the celebrant and the congregation, a living drama, a gathering of the people. If it is celebrated in an unknown language it loses its special character. To impose upon the Byzantines a practice so contrary to their rite would amount simply to "latinization", unreasonable as well as harmful.

2. Eastern Christians owe the preservation of their faith in face of twelve centuries of Moslem domination largely to the fact that the liturgy was celebrated in a language understood by the people and provided a living instruction for them.

3. "It is undeniable that on this point, as on a number of others, the Eastern discipline is less restrictive than that of the West and better adapted to the needs of the people. Not the least of the further advantages of this less restrictive approach is the fact that, while the West has been inundated by extra-liturgical "devotions" which have ended by putting the people further out of touch with the Church's public worship and transforming the liturgy into a kind of clerical speciality, the East has never felt the need for these devotions: for all its services take a liturgical form and if it be desired to adopt some modern practice, this is bound to be done in the style and terminology of the local rite. We are now becoming increasingly aware of this principle, but it must be admitted that in the past, and up to very near our own time, Catholics have ignored it, and brought about a state of things that is in need of reform."¹⁵

¹⁵ C. Korolevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

4. Celebration in a living language represents the only means of survival and development for our Christian emigrants. As long as they understand their original language, we continue to celebrate the liturgy in it, but the younger generations gradually drop their Eastern tongue and come to speak hardly anything but the language of their adopted country. Should we continue, for instance, to celebrate in Arabic among members of the faithful for whom Arabic has become as foreign as Latin? We should then have to ask ourselves why these people are expected to remain in the Eastern rite at all. Why should they not join the Latin rite? If they are forbidden celebration in a living language there is a possibility that they will go over either to Orthodoxy or to the Latin rite. Moreover, it is not a bad thing that members of the Latin rite should use our churches, provided they can pray better there; and that Protestants should become Eastern Catholics if our churches attract them to Catholicism. The Church is not restricted to one language or race and could not do otherwise than welcome this development. The apostolate open to all remains vast, and we shall never "orientalize" as many of the Westerners as they have latinized of our own people.

5. Wherever our priests have begun celebrating in the vernacular, our communities have won the most favour and exercised the greatest spiritual influence. But where the language of the people has for diverse reasons been excluded, the young have left the churches of their rite.

6. Celebrations in the vernacular, like differences of rite, provide an impressive illustration of the catholicity of the Church. It should be unnecessary to stress that uniformity is not universalism and that the Church is all the more catholic when it is open to different practices, linked by being one in faith, worship, spirit and truth.

7. We ought, therefore, to respect the true Byzantine discipline on this point even more than on others. It is obviously unhelpful to add to the differences between

ourselves and our Orthodox brethren, particularly if the further difference is to the disadvantage of the Catholic Church and is, from our point of view, a retrograde step. At the time of an ecumenical council, when all our efforts are directed towards bridging the gap, it seems particularly unprofitable to take steps likely to widen it. We owe it to Christ and the Church to avoid the example of those Catholics who are too much at ease in their Catholicism to feel the need for unity. Once people become more open-minded on this question, the whole of christendom will bless us for having adopted this attitude.

8. Lastly, we know that for some time the Holy See has allowed parts of the Latin world to use the vernacular in some liturgical offices. This recent and beneficial practice is establishing itself slowly but surely. To forbid Eastern Christians in the West all liturgical use of the vernacular is to deprive them of a privilege granted partially at least to the Latins themselves.

Objections and Replies

Practical objections may be raised to these points and it is worth while replying to them.

1. The example of other Eastern Catholics – Copts, Armenians, Maronites, Syrians, and so on – can be cited. Why do they generally not ask for celebration in the vernacular? This, it will be remembered, was the argument used by the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. The Eastern tradition must be presumed to be uniform. The reply is simple. The churches mentioned are, so to speak, national. The national language seems to them an essential part of their existence. The Byzantine church, on the other hand, is clearly supra-national, established among many different peoples and called upon to spread even more widely. No one language is essential to it because the

Byzantine rite is used in a large number of languages and can embrace any new language.

It should also be added that the recent and strongly latinized discipline of the other Eastern Catholic communities prevents them from returning to true Eastern custom on this point as on many others and will continue to do so until they have reacted against this tendency.

Thus, the Maronite synod of Mount Lebanon¹⁶, held in 1736 and approved by Pope Benedict XIV *in forma specifica*, opened by outlining the well known dispositions of the Council of Trent and added¹⁷ that the centuries' old custom of Christian communities in the East of chanting and reciting certain parts in the language of the people – i. e. Arabic – should be maintained. Even so, the use of Arabic was only partially tolerated and was subject to a number of conditions. The synod ended by pronouncing, in the same words as the Council of Trent, anathema against those who maintained that divine office and the Mass were to be celebrated only in the vernacular.

The attitude of the Lebanese synod was adopted almost as it stood by the Syrian Catholic synod of Sharfeh held in 1888¹⁸, by the Coptic synod of Cairo in 1898¹⁹, and by the plenary Armenian council in Rome in 1911²⁰. This last gathering was the most latinizing of all.

But the Byzantine church would feel it a betrayal to adopt the attitude of these synods, often Eastern only in name. Even these national churches, too, are now showing a strong tendency towards the unconditional use of the vernacular.

¹⁶ Part II, Chap. XIII, No. 11 (Coll. Lacensis, II, Coll. 216).

