

THE TRUTH IS ONE



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Vladimir Moss



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The Archangel St. Michael
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Cover illustration

Russian icon of the synaxis of the angels (November 8). "With joy let men make spiritually glad with the angels. For Gabriel now announces once more the good tidings of the unity of the church and the laying low of every adverse heresy by the coming of the memorial of the angels" (second canon to the angels, canticle one, Troparion)

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Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is heaven.

Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:21-23

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be My people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

II Corinthians 6:14-18

Behold, I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Apocalypse 3:11

INTRODUCTION

In science, it is generally understood that out of many conflicting hypotheses, only one can be true (or all are false). In art, it is generally recognized that out of many possible drafts of a poem, only one can be true to the poet's feeling (or all are to be rejected). But in religion today we are witnessing a very strange phenomenon: the belief, well-nigh universal among religious people in this (though not in any other) century, that every form of religious consciousness, every kind of belief in God, either approximates to, or expresses part of, the truth.

In science, an error in the theoretical field immediately has practical consequences – serious ones very often, leading to injury or death. In art, inexact expression of feeling in a poem often leads to its relegation to the scrap-heap of time – and continued frustration for the poet. But in religion, say the ecumenists, differences in belief are not important and, if sincerely held with respect for the beliefs of others, have no serious consequences.

This booklet is a humble attempt, with the help of God and through the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to examine the nature, origin and future destiny of ecumenism, the prevailing religious philosophy of our time.

WHAT IS ECUMENISM?

WHAT is ecumenism? Ecumenism is the heresy that there is no such thing as heresy as the Apostles and Fathers of the Church understand that term – that is, a false teaching on a matter of the Faith which estranges those who adhere to it from the unity of the Church. Ecumenism is the heresy that there is no single Faith, whether Orthodox, Papist or Protestant, which expresses the fullness of the truth, and that all existing faiths (except ecumenism itself) are more or less in error. It implies that the One, Undivided Church of Christ has foundered on the reef of sectarian strife, and that she has to be re-founded on the sands of doctrinal compromise and indifference to the truth. It is the tower of Babel rebuilt, a babble of conflicting tongues united only in their insistence that they all speak the same language.

Not that this does not constitute unity of a sort. But it is a false unity, a unity in opposition to the Truth, not in union with Him. For Christ came to bring, not peace – the peace without honour of compromise with error, but a sword – the two-edged sword of the infallible word of God, cutting both to right and left the thorns that hide the light of truth. True unity can only be in the truth – ‘Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth’, said the Word to His disciples (*John* 17:17). But to those who ‘received not the love of the truth, that they should be saved . . . God shall send . . . a strong delusion, they should believe a lie: that all those should be damned who believed not the truth’ (*II Thessalonians* 2:10-12).

For it is indeed a mighty lie that all are in the truth – both he who believes that the Pope is infallible and he who does not, both he who believes that the Eucharist is a mere symbol and he who believes that it is truly the Body and Blood of Christ, both he who believes that Christ’s Second Coming has already taken place (in the hearts of believers) and he who believes that It is a future event bringing the history of the world to an end.

If rationality may be defined as the capacity to achieve objective truth, does not this flight from objectivity and bland acceptance of contradiction signify an extra-ordinary corruption of man’s rational powers? For as Father Basil Sakkas, a priest of the True Orthodox Church in Geneva, has written, whereas ‘until recently, each heresy claimed the truth exclusively for itself’, today ‘things are presented under a completely different light. Truth becomes nothing but a relative matter and, in reality, does not exist; it is necessary to destroy the spiritual faculties which God has given man’ (*The Calendar Question*, Jordanville, N.Y., 1973).

But it was not always so, and in fact has never been so in the True Church of Christ. In order to prove this assertion, I shall first quote several incidents from the lives of the Apostles and early saints which illustrate the Church’s doctrine

and practice with regard to those who attempted to corrupt Her teaching. Then I shall very briefly trace the origins and growth of ecumenism over the last seven centuries or so, before examining a certain key text which ecumenists often quote in their defence.

THE EARLY CHURCH'S TEACHING

In his second epistle, the Apostle John addressed 'the elect lady and her children, who I love in the truth; and not only I, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth's sake' (1, 2), and instructs her: 'Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds' (9, 10).

The Apostle zealously practised his preaching on this point. For in Eusebius' *Church History* we read that he avoided every kind of communion with the heretic Cerinthus, who taught (in common with many twentieth-century heretics) that Christ's Kingdom would be an earthly one. "According to the tradition of Polycarp, the Apostle John once went into a bath-house to wash, but when he knew that Cerinthus was within he leapt out of the place and fled from the door, for he could not stand being even under the same roof with him, and enjoined on those who were with him to do the same, saying, 'Let us flee, lest the bath-house fall in, for Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within'" (III, 28).

From first-century Egypt let us go to fourth-century Egypt. "It was said concerning Abba Agathon that some monks came to find him, having heard about his discernment. Wanting to see if he would lose his temper they said to him, 'Aren't you that Agathon who is said to be a fornicator and a proud man?' 'Yes, it is very true,' he answered. They resumed, 'Aren't you that Agathon who is always talking nonsense?' 'I am.' Again they said, 'Aren't you Agathon the heretic?' But at that point he replied, 'I am not a heretic.' So they asked him, 'Tell us why you accepted everything we cast at you, but repudiated the last insult.' He replied, 'The first accusations I take to myself, for that is good for my soul. But heresy is separation from God. Now I have no wish to be separated from God.' At this saying they were astonished at his discernment and returned, edified." (*Sayings of the Desert Fathers, Alphabetical series*).

From the sands of Egypt to the snows of Scotland – the tradition and the spirit is the same. Thus in the *Life of St. Kentigern (Mungo)*, first bishop of Glasgow in the sixth century, we read that "when the holy man had finished the service and was returning home, there met him among the rest a cleric, a

most eloquent foreigner. The man of God looked at him with burning eye, and asked who he was, and from where he was, and why he had come into these parts. He said that he was a preacher of the truth, and that he had come into these parts for the salvation of souls. But when the saint had conversed with him he convicted him of being intoxicated with the poison of the Pelagian pestilence. Willing therefore that he should rather repent than perish, he warned and reasoned with him to renounce the pernicious sect, but found his heart hardened against conversion. Then the saint ordered him to be expelled from his diocese, and denounced him as the son of death, saying that the death of soul and body was in his gates. He remembered also the saying of the Apostle, 'A man that is an heretic, after the second admonition avoid, knowing that he that is such is subverted' (*Titus* 3:10). The same son of hell, expelled from these borders, departed, and trying to cross a certain river, drowned."

Examples of such zeal for the Faith could be multiplied. At the First Ecumenical Council in 325, the meek St. Nicholas slapped the face of Arius while he was blaspheming against the Divinity of the Son of God, whereupon he was defrocked by the assembled bishops – only to be reinstated the next morning, after the bishops had had a dream in which the Lord and the Mother of God were seen to give the saint the Gospel-book and *omophorion* – symbols of the episcopal rank. Again, when St. Basil the Great was urged to tone down his confession against the heretical emperor Valens, he replied: 'In all other matters we are as meek as lambs; but in matters of the Faith we are lions and roar.' When St. Martin of Tours momentarily ceased to roar and entered into communion only once with a Synod of Bishops of whom he disapproved (for the very understandable reason that, if he did not, the king would have killed a large number of people in Spain), he was told by an angel that he had endangered his salvation; whereupon he suffered a diminution in his power of miraculous healing, and never again attended a Synod of Bishops. More resolute was St. Maximus the Confessor, who, although almost alone, refused to have communion with the Monothelite Patriarchs of the East (and, later, of Rome also), and said of his proposed communion with Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople: 'Even if the whole world enters into communion with him, I shall not.'