¹⁷ *Permittimus et concedimus*. Note *concedimus* is again used in the recent decision of the Holy Office in spite of the fundamental mistake involved, cf. below.

¹⁸ Chap. III, Art. 2 (Roman edition of 1896, pp. 35–6).

¹⁹ Section II, Art. 2, No. 3 (Roman edition of 1899, p. 52).

²⁰ Canons 629 to 633 (Roman edition of 1913, pp. 304–5).

2. The example of the Greek Orthodox of America who prefer Greek to English can be quoted on the other side. The answer to this objection, however, is that some of the Greek Orthodox hierarchs of America hold to Greek not out of loyalty to the Byzantine discipline but for national reasons. The liturgical language is, in their view, an important link with the mother country, helping to preserve the ethnic group. This consideration does not apply to us.

Moreover, the Orthodox communities, such as the Arab-speaking group, the Russians, the Ukrainians, the Rumanians and the Bulgarians, do not hesitate to use new vernacular languages whenever their members no longer understand the national language. Greek priests themselves, running counter to the instructions of their hierarchical superiors, are more and more ready to follow the example of the others, urged by the spiritual needs of the faithful, which cannot indefinitely be subordinated to national considerations.

3. It is claimed that the use by Eastern Catholics of a living Western language creates "confusion" among Latins in the same country who are lacking what is regarded as this "privilege". We cannot see why there should in practice be any confusion since the positions are clearly defined. Whatever confusion there may be, it exists only in the minds of those who have failed, or do not want, to understand why the Catholic Church contains other rites besides the Latin. As long as they continue to misunderstand they will no doubt go on claiming the existence of confusion. They would like the term Catholic Church to be synonymous with a Latin church. Unfortunately, we cannot oblige them without abandoning the very conception of catholicity. The Latin church is, after all, a branch of the Catholic Church and there are other branches equally Catholic. The Eastern custom is not in any sense a privilege. It is a right belonging to the East and is neither an exception nor a concession. When we use a vernacular

language in the liturgy, we are availing ourselves of a right recognized as ours by the Western church. Our Orthodox brethren, of whom there are many in America, freely employ English. Our habits and liturgical customs are the same as theirs and our catholicity should neither be nor appear to be less than theirs. During the reign of Pius X, when the Ruthenians in the United States were forbidden to follow their custom of confirmation given by the priest at the time of baptism, this produced a schism which has lasted to our own day and it was found necessary to restore the right after spiritual damage had been done.

4. Some people assert that the use of a living language by Eastern Christians scandalizes the Latins. We are certain, on the contrary, that when the Latins take part in our liturgical celebrations in a living language understood by themselves, far from being scandalized, they thank God and are greatly edified. There is so little scandal involved that they are anxious for only one thing – to be able to do likewise.

5. It is also said that the Eastern custom of using a living language creates jealousy among Latins that the Eastern liturgies attract more people, that parish priests of the Latin rite are annoyed and that some Latin bishops look unfavourably on the spiritual prosperity of the Eastern Catholic minorities.

To that there is no reply. The objectors are right, but we can do nothing about it, and it is not a reason for depriving us of our own advantages. They should remember, in the meantime, that they have many "privileges" that are considerably more annoying for us. In particular, they have their own hierarchies everywhere, which protect them even when they are in a tiny minority, whereas Eastern Catholics are often deprived of their own bishops. This new disturbance over languages would not have taken place if the Catholic Byzantines had had their own hierarchy in each place, like the faithful of the Latin rite.

The New Decision

Notwithstanding all these objections and the fact that it had taken the opposite view a few months before, the Holy Office has now officially recognized the use of all languages in the celebration of the Byzantine liturgy.

This is an event of the greatest importance and is the first official act whereby the Holy See has explicitly recognized the legitimacy of the Byzantine custom. The decision is in harmony with the general attitude of the Holy See, but the decision of the Holy Office officially confirms it and ends all doubts on the matter, preventing opposition from any other Roman body or from the Latin hierarchy in the countries in which there is an Eastern Christian emigration. These hierarchies will, in fact, accept a decision from the Holy Office more readily than arguments advanced by Eastern canonists.

By vernacular must be understood all spoken languages without exception and without prejudice to more or less dead languages still used. This amounts therefore to saying that in the Byzantine rite all languages are liturgical. It is necessary to exclude only certain dialects insufficiently formed or widespread for their liturgical use to be appropriate.

The decision of the Holy Office concerns only the Byzantine rite. In principle, therefore, all other Eastern rites are still governed by their present legislation and customs. We believe, nevertheless, that nothing in their true discipline would hinder the application of the measures decided upon by the Holy Office. This stage would quickly be reached were it not for the perhaps excessively national character of their communities, the smallness of their emigrant groups and, particularly, the disinclination of the older clergy to celebrate in modern languages.

Within the Byzantine rite, the decision of the Holy Office applies directly only to the Mass but it is clearly

applicable to the liturgy in general, including therefore the Divine Office, the administration of the sacraments and other blessings. The greater must be understood to include the lesser, for the principle is strictly the same. There is no reason for excepting the other parts of divine worship from the general rule. In our view, the Holy Office decision should therefore be interpreted as recognizing purely and simply the use of all languages in Byzantine liturgical prayer.