But why such extreme zeal, in a matter which even many Orthodox today consider of secondary importance? The answer is given in the *Life* of one of the mildest and most generous men who ever lived, St. John the Almsgiver, Patriarch of Alexandria in the seventh century. "Another thing the blessed man taught and insisted upon with all was never on any occasion whatsoever to associate with heretics and, above all, never to take the Holy Communion with them. 'even if', the blessed man said, 'you remain without communicating all your life, if through stress of circumstances you cannot find a community of the Catholic Church. For if, having legally married a wife in this world of the flesh, we are forbidden by God and by the laws to desert her and be united to another woman, even though we have to spend a long time separated from her in a

distant country, and shall incur punishment if we violate our vows, how then shall we, who have been joined to God through the Orthodox Faith and the Catholic Church – as the Apostle says: “I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ” (*II Cor. 11:2*) – how shall we escape from sharing in that punishment which in the world to come awaits heretics, if we defile the Orthodox and Holy Faith by adulterous communion with heretics?” For ‘communion’ he said, ‘has been so called because he who has ‘communion’ has things in common and agrees with those with whom he has ‘communion’. Therefore I implore you earnestly, children, never to go near the oratories of the heretics in order to communicate there.” (*Three Byzantine Saints*, E. Dawes & N. H. Baynes (eds.), Mowbrays, 1977).

In England, the discipline of the True Church was no different from that prevailing in the East. “If anyone gives communion to a heretic or receives it from his hand . . . he shall do penance for an entire year” (Penitential of St. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury [+ 690]).

Finally, the consistent Tradition of the whole Church, East and West is summed up in St. John of Damascus’ *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*: “With all our strength . . . let us beware lest we receive communion from, or give it to, heretics. ‘Give not what is holy to the dogs’, says the Lord. ‘Neither cast ye your pearls before swine’, lest we become partakers in their dishonour and condemnation”.

THE WESTERN SCHISM

If we now turn to the polar opposite doctrine, ecumenism, we can see its origins in the weakened church consciousness of the West after the West’s falling away from Orthodoxy in the eleventh century, and especially after the Protestant Reformation and the Anglican settlement of the sixteenth century. The first stage in this process has been outlined by Archbishop Ilarion Troitsky: “Truth and salvation are bestowed upon love, i.e., the Church – such is Church consciousness. Latinism, having fallen away from the Church, changed this consciousness and proclaimed: truth is given to the separate person of the Pope, and the Pope manages the salvation of all. Protestantism only objected: Why is truth given to the Pope alone? – and added: truth and salvation are open to each separate individual, independently of the Church. Every individual was thus promoted to the rank of infallible Pope. Protestantism placed a papal tiara on every German professor and, with its countless number of popes, completely destroyed the concept of the Church, substituting faith with the reason of each separate personality.

“It substituted salvation in the Church with a dreamy confidence in salvation through Christ in egoistic isolation from the Church.” (*Christianity or the Church?* Jordanville, N.Y., 1971).

Anglicanism, being a compromise between 'Catholicism' and Protestantism, may be called the first ecumenist experiment; and it exhibits all the features that we have come to associate with ecumenism in the twentieth century. First, its origin was not spiritual, a striving for truth and righteousness, but political, the need to preserve the unity of the secular state and avoid civil war. In the same way, much twentieth century ecumenism – for example, the Moscow Patriarchate's thawing towards the Vatican and entry into the World Council of Churches in 1960 – is dictated by political motives – in the Moscow Patriarchate's case, Soviet foreign policy objectives.¹

Secondly, being a schism from a schism (Papism), and not having returned to the True Body of Christ (the Orthodox Church), Anglicanism is characterised by a very weak sense of the organicity of the Church, and a very vague understanding of the nature of schism and its consequences. Indeed, the one original doctrine of Anglicanism, the notion of 'comprehensiveness', is precisely a denial of the reality of schism, being the bland assertion – in flat contradiction to the unanimous witness of Holy Scripture and Tradition – that the Church somehow 'comprehends' or includes communities which have been out of communion with, and violently hostile to, each other for centuries. Twentieth century ecumenism is simply 'comprehensiveness' writ large – to include, in its most recent manifestations, even non-Christian religions.²

Thirdly, since Anglicanism is such a loose confederation of beliefs in which zeal for the purity of faith is so little prized, it becomes an easy task for the hypocrite who has no real faith in Christ at all to infiltrate himself into its counsels and to subvert the organization to his own ends. Thus it is well-known that the satanic international religious movement known as Freemasonry became established very early on in England (the first lodge was officially opened in London in 1717, though the movement itself has much more ancient roots); and Anglicanism is riddled with Masonry. Similarly, the leaders of twentieth-century ecumenism include a very large proportion of Masons.

The link between classical Anglicanism and full-blown ecumenism was provided by the 'Branch theory of the Church' or 'Puseyism' (as Greek theologians call it after its nineteenth-century exponent, Charles Pusey). This is the theory that the Church has three branches, Anglicanism, Papism and Orthodoxy, and that the schisms of 1054 (between Orthodoxy and Papism) and 1559 (between Papism and Anglicanism) were unfortunate quarrels involving misunderstandings and lack of love on all sides, but nothing so serious as a falling away from the unity of the Church of any of the parties concerned. In its WCC variety, this is the theory that *any* community which calls itself Christian is a branch of the Church.

The Branch theory has an initial plausibility for the unwary in that between any two fallen human beings misunderstandings and lack of love obviously can and do arise; and no individual, be he Apostle, Pope or Patriarch, is immune from the possibility of erring, and erring badly, in this way. The most instructive illustration of this fact (in view of the Papacy's later claims to

infallibility) is St. Peter's behaviour in relation to the Gentile Christians of Antioch, as described in St. Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians*: 'But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all . . . ' (2:11-14).

However, the sequel to this episode is no less instructive. A council was held in Jerusalem, presided over by St. James the Brother of the Lord and first Bishop of Jerusalem, in which St. Paul's teaching on the relationship between the Church and Judaism was endorsed as the true one in the words: 'it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us' (*Acts* 15:28). Thus the Council, though composed without exception of fallible human beings, presumed to speak with the voice of the All-Holy and absolutely Infallible Spirit of God Himself. Is this a contradiction? Not to one who has partaken of the Grace-filled life of the Church, and experienced how the Spirit is constantly leading Her into all truth.

This is not to say that Councils of Bishops never make mistakes – the 'robber council' convened by Dioscurus at Ephesus in 449 is a famous example of a council proclaiming heresy. But when they do there is always a reaction from another part of the Church – 'help and deliverance will come from another quarter,' as Mordecai said to Esther (*Esther* 4:14) – which eventually triumphs and restores the correct confession. Thus the 'robber council' of 449 was corrected by the Fourth Ecumenical Council of 451, in which Dioscurus' teachings were anathematized.

If, on the other hand, there is no reaction, or one not having the effect of removing the heresy, then the Lord's threat to the angel of the Church of Ephesus apply again: 'I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place' (*Apocalypse* 2:5). Thus the *filioque* heresy was publicly approved by the council of Frankfurt in 794. Some of the Roman Popes did react against it (e.g. Leo III and John VIII, whose legates subscribed to the Council convened by St. Photius the Great in 879-80 which anathematized the heresy, and who promised St. Photius that he would see to its removal from his Patriarchate). But the reaction was not sustained, and later Popes – intermittently in the tenth century, constantly from about 1009 – permitted its interpolation into the Creed. Perhaps they saw in it a prop to the theory of the Pope's universal supremacy; for just as the theory that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son destroys the monarchical principle (the Father as the sole Origin) in the Life of the Trinity, so the theory that spirituality proceeds from God *and* the Pope destroys the hierarchical principle (Christ as the sole Chief Shepherd) in the Life of the Church. In any case, the Church in the West lost Her candlestick, in recognition of which Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople anathematized the Pope in 1054. This *anathema* was then

recognized by the whole Orthodox Church in the East, not in response to any special infallibility or holiness on the part of the Patriarch (he is not a canonized saint of the Church), but because the body of the Church, acting as 'the pillar and ground of the truth' (*1 Timothy 3:15*), saw in his act a valid expression of the unchanging Tradition of the Church throughout the ages.³

For nearly 900 years after the schism, both parties were agreed about one thing: that it really was a schism, and that one of them had fallen away from the Church. The only argument was about *which* party that was. As Archbishop Ilarion put it: 'What happened in 1054 was a falling away. Who has fallen away is another question; but someone did fall away. The Church has remained one, but either only in the East or only in the West' (*The Unity of the Church and the World Conference of Christian Communities*, Montreal: the Monastery Press, 1975).

In this period, through a mixture of fraud (the pseudo-Orthodox 'Eastern rite' churches), of diplomacy (the uniate councils of Lyons in 1274 and Florence-Ferrara in 1438-9) and force (the Teutonic Knights' 'crusade' against Novgorod in the thirteenth century and the Jesuit persecution in Russia and the Ukraine in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), the Papacy tried to subdue the Orthodox to itself. But in every crisis the Lord raised up holy confessors and martyrs who helped to save a faithful remnant. Thus at the council of Florence, all the Orthodox bishops signed the false union with Rome except the Metropolitan of Ephesus, Mark. But so great was Mark's spiritual stature and influence that when the Pope saw that his signature was not on the document of the union he said: 'Then we have achieved nothing'. And it was St. Mark who expressed the last word on all such attempts at union through doctrinal compromise: 'It is possible to find a middle word between two views that will denote both. But a middle word between two opposite views concerning the same thing is impossible. . . . There is no room for compromise in matters of the Orthodox Faith.'

In Russia and the Ukraine the resistance against the Teutonic Knights was led by St. Alexander Nevsky, and against the Jesuit torturers by St. Job of Pochaev and Hieromartyr Athanasius of Brest. Later, the struggle spread even to the New World, where in 1812 the holy new martyr Peter the Aleut was tortured to death in a Jesuit prison in San Francisco. But by that time the tide was moving against the papists; for in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries millions of uniates who had been coerced into renouncing Orthodoxy returned to the fold of the True Church in the wake of an easing of pressure from Poland; and in 1870, the very year in which the false dogma of papal infallibility was proclaimed by Vatican I, there was a mass conversion of uniates in the diocese of Kholm, necessitating a special decree of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church on the method of their reception.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY ECUMENISM

Stung, the devil now produced his masterstroke: ecumenism. Having perfected this brew in the distillery of Anglicanism, he introduced it into the body of the Orthodox Church through his chosen servants, the Freemasons. Thus in 1923 a Freemason Patriarch of Constantinople, Meletius Metaxakis, convened a council in which, among other modernist-ecumenist innovations, it was proposed that the Orthodox Church adopt the Western secular calendar for Her liturgical usage in preference to the old one which had been sealed by the decrees of the First Ecumenical Council and sanctified by centuries of worship.

When the proposal was actually put into practice, in 1924, it entrained whole local Churches and millions of people into a disastrous and seemingly permanent schism. Not only the Eastern Patriarchates (except Jerusalem), but also the State Churches of Greece, Cyprus, Romania and Bulgaria have adopted the new calendar, together with the ecumenist philosophy of convergence with the West in matters doctrinal and liturgical. For the new calendar is the thin end of a very fat wedge. Introduced by the Pope into the West in the sixteenth century, it was immediately anathematized by three Great Councils of the Patriarchs of the East, who correctly saw in it a device for dividing the Orthodox, an innovation which would lead to many other innovations, including, ultimately, subjection to the Pope. Indeed, it was only 40 years after the introduction of the new calendar, in 1964, that Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople (like Metaxakis, a Freemason) met in Jerusalem to enact the so-called 'lifting of the anathemas' of 1054.

Not to be outdone by Constantinople, the Patriarchate of Moscow went one step further. This 'Church', though still old calendarist, has been in union with the communists, and therefore outside the communion of the true Church, since 1927.⁴ In 1969, its synod issued an order allowing papists to receive communion in their churches without first renouncing the papist heresy – an act which logically implies that papists are already in the Church and do not have to repent. The man who engineered this move (as also Moscow's entry into the WCC in 1960) was the so-called Metropolitan of Leningrad, Nikodem – a KGB agent in a cassock, according to the testimony of two former agents who have defected to the West. His sudden death in the arms of Pope John Paul I in 1978 was a vivid illustration of the position of apostate world Orthodoxy today – and a clear warning to all the faithful.

What of the True Orthodox during this period? In Russia, the renovationist 'Living Church' was crushed by Patriarch Tikhon, although at one time, when he was in prison and the communists were giving the renovationists all their support, a third of the churches in Russia were in their hands. In Greece, three

metropolitans with their flocks separated from the innovating Hierarchy, choosing 'to go forth unto Him without the camp, hearing His reproach' (*Hebrews 13:13*).

Father Basil Sakkas describes the sequel: "One could write volumes on the subject of the persecutions which the true Orthodox Christians have undergone and undergo to this very day. Nuns were forcibly stripped of their monastic habits at court trials and in the diocesan headquarters of the new calendarists; priests were forcibly defrocked and shaved by policemen in the basements of the Archdiocese headquarters of Athens; churches were closed and the faithful were forced to take refuge in the forests and in caves in order to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. Accompanied by policemen, priests of the State Church entered the churches of the true Orthodox Christians and defiled the sanctuaries, overturned the holy altar tables, and trampled upon the Bread of the Eucharist, the Body of the Lord! Any icons which could not be taken down were chopped away with axes so that, together with the holy chalices and other holy utensils, they could be thrown into police trucks.

'Our churches were demolished or blown up with dynamite. Our bishops and priests hid themselves, running from house to house, even as our Lord said, 'the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests' while these men had not 'where to lay their heads' (*Mat. 8:20*). The monasteries were disbanded, closed, and defamed. Students of theology who followed the traditional calendar were not permitted to receive their diplomas. Marriages and baptisms performed by the clergy of the true Orthodox were not set down in State registers and thus, many children were declared illegitimate, and many widows were not permitted to receive pensions.

'Yet, the attitude of the true Orthodox Christians was heroic. By the thousands, they protested, only to be cudgeled and dispersed by the police. Old men of 90 years were beaten. Nevertheless, they stood outside the locked doors of our churches, and held lighted candles as they stood on the sidewalk. And the old women, not wishing to confuse the House of the Living God with the Mount Gerizim of Innovation, would tell the police: 'Close the church, my son, but whatever you do, it is here and here only that we shall come to worship the God of Truth.' And truly, they did not lift up their hands to the false gods of the West.