A number of further obscurities in the text seem to make emphasis on this point all the more necessary and with all respect we would like to indicate where there is ambiguity:

1. Instead of the words "Si concede l'uso della lingua volgare . . ." (the use of the vernacular is conceded), we should have liked to see the more strictly accurate form of words. "Si riconosce l'uso . . ." (. . . is recognized) or "Si approva l'uso" . . . (is approved of). For, as we have said, it is not a question of a concession or a privilege, more or less tolerated, but of the recognition of a perfectly legitimate discipline in force for many centuries.

2. In the Byzantine rite the anaphora properly so called does not start, as the Holy Office text indicates, with "Lift up your hearts" but with the invitation by the deacon which follows: "Let us stand aright, let us stand in awe. Let us be attentive to make the holy offering in peace."

3. Nor does the anaphora finish with the *per (omnia) saecula saeculorum* (there is no need for the *omnia*) as in the Latin canon but with the blessing by the celebrant which follows: "And may the mercies of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all."

4. The decision describes the commemorations of the Blessed Virgin and the Supreme Pontiff as interpolations. In fact, however, it would be more precise to say that the interpolations consist, not in these two commemorations in

general, but in the hymn to our Lady and in the fact that the celebrant is required to commemorate the Supreme Pontiff (and the Patriarch).

5. In granting that these two interpolations should be said in the vernacular, the decision claims to base itself on "very ancient tradition". The tradition on this point is, however, the same as for all parts of the liturgy. What the "very ancient tradition" did was to bring these two interpolations into liturgical use. These may be mere errors of detail, but they would have been easily avoided had this matter been left to the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, which is canonically competent and better informed on the subject. What seems to us more serious is that the decision of the Holy Office has introduced into the Byzantine rite a regrettable liturgical hybridism.

This consists in the exception made for the anaphora whose celebration in the vernacular is forbidden. If the Byzantine discipline admits celebration in every language, we fail to see why this part of the holy liturgy should be made an exception. Our Orthodox brothers will be shocked and will allege westernization. They will be right. This exception supposes that the foundation of the Byzantine rite is the anaphora in a Greek that must not be changed, like the Latin of the Roman canon. But this is not at all the case. We use Arabic in the anaphora as in the rest of the liturgy. Can the languages of Bossuet, Dante, St. John of the Cross, Newman and Peter Canisius be considered less sacred than the language of the Koran?

Rome has so far made the same reservation in regard to the Roman rite in governing the use of the vernacular in the administration of the sacraments. In doing so, she has in mind the essential part of the rite, and particularly what scholastic theology terms the form of the sacrament.

We can accept that the West should be particularly anxious about the strict accuracy of this form and agree that accuracy is most fully guaranteed by the use of the

traditional liturgical language. All we are really entitled to conclude from this, however, is the need for a translation carefully checked by competent authority.

From a theological and pastoral point of view, on the other hand, there is a definite and serious illogicality in requiring that the form in which the meaning of the sacrament is expressed should be recited in a language of which the faithful receiving the sacrament are ignorant. There seems to us an underlying contradiction here, if not with the nature of the sacrament as the Protestant reformers maintained, at least with the logical implications of the liturgy.

It will not be surprising if this exception tends to disappear even though the patriarchal communiqué refrains from pressing the point (Cf. POC., 1960, p. 134). Many priests will find it aesthetically objectionable that, after starting the dialogue of the anaphora in a living language, they should take it up, again without transition, in a dead language in order to recommend the people to "lift up their hearts", and should then continue with the commemorations of the Blessed Virgin and the hierarchy in a living language, ending in a dead language. This fourfold change of language in the space of five minutes is rather shocking.

These considerations all suggest that the reservation maintained in the Roman decisions will be merely transitional, giving way to a full recognition of the liturgical use of all languages, under the control of the ecclesiastical authority. Logic and suitability demand it. We understand, nevertheless, that in the present situation it is difficult to obtain more than we have done and it would be ungracious on our part to insist further.

Some Suggestions

The latest decision of the Holy Office requires the addition of a number of practical measures, if abuses are to be

avoided in this particularly delicate field and maximum spiritual advantages derived from the official recognition of the Eastern tradition. We respectfully suggest the following:

1. Clearly, the ecclesiastical authority alone is competent to decide in a given area whether the particular living language is to be introduced into the liturgy or not. If the decision were left to the discretion of each celebrant, scandal would certainly arise. In the same church and for the same congregation, one celebrant might wish to continue with the ancient language while another might adopt a modern language. This does not mean that it would be necessary to decree the outright introduction of a modern language. The process could and should take place progressively, according to the needs of each group. It is a question of gradation which must be left to the local ecclesiastical authority. Similarly, it would be shocking, for instance, to see some priests celebrating, for example, in French or English, in countries where Arabic is spoken, simply out of a whim or to satisfy the snobbery of some of the faithful. The decision relating to the place where the vernacular is to be introduced must therefore also depend on ecclesiastical authority.

2. The use of new languages in the liturgy presupposes an authentic translation. While anyone may freely make his own translation of a liturgical text he has no right to impose it or use it officially for liturgical purposes. The ecclesiastical authority is alone competent to decide on the accuracy of a translation and approve its liturgical use.

3. In principle, there is nothing against each Byzantine church having its own translation, in conformity with its customs. But there would obviously be great practical advantages in a single version for the use of all Byzantine churches, without, however, eliminating variants or particular customs in each of the churches.