'A similar schism has taken place in Romania, despite the fact that the present patriarch endeavours in vain to deny the existence of true Orthodox Christians in Romania. Also, as we have learned, notable members of the clergy in Bulgaria have refused to follow the 'diabolical innovation' (as it is called by the Abbot Philotheus Zervakos the Elder, a renowned figure among the new calendarists). It appears that the Russian Convent for Women has also refused to subscribe to this apostasy. The holy Monastery of Stavrounion in Cyprus was disbanded because of the papal calendar. The holy Monastery of Valaam (in Finland) was likewise destroyed because of this accursed calendar. When it adopted the new calendar, the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos

separated itself from the rest of the Fathers of the Holy Mountain who no longer take part in any celebrations or on the feast day of this 'modernists' monastery.⁵

'There is no need to have recourse to exalted theological speculations since the Gospel says very clearly: 'Every tree is known by its fruit' (Luke 5:44). Let the new calendarist show us even *one* good fruit which has come from this innovation. Does it sanctify anyone? Does it edify the faithful? Does it bring back those who have gone astray? Has it united those that were divided? To the contrary, it has brought about schisms, divisions, enfeeblement and indifference. Do we need any other proofs that it does not come from God? But if it does not come from God, then it must by necessity have the demons as its origin, and is clearly therefore diabolical. Therefore we sin if we espouse it.' (*The Calendar Question*, pp. 43-45).

But God did provide another proof, as Father Lev Puhalo relates:—

'In 1925, on the eve of the Exaltation of the All-Honourable and Life-giving Cross of our Saviour, September 14 according to the Orthodox Church calendar, the all-night vigil was served at the church of St. John the Theologian in suburban Athens. By 9 o'clock that evening, more than 2000 true-Orthodox faithful had gathered in and around the church for the service, since very few true-Orthodox churches had been accidentally left open by the civil authorities. Such a large gathering of people could not, however, go unnoticed by the authorities. Around eleven P.M. the authorities despatched a battalion of police to the church 'to prevent any disorders which might arise from such a large gathering.' The gathering was too large for the police to take any direct action or to arrest the priest at that time and so they mingled with the crowd of worshippers in the already over-flowing courtyard of the church.

'Then, regardless of the true motives for their presence, against their own will, but according to the Will which exceeds all human power, they became participants in the miraculous experience of the crowd of believers.

'At 11.30 there began to appear in the heavens above the church, in the direction of North-East, a bright, radiant Cross of Light. The light not only illuminated the church and the faithful but, in its rays, the stars of the clear, cloudless sky became dim and the church-yard was filled with an almost tangible light. The form of the Cross itself was an especially dense light and it could be clearly seen as a Byzantine cross with an angular cross bar toward the bottom. This heavenly miracle lasted for half an hour, until midnight, and then the Cross began slowly to raise up vertically, as the cross in the hands of the priest does in the ceremony of the Elevation of the Cross in church. Having come straight up, the Cross began gradually to fade away.

'The human language is not adequate to convey what took place during the apparition. The entire crowd fell prostrate upon the ground with tears and began to sing hymns, praising the Lord with one heart and one mouth. The police were among those who wept, suddenly discovering, in the depths of their hearts, a childlike faith. The crowd of believers and battalion of police

were transformed into one, unified flock of faithful. All were seized with a holy ecstasy.

"The vigil continued until four A.M., when all this human torrent streamed back into the city, carrying the news of the miracle because of which they were still trembling and weeping.

"Many of the unbelievers, sophists and renovationists, realizing their sin and guilt, but unwilling to repent, tried by every means to explain away or deny this miracle. The fact that the form of the cross had been so sharply and clearly that of the Byzantine Cross (sometimes called the Russian Cross), with three cross-bars, the bottom one at an angle, completely negated any arguments of accidental physical phenomena.

"The fact that such an apparition of the cross had also occurred during the height of the first great heresy [Arianism – the reference is to the apparition of the Cross over Jerusalem in 351] must strike the Orthodox with an especial sense of the magnitude of the importance of the calendar question and of all that is connected with it. No sensible person can discuss this issue lightly, with secular reasoning or with worldly arguments. Renovationists, like the Arians in 351, are left without extenuation or mitigation."

Sadly, however, the devil has managed to sow seeds of disunity even among the old calendarists. The question is over whether or not the new calendarists are in the Church, and have valid sacraments. The True Orthodox (sometimes called 'Matthaists' after Bishop Matthew of Bresthena [+ 1950]) have taken the only position which is consistent with Orthodox dogma and canon law, namely, that since the new calendarists have broken away from the Church and fallen under the anathema of three Great Councils, they are schismatics and deprived of valid sacraments (Canon of the Council of Carthage under St. Cyprian; first Canonical Epistle of St. Basil the Great). The 'Auxentites', however, (so called after their present chief hierarch, Archbishop Auxentios), though refusing to have communion with the new calendarists, will not draw this conclusion. In this indecisiveness they are supported by the Russian Church in Exile.

A similar controversy took place in the mid-third century between St. Cyprian of Carthage and Pope Stephen of Rome, as a result of which Pope Stephen excommunicated St. Cyprian; and again in the eight century between St. Boniface of Germany and Pope Zachary. However, the Orthodox Church has always upheld St. Cyprian's 'strict' line (and even the West has recognized his sanctity). And She rejects the papist doctrine that any baptism in the name of the Trinity is valid, even if performed by a Jew; for one who has lost, or never had, the Holy Spirit cannot possibly bestow It himself. The fact that in certain special circumstances the Church receives heretics into Her bosom without Baptism is not inconsistent with this: in such cases the Baptismal Grace is bestowed through other means than trine immersion (e.g. Chrismation). For, as Archbishop Ilarion says "the Church is One and She alone has the entire fulness of the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit. Whoever

has in whatever way fallen away from the Church – in heresy, in schism, in unlawful assembly – this man loses the communion of the Grace of God. Therefore, mysteries performed outside the Church have no charismatic action'. (*The Unity of the Church*, p. 44).

We arrive, then, at a picture of the True Orthodox Church today as indeed a 'little flock' (*Luke* 12:32), often persecuted (especially the Catacomb Church in Russia), usually maligned (the old calendarist Churches of Greece and Cyprus), and always deeply sorrowful because of the mass apostasy which ecumenism is producing all around Her. And yet this sorrow is not despondency or despair, nor is it unaccompanied by a deep joy; for She knows that the Lord's promise is inviolable, that She will prevail even against the gates of hell (which, according to the Venerable Bede, are the seducements of heresy no less than the terrors of persecution). It remains to clinch the argument against ecumenism by examining as objectively as this author's humble understanding allows the ecumenists' favourite quotation – the Lord's words on unity during His last discourse to His disciples before His Passion and Resurrection.

THE HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER

These words are: 'that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us' (*John* 17:21). The ecumenists interpret this as referring to the unity of all mankind in Christ, regardless of differences in creed; and on its basis they attempt to break down the boundary between the Church and the world. Some preliminary remarks are necessary in order to place this text in its proper context.

The unity of the truth, and of the community of true believers, is one of the major themes of Holy Scripture. We think of the first commandment: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord Thy God is one God' (*Deuteronomy* 6:4), and of St. Paul's words: 'There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all' (*Ephesians* 4:4-6). But in an egoistic and individualistic world, which is nevertheless obsessed by schemes of unification and centralization, it is often forgotten that true unity is obtained through exclusion of that which is false, of that which tends to disunity. Thus the corollary of 'the Lord Thy God is one God' is: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before My face' (*Deuteronomy* 5:7). And in the same chapter of *Ephesians* in which St. Paul speaks of the one Faith and Baptism, he also says: 'that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive' (4:14).

Thus unity in the truth presupposes separation from falsehood as its essential condition. But to all those who would have a foot in both camps, the words of the holy prophet Elijah are directed: 'How long will ye halt on both

feet? if the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him' (*III Kings* 18:21). Again, St. James in his epistle says: 'the double-minded man is unstable in all his ways' (1:8). The Lord Himself is no less strong: 'no man can serve two masters' (*Matthew* 6:24); 'every city or house divided against itself shall not stand' (*Matthew* 12:25); 'he who is not with Me is against Me; he who does not gather with Me scatters' (*Luke* 11:23). To Pilate, who wished to help Him, but not at the cost of his friendship with the world, and who would not stay for an answer to his question 'What is truth?' (*John* 18:38), the Truth did not reveal Himself. And to the Laodicean church, which was similarly indifferent, He said: 'because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth' (*Apocalypse* 3:16). But the persecutor Paul He made one of His greatest preachers, for zeal which is 'not according to knowledge' (*Romans* 10:2) can be redirected to the Truth, when it becomes, in Archbishop Averky's phrase, 'the chief thing in Christianity' (Holy Zeal', in *The Orthodox Word*, May-June, 1975).

For zeal for the truth to the exclusion of all error is that fire which the Lord came to cast upon the earth (*Luke* 12:49); which is why the tongues that descended upon the disciples at Pentecost were of fire, signifying that gift of fiery speech, castigating all evil and falsehood, which they then received (cf. St. Gregory the Theologian, 'On Pentecost', 12). But this zeal for the unity of the truth is inseparable from the zeal for the unity of all true believers – to the exclusion of all those who disrupt that unity by preaching or doing falsehood. Thus the prophet-king David cries out in the psalms: 'Rebuke the wild beasts of the reed, that congregation of bulls among the heifers of the peoples, lest they exclude them that have been proved like silver' (67:31). And the prophet Amos asks: 'Shall two walk together, if they do not know one another?' (3:3). The Lord Himself gives the answer: 'If he refuses to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican' (*Matthew* 18:17). And He demonstrated His teaching in a very practical way when He cast the money-changers out of the temple, both at the beginning (*John* 2:10-13) and at the end of His public ministry (*Matthew* 21:12-13). No less clearly, though in a more hidden manner, did He cast out Judas from the company of the twelve, before beginning His last discourse.

'Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him' (*John* 13:31). God is glorified by the true unity of all true believers, who love each other in the truth and thereby imitate the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For 'by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, that ye love one another' (*John* 13:35). Judas did not love the truth or his fellow-disciples, so he had to be excluded before the Son of man could be glorified. As Peter said, quoting from the Psalms: 'let his habitation be desolate, and his bishopric let another take' (*Acts* 1:20; *Psalms* 108:7).

Moreover, this excluding of unrepentant sinners, that God may be glorified 'in spirit and truth' (*John* 4:22), is a process that continues in every coming

together of the faithful, as on that holy night. Thus when St. Peter excluded Ananias and Sapphira from the communion of the faithful, we read that 'great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as hear these things. . . . And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women' (*Acts* 5:11-14).⁶ Unrepentant sinners did not 'dare' (v. 13) to come to the light because their deeds were darkness. But this light was precisely what attracted the true believers (v. 14).

Again, St. Paul told the Ephesian elders that after his departure, 'grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them' (*Acts* 20:29-30). This image of the wolves and the false shepherds is used both by the prophets (e.g. *Ezekiel* 34) and by the Good Shepherd Himself (*John* 10). It is especially apt for describing the necessity of zeal for the truth; for it can easily be seen that a shepherd without zeal to combat wolves (heretics) is little better than a wolf himself. The good shepherd however, lays his life down for his sheep, and is not afraid to wield the sword of *anathema* against the wolves: 'Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you let him be accursed' (*Galatians* 1:8).

St. Gregory the Great says of the hireling: "He flies, not by giving ground, but by withholding his help. He flies, because he sees injustice and says nothing. He flies, because he takes refuge in silence. To such as these it was said: 'You have not gone up to face the enemy, nor have you set up a wall for the house of Israel, to stand in battle in the day of the Lord' (*Ezekiel* 13:5). For to go up and face the enemy means to oppose with the free voice of reason any power whatsoever that is acting wickedly. And we set up a wall, and we stand fast in the day of the Lord for the house of Israel, whenever by the authority of justice we defend the unoffending faithful against the injustice of the irreligious. This the hireling will not do; for when he sees the wolf coming he flies".

And a Christian sheep must flee the hireling; for "these sheep are not irrational but rational creatures – and we say this lest at any time a lay person should say, 'I am a sheep and not a shepherd, and I have no concern for myself; let the shepherd look to that, for he alone will be required to give account for me.' For even as the sheep that will not follow its good shepherd is exposed to the wolves, that is, to its destruction; so also the sheep which follows a bad shepherd is likewise exposed to unavoidable death, since the shepherd will devour him. Therefore, take care to flee from the ravaging shepherd' (*Institutions of the Apostles*). Or, as St Cyril of Jerusalem said to his catechumens: "Make thou thy fold with the sheep: flee from the wolves: depart not from the Church. Hate those who have ever been suspected in such matters: and unless thou in time perceive their repentance do not rashly trust thyself among them". And again: "Even though I who teach thee perish, thou shalt not also perish

with me. Nay, even a hearer may become better than his teacher, and he who came last may be first”

Nor is it only heretics who should be separated from the communion of the faithful. The Corinthians had among their number one who had practised ‘such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife’. St. Paul wrote to them: ‘ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken from you.’ He then decided ‘to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person’ (*I Corinthians* 5:1, 2, 5, 6, 12, 13).

Returning now to the Lord’s last discourse, we see the results of the true unity: ‘Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you’ (*John* 14:27). For the world’s peace is that of partners in, or accessories to, a crime, uniting not only ‘them that do the same, but also those that consent to them that do them’ (*Romans* 1:32). The Lord’s peace, on the other hand, is one that passes the understanding of the world; for it resides only in him who has no part in the world – ‘the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me’ (*John* 14:30).

Thus unity in the truth is an exceedingly close, organic unity which resists and expels all alien elements. ‘I am the true Vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned’ (*John* 15:1, 2, 6).

The Christian abides in Christ through participating in His Body. For ‘the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? For we being many are one Bread and one Body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread’ (*I Corinthians* 10:16, 17). But the world also has its communion, its ‘anti-body’ in opposition to the Body of Christ, its false vine attempting to uproot the true: for this is the woman having in her hand a cup ‘full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication’ (*Apocalypse* 17:4). And with this we must have no communion whatsoever; for ‘ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils’ (*I Corinthians* 10:21).