4. These versions should be as full as possible. In the past, we have too often been satisfied with translations restricted to the common parts of the Mass. This has tended to encourage an already too wide tendency among Eastern Catholics to neglect the proper (the parts which vary according to the liturgical season).

5. To which ecclesiastical authority can control of the vernacular in the Byzantine liturgy best be entrusted? A distinction is necessary. It is obviously the local authority that must authorize the use of a living language in a particular place, because it is better informed and has ultimate responsibility. In a patriarchate, the authority concerned should be that of the patriarch and the bishops. Outside the territory of the patriarchate itself, it is still the patriarch who seems to be the best placed to exercise this right, in so far as it concerns the faithful of his Church. The local Latin authorities generally either lack the capacity, are careless about the matter, or are hostile. It is the patriarch also who is normally informed of the need of a given community to change to a new liturgical language. He alone is able to graduate the introduction of it so that it does not cause disturbance. Canon law does not entrust him in vain with the protection of his rite. In those Byzantine churches which have no supra-episcopal organization, the right would fall on each bishop in his eparchy.

To make the necessary translations, we would propose the formation of an inter-Byzantine commission working for preference on the spot – for instance, in America for English, in France for French, and so on. This commission would naturally take advantage of existing versions and would improve on them. The approval of the new versions would be reserved to the patriarch, whether assisted or not by his synod, and in churches without a supra-episcopal authority, the synod of bishops would be responsible. We think that for practical reasons the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church should take the initiative in setting

up the necessary commissions and acting as a liaison between the different Byzantine Catholic churches.

6. From the ecumenical point of view, it would be helpful for new texts in modern languages to be the same for the Orthodox and for Catholics. If there cannot be active cooperation between the two groups within the framework of a single commission, Catholics could at least attempt to bring their own texts as close as possible to those in use among the Orthodox, even if they were not prepared to adopt Orthodox texts as they stood.

Ex Oriente Lux

It is easy to foresee repercussions in the East as well as the West from the Holy See's recent decision. In the East, the Greek Catholic Patriarch's action to obtain the withdrawal of the decision of the Holy Office has had the unexpected effect of rallying round him all the other Byzantine Catholic churches. Though he has no jurisdiction over them, it seems that in critical hours he alone can speak in the name of all and effectively defend the purity of the Byzantine tradition. Apart from the outstanding personal qualities of the present holder of this office, it is the institution of the patriarchate itself that has resumed its rank and traditional rôle in relation to the other Byzantine communities and to the Catholic Church itself.²¹ One of the great mistakes in the recent codification of Eastern canon law was the failure to establish contact with the Eastern Catholic churches, particularly those

²¹ St. Gregory the Great made to Anastasius of Antioch and to Eulogius of Alexandria the following admirable suggestion amounting to a complete programme in itself: "Oportet ergo ut constanter, ac sine praejudicio, servetis, sicut accepistis, Ecclesias... . State fortes, state securi... ut universa vos Ecclesia patriarchas, non solum in bonis operibus, sed etiam in veritatis auctoritate, cognoscat" (P. G., t. 77, Col. 774).

having a common rite such as the Byzantine churches. The need to defend their common spiritual interests has led to the adumbration of what the codifiers neglected or avoided doing. The need is beginning to be felt for a kind of Byzantine association, entrusted with promoting common interests, particularly liturgical, but extending eventually into the fields of charitable assistance and pastoral interchange among the clergy of the different churches of the Byzantine rite. In any case, if our suggestions are accepted, the churches will be able to celebrate in the *diaspora* according to a single pattern and liturgical unity will necessarily promote greater cooperation in all other spheres.

It is reasonable to predict that in the East itself the other churches of Eastern rite will not be long in obtaining a revision of their present disciplines, permitting them to celebrate in as many living languages as the needs of their dispersed congregations require.

As for the West, the recent declarations of Pope John XXIII and all the tendencies of the liturgical movement in recent years suggest that the Eastern discipline on this point may gradually come to be adopted.

Our example will have been a happy precedent and once more light will have come from the East.

6

Concerns of the Eastern Church

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Concerns of the Eastern Church¹

BY PATRIARCH MAXIMOS IV SAYEGH

Communicatio in Sacris

THERE should, in my view, be some mitigation of the discipline hitherto in force on the important and delicate matter of *communicatio in sacris* in so far as it relates to our Orthodox brethren.

We should undoubtedly give them a special canonical status. I should equally like the rule governing our attitude to our brethren in the various churches arising from the Protestant Reform to be less strictly applied, but it is right that there should be an even greater relaxation in favour of the Orthodox. They share our faith, have our sacraments and a divinely instituted hierarchy. The sources of their faith are the same as our own, namely, Holy Scripture and the tradition of the Church. In their case, the question is one of reconciliation rather than conversion

¹ These notes on a number of religious topics, written in a wide variety of circumstances, have been selected from the archives of the Melkite patriarchate. Their confidential character necessitates the omission of dates and names of correspondents.

properly so called. The best way to seek reconciliation with a brother in a family quarrel in which the blame is shared is surely to make as many contacts as possible.)