If, however, we approach the Body of Christ without having broken communion with the world’s body, then we provoke the Lord to jealousy, and are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord (*I Corinthians* 11:29). Thus to the unworthy would-be communicant whom he has turned away from the holy table St. John Chrysostom says: ‘I am forced to speak of these things, so that you may understand that I do not turn away, but seek to unite; nor do I repel or

exclude, but seek rather by trials to help you. For the fear of chastisement falling on the consciences of those who do wrong destroys and consumes sin as fire touching wax, and while it remains there preserves the soul clean and undefiled, and thus brings us to a greater degree of confidence. And just as the physician who ministers bitter medicine to those whom food disgusts drives out distressing poisons and helps to revive the lost appetite, so that our accustomed food is eaten with even greater appetite, so does he who uses sharp words, and helps to purify the evil thoughts of the heart, and lift the heavy burden of sin, allowing the conscience to breathe, and thus prepares the soul to taste with greater delight the precious Body of the Lord . . . And since we have spoken sharply to those who partake unworthily of the Sacred Mysteries, it is necessary that we speak also to you who minister them, that you may dispense those Gifts with great carefulness: for otherwise your chastisement will not be light. For should you while knowing that a man is unworthy permit him to partake of the Sacred Table, his blood will be required at your hands. . . . Give not a sword instead of food'

This is the true love, the true mercy and compassion, for it is based on a knowledge of the truth. But this love aroused the bitter hatred of the world against St. John, as it did against his namesake, St. John the Forerunner, and the Lord Himself. For 'if this world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me' (*John* 15:18-21).

This, then, is the Way which all Christians must follow – the straight and narrow Way of the Cross, of rejection of and by the world for His name's sake. It is trodden by all who without hypocrisy proclaim the Truth – the Truth of Christ and of the Body of Christ. Its reward is the Life – the Life which Christ came to give in abundance (*John* 10:10), the Life of the Holy Spirit, of Whom the Lord now begins to speak openly for the first time.

The first title which the Lord gives to the Holy Spirit is 'the Comforter'. For the disciples would soon be in need of great comfort, first, when they would see their Lord crucified and buried, and then, when they would themselves suffer persecution without the comfort of His visible Bodily presence. For the Comforter strengthens the faith of the storm-tossed and brings Christ directly into the hearts of His disciples. Again, they would need comfort at the sight of their sins, their pusillanimity and faithlessness – especially Peter, who denied the Lord three times. For the Comforter brings the assurance of forgiveness to those who mourn with a godly sorrow, in accordance with the promise: 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted' (*Matthew* 5:4). But to Judas, who mourned with an ungodly sorrow – that is, with despair, without recourse to the Mercy of the Saviour – the Comforter brought no comfort. As

the Lord said: 'none of them is lost, but the son of perdition' *John* 17:12).

The Spirit's second title is: 'the Spirit of truth', which the Lord used no less than three times in the course of His discourse *John* 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). The Spirit guides us into truth in three ways. First, by reminding us of the past: 'He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you' *John* 14:26). Secondly, by witnessing in the present: 'He shall testify of Me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning' *John* 15:26-7). And thirdly, in prophecy, of the future: 'He will show you things to come' *John* 16:13).

For the world is always trying to take the Truth out of our hearts, by substituting for His words the words of the devil, who is a liar and the father of lies *John* 8:44). The Spirit of truth is therefore sent into our hearts to restore us to the unity of the Truth, by weeding out all lies and driving away the spirits of falsehood. As St. John says; 'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God. For many false prophets are gone out into the world. . . . Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all have knowledge.' (*John* 4:1; 2:20).

Now it is only for His disciples who have this knowledge that the Lord prays in His High-Priestly prayer. 'For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them' *John* 17:8-10). He is glorified in them, not in the world; He prays for them, not for the world; for His Spirit and His Truth are in them, not in the world. And this is because the Father has chosen them out of the world. 'Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world' *John* 17:11-14).

To be in the world but not of the world is to be holy. And holiness comes from truth. Therefore: 'Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. As Thou has sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through Thy truth.' *John* 17:17-19).

But the Truth has a Body, so the holiness which is from the Truth extends to the whole Body, making all the members one. 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through Thy word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory

which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me' (*John* 17:20-23). Thus is the Body of Christ made one with His Head, even God the Father (*I Corinthians* 11:3), in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, which is perfect love. As St. Paul said, as if commenting on this passage: 'And He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from Whom the whole Body fitly joined together is firmly held by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part (with power adapted to its need) worketh properly in all its functions and groweth to full maturity, building Herself up in love' (*Ephesians* 4:11-16).

After He had completed this discourse, the Lord went out to His Passion, Death and Resurrection, which is the supreme demonstration of the fact that union in the Truth is possible only after exclusion of the lie. For He called all men unto Him – 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me' (*John* 12:32) – only after He had destroyed the power of the devil – 'Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out' (*John* 12:31). In the same way, at our Baptism, we first renounced Satan and all his works, and spat on him, before being united to Christ. And whenever we make the Sign of the Cross we do the same, imitating in this Moses, who is himself the type of our Passover: 'Inscribing the invincible weapon of the Cross upon the waters, Moses marked a straight line before him with his staff and divided the Red Sea, opening a path for Israel who went over dry-shod. Then he marked a second line across the waters and united them in one, overwhelming the chariots of Pharaoh. Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, for He has been glorified' (Canon for Mattins of the Exaltation of the Cross, Canticle One, Irmos).

Today, the Chariots of Pharaoh are the snares of ecumenism. We can destroy them only through the power of the Cross, which is the Truth of Christ. For we know that the Cross, the Sign of the Son of Man, will precede the Second Coming of Christ in glory (*Matthew* 24:30), when all lies will be destroyed.

But we also know that before then 'evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived' (*I Timothy* 3:13), 'insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect' (*Matthew* 24:24). For a great antichristian 'Church' will be set up, in close union with the world government

ruled by Antichrist himself; and this will entrain all but a very small remnant into its coils, calling down upon the world the terrible wrath of God (*Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; I Thessalonians 4, 5; II Thessalonians 1, 2; II Peter 3; Jude 14, 15; Apocalypse 6-20*). From the pattern of events so far, and from the prophecies of the holy Fathers of the Church, the true Orthodox have concluded that those times are very close at hand, and that ecumenism in its many and subtle forms is the lie which will entrain, and has already entrained, vast multitudes into apostasy. Perhaps the Papacy will provide the centralized organization of this 'Church' of Antichrist. Almost certainly, the Zionist-Freemasons will provide its controlling elite.

It becomes therefore essential for all those who love the Truth, and wish to be united to His Body for ever, to understand in what the lie consists. Such has been the purpose of this humble booklet. It will have achieved its purpose if there are some who have come to understand, through the Grace of God and the prayers of His Saints, that the true unity is the unity of the few who are chosen, not of the many who are called; the few who built the ark of Noah, not the many who built the tower of Babel; the few who stood at the Cross of Christ, not the many who passed by reviling. To these few who constitute the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ this booklet is dedicated, in the hope that the author, through their prayers, will not be excluded from their company; for to them, and them alone, is the promise: 'Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie' (*Apocalypse 22:14-15*).

October 9/22, 1978. Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

Appendix 1

From the *Epistles* of St. Cyprian of Carthage (mid-third century)

(with acknowledgements to Cambridge University Press)

Cyprian to his son, Magnus, greeting:

1. My dear son, you show your usual scrupulous care in consulting so inferior a person as myself about the question whether, along with other heretics, those who come over from Novatian after receiving his profane washing ought to be baptized and sanctified within the Catholic Church with the Church's one true and lawful Baptism. On the basis of the evidence of such faith as I have and of the holiness and truth of the Divine Scriptures, I reply that no heretic or schismatic whatsoever has any power or rights at all. There is therefore no reason for, I, or possibility of, Novatian's being exempted from being classified among the adversaries and anti-christs, since he like the others stands outside the Church and acts against the peace and love of Christ. When our Lord Jesus Christ declared in his Gospel that those who were not with him were his enemies he did not specify any particular form of heresy; his statement was universal that *all* who were not with him and who did not gather his flock with him but scattered it were his adversaries: 'He who is not with Me is against Me; he who does not gather with Me scatters' (*Luke* 11:23). So also the blessed Apostle John did not specify any particular form of heresy or schism; all without exception who had gone out from the Church and who were acting against the Church he called antichrists: 'You have heard that antichrist is coming, but now many antichrists have come into being. Therefore we know that this is the last hour. They went out from us but they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have continued with us' (*John* 2: 18-19). It is therefore plain that in every case where someone has clearly withdrawn from the love and the unity of the Church that person is an adversary of the Lord and antichrist. Indeed the Lord makes this point in his gospel: 'If he refuses to take notice even of the Church, let him be to you as a gentile and a tax-collector' (*Matthew* 18:17). If those who refuse to take notice of the Church are to be regarded as gentiles and tax-collectors, there is obviously a far greater obligation to classify as gentiles and tax-collectors those who show themselves to be rebels and enemies by devising false altars, illegal priesthoods, sacrilegious sacrifices and counterfeit titles. It must be so, when the Lord himself has adjudged those who have committed the lesser sin of merely refusing to take notice of the Church to be gentiles and tax-collectors.

2. That the Church is One is declared by the Holy Spirit in the Song of Songs, speaking in the person of Christ: 'My dove, my perfect one, is one; she

is the only one of her mother, the chosen one of her who bore her' (*Song of Songs* 6:9). He also says of her: 'A locked garden is my sister, my bride; a sealed fountain, a well of living water' (*Song of Songs* 4:12). If then the Bride of Christ, which is the Church, is a locked garden, something locked cannot possibly be open to the stranger or the profane; if it is a sealed fountain, the man who is outside and without access to the fountain cannot either drink from it or be sealed there; and if there is only one well of living water, namely that which is inside, the man outside cannot receive the life or the sanctification from that water which only those inside are allowed to drink or to use in any way. Peter also shows that the Church is One and that only those who are in the Church can be baptized: 'In the days of Noah a few, that is eight, persons were saved by water; in a similar way baptism now saves you' (1 *Pet.* 3:20-1). This passage shows that one ark of Noah is a type of the One Church. If it had been possible for anyone who was not in the ark of Noah to be saved in that baptism by which the world was expiated and purified, then it would also be possible now for a person to receive life through Baptism when he is not in the Church, to which alone Baptism has been granted. Paul makes this same point even clearer and more explicit in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*: Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for Her, that he might sanctify and cleanse Her by the washing of water' (5:25-6). If there is only One Church which is loved by Christ and it alone is cleansed by His washing, how can those who are not in the Church be either loved by Christ or cleansed and purified by His washing?

3. Therefore since the Church alone has the living water and the power of baptizing and cleansing men, anyone who asserts that a man can be baptised and sanctified with Novatian, will have first to demonstrate that Novatian is in the Church or presides over the Church. Now the Church is One, and what is one cannot be both inside and outside. If it is with Novatian, it was not with Cornelius. If it was with Cornelius, who was made Bishop Fabian's successor by lawful ordination and to whom the Lord gave not only the honour of priesthood but also the glory of martyrdom, then Novatian is not in the Church; nor can he be reckoned to be a bishop, seeing that his office originated with himself and that in defiance of evangelical and apostolic tradition he was not in succession to anyone else. One who was not ordained in the Church cannot conceivably have or maintain any authority over the Church.

4. The testimony of the Divine Scripture shows that the Church cannot be outside, that it cannot be split or divided against itself, but that it possesses the unity of a single indivisible house. Of the passover lamb (which signifies Christ) it is written: 'In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house' (*Exod.* 12:46). We see the same thing in the command given to Rahab who is a type of the Church: 'You shall gather your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's household to you in your house; and any who goes outside the door of your house, his blood will be on his own head' (*Josh.* 2: 18-19). In this figurative event it is shown that those who are to live and to escape the destruction of the world must be gathered into

one house, namely the Church; and if anyone goes outside from that gathering, in other words if anyone even though he has received grace in the Church later goes away and leaves the Church, his blood will be on his own head: in other words he will only have himself to blame for his destruction. Paul makes this clear by enjoining that a heretic is to be shunned as perverse, a sinner and self-condemned. He is speaking of the man whose blood is to be on his own head, the man who has not been expelled by the bishop but who has deserted the Church of his own free choice, the man who for his heretical presumption stands self-condemned.

5. The Lord shows us that this unity has a divine basis by his saying: 'I and the Father are One' (*John* 10:30). It is to be this unity that he relates his Church in the saying: 'There will be one flock', how can someone be counted as belonging to the flock when he is not one of the flock? Or how can he be regarded as a shepherd of the flock, when the true shepherd is still there presiding in the Church of God on the basis of an ordination in succession and he on the other hand is in succession to no one but originates with himself? Thereby he makes himself a stranger and profane, and enemy of the peace of the Lord and of the unity of God, not dwelling in the house of God, that is the Church, where only those who are in harmony and of one mind can dwell. In the Psalms the Holy Spirit says: 'God who makes those who are of one mind dwell together in a house' (*Psa.* 6:6).

There is a final demonstration that it is firm and unbreakable mutual love that maintains this Christian unity of mind, in the Lord's sacrifice itself. The Lord called bread his Body (bread which is made up of a union of many grains), thus showing that we, his people, whom it signified, have been made a unity. Similarly he called wine his Blood (wine which is made from a gathering together of what has been pressed out from a multitude of grapes), thus indicating that we, his flock, are bound together by the mingling of vast numbers united into one. If Novatian really is united into this bread of the Lord, and if he is also mingled in the cup of Christ, then there is a possibility that he will have the grace of the one Baptism of the Church as well – but it must first be clearly established that he maintains the unity of the Church.

Appendix 2

From the *Complete Works* of Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov (mid-nineteenth century)

(translated by the St. Herman Brotherhood, Platina, California)

HERE is a spectacle worthy of bitter lamentation: Christians who do not know in what Christianity consists! Yet one encounters this spectacle almost everywhere one looks today; rarely, in the great multitude of those who call themselves Christians, can one find anyone who is a Christian both in name and in deed.

I will answer the question you have raised point by point, in as few words as possible. 'Why', you write, 'cannot pagans, Moslems, and so-called heretics be saved? There are excellent people among them. To condemn these good people would be contrary to the Divine mercy! . . . Indeed, it is even contrary to sound human reason. – Heretics, after all, are Christians just the same. To consider oneself saved, and the members of other faiths damned, is both foolish and extremely proud!'

Christians! You reason about salvation, yet you do not know what salvation is, why men are in need of it, and finally, you do not know Christ, the only means of our salvation. Here is the true teaching on this subject, the teaching of the Holy Ecumenical Church.

Salvation consists in the recovery of communion with God. This communion was lost by the whole human race when our ancestors fell into sin. The whole human race belongs to the category of doomed creatures. Damnation is the lot of all people, whether virtuous or evildoers. We are conceived in iniquity and born in sin. *I will go down to my son mourning to hell* (Gen. 37:35), said the holy patriarch Jacob of himself and his holy son Joseph the chaste and fair. It is not only sinners who descended into hell at the end of their earthly pilgrimage, but the righteous men of the Old Testament as well. Such is the power of the good works of men; such is the worth of the virtues of our fallen nature!