Secondly, while being careful to preserve the theoretical distinction between formal and material dissidence, we should not assume, as has so often been done up to now, that every non-Catholic is a formal heretic or schismatic until there is proof to the contrary. An objective and psychological understanding of the spiritual outlook of our separated brethren would on the contrary lead us to assume their absolute good faith, and recognize that bad faith is a very rare exception. There should thus be a change of perspective and the Church's rules should be based not on the presumption that they are formal dissidents until the contrary is proved, but on the opposite one that they are material dissidents – that is to say, in good faith.

Thirdly, it should be observed that when a heresy or schism is born in the Church the responsible authorities take severe emergency action to nip it in the bud and protect those weak in faith. However, little by little a concrete situation develops. Christians are born within the division without it being in any way their fault. The Church does not treat the two cases in the same way. It is severe when the heresy or schism starts, but less severe once the division is established, lest excessive severity should, as the Fathers of the Church have told us, drive away the sheep that have been lost.

This explains why the attitude of the Church to *communicatio in sacris* in relation to non-Catholics of good faith has not remained constant.

Changes in the Church's discipline on this point also illustrate that the prohibition of religious intercommunion with non-Catholics of good faith is a matter not of divine law but of church law and is therefore susceptible of change in accordance with the prudent opinion of the

pastors of the Church and with changing circumstances of time and place.

┌ The present situation seems to require a redoubling of charity, particularly towards our Eastern Orthodox brothers. It is harmful to the work of union to treat them in the same way as other Christians who do not share our faith to the same degree.

Such an attitude would be neither a weakness nor a compromise on the part of the Catholic Church. Nor would it lead to any reduction in our prestige. It seems to me, on the contrary, that in these efforts to reach a better understanding, the Church that has received from God the greatest share of enlightenment and charity and feels itself firmest in the faith should be the one to make the first step.

The dangers of religious indifference, of introducing error, and of scandal should not be exaggerated, though they certainly exist. It is the function of the Church's pastors to decide in practice how far restrictions can be relaxed, who can safely be allowed to enter into contact with our separated brethren and who must be forbidden to do so. It should also not be forgotten that the scandal feared in this case works more often than not in reverse. In other words, Catholics are as frequently scandalized as the Orthodox, not by intercommunion, but by its prohibition, and I say this after long experience.

With the convening of the council, Catholic and Orthodox Christians have come to hope that reunion will result or that at least measures will be taken to bring about better understanding and more practical charity between the different Christian communions. Let us hope that we shall not disappoint those who expect a new approach from us in relations between Christians.

Agreement on the Date of Easter

It is of the utmost importance for Eastern Christians that agreement should be reached between East and West on the date of Easter.

Eastern churches outside the Roman communion did not adopt the calendar reform ordered by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 in so far as it affected the date of Easter and the result is that Western Christians only rarely celebrate with them the "great feast", the memorial of Christ's resurrection, the foundation of our faith and symbol of our unity. According to the ecclesiastical calendar from 1960 to 1975, for instance, we shall have the joy of celebrating Easter together only three times (1960, 1963 and 1974). On four occasions, there will be a difference of thirty-five days (1964, 1967, 1970 and 1975). In the eight remaining years, the difference will be of seven days.

In the West (Europe and America) and in countries in which Christians are primarily Catholics and Protestants – Africa, Asia and the South Seas – the importance of this point is overlooked, but throughout the East, and particularly where there are Orthodox minorities, Christians suffer greatly on religious and social grounds.

In these countries, the different religious communities are not divided into watertight compartments. Many families are mixed, having Catholic and Orthodox branches, and all families have social contacts, friendly and neighbourly relations and business connections to take into account. In the East, Easter has a special importance, not only for Christians but also for their Moslem fellow citizens, who come to congratulate them. There should be some thought for the special pain Christians feel at a time that should really be one of outward and inward joy. They also have to meet the sarcasm of those who remark that while some are celebrating the resurrection, others are celebrating the burial. All are not scholars or sufficiently

educated to realize that this difference of calendar is simply a matter of astronomical calculation. The Moslems see in it one of the incurable weaknesses of a divided Christian religion; ordinary Christians – and they are in the majority – regard it as a sign of the stubbornness of the ecclesiastical authorities. Each year the same complaints are made in many different voices.

In the Arab East, Christians are more than ever feeling the call to unite, at least in externals, while awaiting a more complete and deeper unity. The need for agreement on the date of Easter is so great that when Pope John XXIII announced his intention of calling an ecumenical council, most good Christian people of all communions in the Near East thought the chief task of the Council would be to fix a common date for the great feast of all Christians.

The old League of Nations in Geneva studied many proposals for a reform of the calendar, including some relating to this subject. Among these was one according to which Easter should be fixed on the second Sunday in April. The proposal was accepted in principle by Catholics, Protestants and the Orthodox churches, but after the last war and the consequent political upsets had brought an end to the League of Nations, nothing more was heard of the idea.

Now, when the deep concern for unity felt by all Christians is revealed in the universal joy aroused by the announcement of an ecumenical council, we feel it all the more necessary to seize the opportunity thus offered and to insist as strongly as we can on the importance of this question. Rome and all who belong to the Latin rite must be brought to share the feelings of Eastern Christians of all communions and rites on the deep need for agreement on the date of Easter.

We therefore suggest the creation in Rome of a small commission of specialists to study the technical aspects of

the question and then make the necessary contacts with the Eastern Orthodox churches. Such contacts are essential and must be pursued with perseverance and charity until they succeed.

Adaptation of the Liturgy

We entirely agree in principle on the need to adapt the liturgy to changing conditions of time and place, but as far as the East is concerned two points need special emphasis.

The first is that, for a number of reasons, including the need to avoid any fresh differences with our separated brothers, the Eastern Catholic church must avoid any idea of adapting its rites without prior agreement with the corresponding branches of the Orthodox Church.

Secondly, we must not allow the adaptation of the liturgy to become an obsession. The liturgy, like the inspired writings, has a permanent value apart from the circumstances giving rise to it. Before altering a rite we should make sure that a change is strictly necessary. The liturgy has an impersonal character and also has universality in space and time. It is, as it were, timeless and thus enables us to see the divine aspect of eternity. These thoughts will enable us to understand what at first may seem shocking in some of the prayers of the liturgy – feasts that seem no longer appropriate, antiquated gestures, calls to vengeance which reflect a pre-Christian mentality, anguished cries in the darkness of the night, and so on. It is good to feel oneself thus linked with all the ages of mankind. We pray not only with our contemporaries but with men who have lived in all centuries.

We hope that this reminder of the principle of conservation in the liturgy coming from an Eastern patriarch will temper somewhat the ardour of reformers in both East and West.

A Vernacular Liturgy

Some people would like to restrict the liturgical use of the vernacular to bible reading, the common prayer after the homily (our *ektenes*) and certain paraliturgical hymns. They are willing to go somewhat further in offices other than the Mass.

We are personally very much in favour of a wider use of the vernacular, even in the celebration of the Mass.

Whatever the advantages of Latin as a liturgical language, and they are many, they do not seem to us sufficient to compensate for the irreparable difficulty that Latin is not understood by the great majority of those participating in the sacred act. This being so, we feel that the example of the Eastern church, which resolutely favours the use of a language understood by the people, should serve as a model. Those who enthusiastically defend the almost exclusive use of Latin are, we fear, not always moved by purely pastoral or ecclesiastical considerations. What then are we to say of those who claim Latin to be the language of the Church, forgetting that the Latin church is not the Church but a church in the Church, and that "Latinism" and Catholicism are not the same thing?

Obligatory Attendance at Mass

Those with pastoral responsibilities should impress on their flocks that they must take part in the entire eucharistic sacrifice and not simply in the parts called essential. We should avoid on this point the discouragingly casuistical outlook of those moralists who have divided the Mass into parts of different kinds and of different obligation. It is to be hoped, too, that while the obligation to attend Holy Mass is insisted upon, there will be an avoidance of the terms mortal and venial sin.

Western moralists, from the Middle Ages onwards, have tended to two opposite extremes. They have adopted an excessively juridical outlook, wishing to lay down rigorously the limits of serious sin, and have also shown an excessively casuistical outlook, liable to pervert the moral sense. The Christian ought to be drawn to God otherwise than by the constant threat of serious sin and the censures of the Church, just as he ought to serve God in a more generous spirit than is suggested by these casuistical subtleties.

In Defence of Decentralization

In defending the present-day centralization of ecclesiastical administration, some have sought to base their case on a theological principle, that the pope by right of primacy can freely enlarge or restrict the power of bishops. Expressed thus, without the necessary qualification, the proposition is inaccurate. For the common good, synods, patriarchs and popes can limit to a certain extent the exercise of episcopal power in order to achieve a better coordination of pastoral activity. The pope can also reserve to himself so many "major causes" that the effect is to make the powers of the bishops unconditionally dependent on his will. This makes the bishops simply agents of the pope, having only those functions that the pope wishes to confer upon them.

Historically, a progressive extension of these "major causes" has been one of the main reasons for the excessive centralization about which practically the whole of the Catholic Church is now complaining. Before reserving a major cause to the pope's exclusive jurisdiction, it is necessary to be sure that the reservation is essential for the higher good of the Church and does not arise out of a human desire to centralize for the sake of it. Every

authority – and this applies in the ecclesiastical as well as in other spheres – has a natural tendency to attract to itself as many functions as possible, particularly if any resistance by others is deemed out of order. Nowadays, for the greater good both of the Church and of the Roman institutions themselves, a decentralizing tendency should replace the centralizing tendency which, for certain contingent historical reasons, has prevailed in Rome for centuries.

But, to decentralize it is not sufficient simply to give nuncios and apostolic delegates more ample “faculties”. This tends to place the representatives of the Holy See even more in the position of super-bishops and destroy the whole idea of the episcopate. The representatives of the Holy See must not transform themselves into something like viceroys supervising the activities of governor-bishops, guided from afar by the central organizations. With decentralization we should hope to see a greater internationalization of the Roman curia. The central government of the Church and the representation of the Holy See are in fact at least eighty per cent Italian. The Italians are a charming people, but they are tempted to consider the Holy See and even the Catholic Church as family preserves. Internationalization of the Roman curia would enlarge the horizons of the central government of the Church and allow a wider choice of appointments, bringing about a salutary renewal of administrative outlook and allowing the Church to be seen as truly and effectively universal.

Infallible and non-Infallible Magisterium

Catholic theologians rightly distinguish in the teachings of the Roman Pontiff between the infallible magisterium – *ex cathedra* pronouncements – and the ordinary or non-

infallible magisterium. Great respect is due to the latter: but the truths it proclaims do not, unless guaranteed by some other factor, acquire the status of dogma. When the Holy Father speaks we must keep respectful silence. However, cases may arise, such as that of Galileo, in which, after a time, and particularly after further study of the matter, papal teaching can be reconsidered.

Theologians of one particular school consider that the non-infallible teaching of the Roman Pontiff has the same practical value as the infallible *ex cathedra* teaching. They believe that this non-infallible teaching demands not only respectful silence but interior assent and that a doctrine thus dealt with is no longer open to discussion. We do not agree.

The so-called non-infallible magisterium is, by definition, fallible, i. e. capable of error. The fact that a doctrine is put forward by the highest authority in the Church gives it exceptional importance but still does not make of it a dogma conferring absolute certainty. If these theologians were right, the whole teaching of the popes would be transformed into dogmas and absolute certainties, yet the scope of this teaching has tended, particularly in recent years, to cover almost the whole field of human knowledge.

The extent to which the exceptional authority attaching to papal teaching extends to those who compose the pope's immediate entourage is in need of definition. Someone once remarked humorously that in the Catholic Church today everybody considered himself partially infallible.

It needs also to be pointed out that infallibility does not extend to disciplinary measures taken by central organs of administration, which can easily be based on insufficient information or on human motives.

Finally, while jealously safeguarding the deposit of the faith, we should avoid restricting still further the truths which in our Eastern tradition we know as *theologumena*, that is, theological statements that are not part of the

defined body of faith, the rational discussion of which is the proper function of theology. We must not be afraid to leave the largest field possible open to reasonable theological speculation, ready to intervene should dogma at any time be threatened. Some people behave as though they found everything clear and certain and react violently when others do not share their outlook. Many of the Church's troubles might have been avoided had there been firmness on dogma and truths that are certain and respect for the freedom of theological thought on the rest.

The Source of Episcopal Power

One school of theological thought in the West has been trying for some time to pass off as a dogma expressed through the constant teaching of the Church a theory which we consider to be not only tendentious but also erroneous. It is that the Roman Pontiff is the final source of all power in the Church.

According to this theory, no bishop can be legitimately constituted as a successor of the apostles except by the Roman Pontiff acting directly or indirectly. This, it is asserted, forms part of the divinely instituted law of the Church.

Nobody denies that the Roman Pontiff can establish bishops in the Church, accept their resignation, remove them from office and replace them. Nor is it denied that by a development in the West arising from historical circumstances, the nomination of all bishops is strictly reserved to him and has been reserved for several centuries; but that does not imply that no bishop has ever been appointed, or can be appointed, according to the provisions of divine law itself, except by the Roman Pontiff, acting directly or indirectly through organs (synods and patriarchates) to which he has himself delegated this power.

In reply to such a tendentious theory we would urge the following:

1. Holy Scripture affirms a primacy in favour of Peter over the rest of the apostles and over the whole Church but does not anywhere assert that no bishop can be constituted except by the direct or indirect intervention of Peter and his successors, the bishops of Rome. We even find it explicitly said that the other apostles appointed bishops without referring the matter to Peter. Their disciples, such as Titus and Timothy, acted in the same way. Assuming that we are to understand the text as referring to bishops in the strict sense, does not Holy Scripture tell us that it was the Holy Spirit who made bishops to rule the Church of God (cf. Acts 20:28)? Without doing violence to the texts, it is difficult to find in Scripture any foundation for the idea that a bishop cannot be given jurisdiction over his church except by the direct or indirect intervention of the bishop of Rome, successor of Peter.

2. In tradition, we can, it is true, find some texts favouring this opinion, for example from Pope St. Leo, but we cannot claim that this is the teaching of the majority of the Fathers. There are other ancient and impartial texts affirming the contrary, some Fathers of the Church being opposed to this tendency to excessive development of papal power. We may even assert that, particularly in the East, they constitute a majority. While recognizing the primacy of the Roman Pontiff, they do not admit that he is the source of power and jurisdiction in the Church to such an extent that no bishop can be appointed except by him. Tradition, then, is not on the whole in favour of this extreme view. We are moved here to an observation, which applies to many other extreme tendencies in modern theology. While the West does not advance false texts, it produces only those texts that are favourable to its own views, and, consciously or unconsciously, keeps quiet about

those on the other side, even when they are numerous. An objective study of tradition should take account of all currents and all texts. Against a few texts favourable to the view that the Roman Pontiff is the only and last source of all authority are many others, which either take no account of this theory or assert the contrary. Where then are we to find the true tradition?

3. On this subject the practice of the Church is still our best guide. Even in the West, bishops were not always nominated and invested directly or indirectly by the Roman Pontiffs. During the first nine centuries of the Church's existence, for most of which East and West were united, the popes certainly claimed the right to intervene, particularly when serious dangers threatened the Church. They occasionally nominated or deposed bishops, but the East has never supposed that the popes alone had the power, directly or indirectly, to appoint bishops. When Pope Nicholas I complained to the Patriarch Photius concerning his election without reference to Rome, Photius was able to reply that that had never been the custom of the Church. Pope Nicholas seems to have based his claim in good faith on the false decretals, which were beginning to circulate in the West. We can at least say, then, that for centuries the Church was unaware that the nomination or mandating of bishops in their respective dioceses was the exclusive prerogative of the Roman Pontiff. In our own Melkite church, until a dozen years ago, bishops were nominated in synod, and could be appointed without papal confirmation.

4. Knowing that tradition does not support them, the advocates of this extremist view think they have succeeded in overcoming all objections when they insert the parenthetical "direct or indirect". Thus, if it is proved historically that out of a hundred thousand episcopal elections in the East from the time of the apostles until the middle of the twentieth century, the popes have intervened in

only a hundred cases, some theologians will continue to maintain that the elections were on papal authority, exercised in this case indirectly, by the synods, the patriarch, or in some other way. The popes have not themselves thought of this any more than they thought of giving Eastern priests the power to confirm. Such deductions do not follow from the facts, but twist the facts to suit preconceived theories. One might assert by this method that ordinary priests obtain their canonical mission from the pope, although indirectly through the intermediary of the bishops. Extending the process, one might ask what there is in the Church that does not come from the pope. The excessiveness of these deductions reveals the error of the method and shows the reasoning itself to be defective.

5. Those who share the opinion that we oppose have recourse to another line of argument. They claim that their opinion is a logical deduction from the dogma of the Roman primacy. Since, according to the definition of the first Vatican Council, the pope has ordinary, episcopal and immediate power over pastors and the faithful, the bishops owe their own power over their dioceses to papal mandate. Our reply is that the definition of the first Vatican Council does not in the least say that the pope is the ultimate and sole source of all power within the Church. It is possible to have power over another without being the source of all authority over that person. The two things are distinct, and to jump from one to the other is tantamount to a wish to impose on the Church by underhand means a new dogma which the first Vatican Council in fact refrained from pressing.

The Collegiate Nature of the Episcopate

The Eastern Catholic church wishes to encourage assemblies of the hierarchy in each country and wants them to be recognized as having a real legislative authority. This

would lead to restoring in practice within Catholicism the collegiate character of the episcopate.

The Church is not made up of individuals linked directly to the head, nor of bishops under the immediate and exclusive direction of the pope. It is an organized body, composed not of separate cells and a head, but of organs variously constituted and of different groups each with its respective functions. The bishops are not merely responsible for their own dioceses. In union with their head, the Roman Pontiff, they are responsible also in a collegiate way for the church of their country and even for the Universal Church.

In the East, we must look forward to episcopal conferences and synods on a double plan. First there should be synods of a given church or rite and then synods of the whole of the Catholic episcopate, independent of rite. The bishops belonging to a single rite, who would make up the first group, normally come from more than one country. Members of the second group could with advantage be restricted to a single country. It would also be useful to envisage patriarchal synods between members of different rites.

These gatherings of the whole of the hierarchy of a country should be able to take mandatory decisions, provided they do not run counter to the common law of the Church.

The Power of Bishops

In our view, there should be no question in the Catholic Church of "faculties" granted to bishops, permanently or for a given period. The bishop in his church has, by positive divine law, all the powers necessary to govern his flock, without any limitation. Nevertheless, for sufficient reasons some powers can be reserved to the metro-

politan, the patriarch, the synod, or the Roman Pontiff. It would be better to draw up a list not of "faculties" but of "reservations". Even then, these reservations should be limited to serious cases where the general interest of the Church demands that the bishop should not use the authority he possesses. To reserve to the Holy See or to a special religious order the blessing of ways of the cross, or decisions on the status of monks who have left their enclosures, even though the same faculty can be granted to ordinaries who ask for it, does not show a proper conception of the constitution of the Church. It derives rather from the false idea that the Holy See has all the powers and is alone in having them, though it may at times delegate the use of them as it thinks fit to bishops. Never openly declared yet applied in practice, this concept is inadmissible.

Emigrants of the Eastern Rites

The Holy Roman See not only recognizes the equality of all rites within the Catholic Church but recommends that, where the good of souls requires, special dioceses should be created for faithful of the Eastern rite or that at least they should have their own parish.

There are many difficulties in the way of carrying out this wish of the Holy See, one of which is the opposition of some Latin bishops who refuse to allow the creation of separate dioceses in their territory. The same people nevertheless consider it normal that Latin emigrants in the East, even when very few, should immediately have their own territorial dioceses, as soon as they arrive. Pope Pius IX did not hesitate to restore the patriarchate of Jerusalem for 4,000 faithful of the Latin rite in Palestine, whereas hundreds of thousands of Eastern Christians have no dioceses of their own, particularly in America.

CONCERNS OF THE EASTERN CHURCH

Our Orthodox brethren in that country, being under the jurisdiction of a local hierarchy, have a freedom of action that has enabled them to organize and develop, often to our detriment.

In the meantime, our own emigrant Eastern Christians, deprived of pastors of their own rite, decline in numbers, leave their faith and become prey to atheistic, dissident or communist propaganda. So far the Holy See has held their loyalty by the consideration it has shown them, but we hope that a solution to the problem will not be indefinitely delayed, for it affects the salvation of souls.

Our Orthodox brethren in that country, being under the jurisdiction of a local hierarchy, have a freedom of action that has enabled them to organize and develop, often to our detriment.

In the meantime, our own unorganized Eastern Christians, deprived of pastors of their own and living in numbers, have their faith and hope in Christ and His Church, but their loyalty to the communion is not as strong as it should be. We hope that a solution to this problem will not be indefinitely delayed, for it affects the salvation of souls.