In order to restore man's communion with God, in other words for salvation, redemption was necessary. The redemption of the human race was accomplished not by an angel, not by an archangel, not by some other of the higher but still limited and created beings, – it was accomplished by the infinite God Himself. Execution was the lot of the human race, commuted by His execution; the insufficiency of human merit was compensated by His endless worth. All the feeble good works of men which lead to hell, are compensated by a single powerful good work; faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews asked the Lord: *What must we do that we may work the works of God?*

And the Lord answered them: *This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent (John 6:29)*. One good work is necessary for us for salvation: faith; but faith is work! By faith, and faith alone, may we enter into communion with God, with the aid of the sacraments which He has granted us.

You are quite wrong, then, if you think and say that good people among pagans and Moslems are saved, that is, enter into communion with God! You are quite wrong, then, if you look upon the opposite view as some kind of novelty, as some kind of error that has crept in! No! Such has been the constant teaching of the true Church of the Old Testament as well as of the New. The Church has always acknowledged but one means of salvation: the Redeemer. She acknowledges that the greatest virtues of fallen nature lead to hell. If the righteous men of the true Church, the lamps from which the Holy Spirit has shone, prophets and wonder-workers who believed in the coming Redeemer yet died before his coming, – if they descended to hell, how can you think that pagans and Moslems who have neither acknowledged nor believed in the Redeemer, but just because they seem good to you, have attained the salvation that is attainable by one means and one means alone, faith in the Redeemer?

Christians! You must know Christ! You must realize that you do not know Him, that you deny Him if you acknowledge salvation to be possible without Him for any kind of good works! He who acknowledges salvation to be possible without Christ denies Christ and, perhaps without knowing it, falls into the grave sin of blasphemy. *We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law, says the holy Apostle Paul (Rom. 3:28). The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe, for there is no distinction. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:22-24)*. You reply: 'The holy Apostle James without any question asks for good works, he teaches that faith without works is dead.' But consider just what it is that the holy Apostle James asks for.

You will see that he, like all the Divinely-inspired writers of the Holy Scriptures, asks for works of faith, and not the good works of our fallen nature. He asks for living faith, confirmed by the works of the new man, and not the good works of fallen nature, which are repulsive to faith. He cites the conduct of the patriarch Abraham – a work in which the faith of that righteous man was revealed. This work consisted in offering as a sacrifice to God his only-begotten son. To slay one's son for sacrifice is not by any means a good work according to human nature: it is, rather, a good work insofar as it fulfills a Divine command – it is a work of faith. Look into the New Testament and into the Holy Scriptures in general, and you will find that they ask for fulfillment of God's commands, that this fulfillment is called works, that from this fulfillment of God's commands faith in God becomes living, and active; without it faith is dead, being deprived of any activity. And on the contrary you will find that the good works of fallen nature, whether from feelings, from blood, from impulse, or from a tender sentiment of the heart – are forbidden

and rejected! And these are the same good works that please you in pagans and Moslems; for these, even if they involve the denial of Christ, you want to give them Salvation!

Your conception of sound reason is a strange one. How, by what right, do you find and recognize this in yourself? If you are a Christian, you should have a Christian understanding of this subject, and not some other arbitrary opinion taken from nowhere. The Gospel teaches us that by the fall we acquired a falsifying reason; that the reason of our fallen nature, no matter what its innate worth, no matter how well sharpened by worldly learning, retains the worth transmitted to it by the fall and remains a falsifying reason. We must reject it and commit ourselves to the guidance of faith; under such guidance, in due time, through much effort in piety, God will give to His true slave the reason of truth, or spiritual reason. This reason we can and must acknowledge as a sound reason; it is an informed faith, as the Apostle Paul excellently described it in the 11th chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews. The foundation of spiritual reasoning is God. Being founded on this hard rock, it does not waver or fall. What you call sound reason we Christians take to be a reason so infirm, so darkened and so far gone astray, that there can be no healing for it except by cutting it off, with the sword of faith, and renouncing all the learning that has gone into its formation. If we take it for sound reason, basing ourselves on a foundation that is uncertain, tottering, indefinite, constantly changing – then it, being sound, will renounce Christ too. This is proved by experience.

And what, may I ask, does your sound reason say to you? – That the condemnation of good people who do not believe in Christ is repulsive to it! And not only that; such a condemnation of virtuous people is contrary to the mercy of such an all-good Being as God.

To be sure, you had a revelation from above on this subject, concerning what is contrary and what is not contrary to the Divine mercy? – No, it was sound reason that pointed it out. Ah, your sound reason! Still, where in your sound reason did you find out that it was possible to understand, with your own limited human mind, what is contrary and what is not contrary to the Divine mercy? Permit us to speak our mind.

The Gospel – that is, the teaching of Christ, that is, the Holy Scriptures, that is, the Holy Ecumenical Church – has revealed to us all that man may know of the Divine mercy, which surpasses every kind of reasoning and all human apprehension, and is inaccessible to these. Vain is the trifling of the human mind when it seeks to define the indefinable God, when it seeks to explain the inexplicable, to submit to its own calculations . . . whom? . . . God! Such an undertaking is a Satanic one.

Oh, these people who call themselves Christians and do not know the teaching of Christ! If from this blessed, heavenly teaching you people have not learned the incomprehensibility of God, – then go to school and listen to what the children are taught! The teachers of mathematics explain, in the theory of

the infinite, that is an indefinite quantity, is not subject to the laws to which definite quantities, numbers, are subject, that when you calculate with it you may get a result completely at variance with that arrived at through calculating with numbers. And you wish to define the laws by which the Divine mercy acts; you say, this is in accord with it, that is against it! It is in accord or not in accord with your sound reason, with your understanding and feelings!

Does it follow from this that God is obliged to understand and feel as you understand and feel? Yet this is what you are demanding of God! What a foolish, proud undertaking! Do not accuse the Church's judgement of a lack of common sense and humility – it is your own lack. She, the Holy Church, merely follows unswervingly the Divine teaching in the acts of God, revealed by God Himself. Her true children follow Her obediently, scorning the puffed-up reason that rises up against God. We believe that we can know about God only what God deigns to reveal to us. If there had been a different path to the knowledge of God, a path which our mind could have cleared for itself with its own powers, revelation would not have been given to us. It was given because it was necessary for us. Vain and deceitful, then, are the personal opinions and wanderings of the human mind.

You say, 'heretics are Christians just the same.' Where did you take that from? Perhaps someone or other calling himself a Christian while knowing nothing of Christ, may in his extreme ignorance decide to acknowledge himself as the same kind of Christian as heretics, and fail to distinguish the holy Christian faith from those offspring of the curse, blasphemous heresies. Quite otherwise, however, do true Christians reason about this. A whole multitude of saints has received a martyr's crown, has preferred the most cruel and prolonged tortures, prison, exile, rather than agree to take part with heretics in their blasphemous teaching.

The Ecumenical Church has always recognised heresy as a mortal sin; she has always recognised that the man infected with the terrible malady of heresy is spiritually dead, a stranger to grace and salvation, in communion with the devil and the devil's damnation. Heresy is a sin of the mind; it is more a diabolic than a human sin. It is the devil's offspring, his invention; it is an impiety that is near idol-worship.

Every heresy contains in itself blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, whether against the dogma or against the action of the Holy Spirit. The essence of every heresy is blasphemy. St. Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, who sealed with blood his confession of the true faith, pronounced the decision of a local council held in Constantinople on the heresiarch Eutyches in the following words:

Eutyches, until now priest and archimandrite, is entirely convicted, both by his past actions and by his present statements on the errors of Valentine and Apollinarius, whose blasphemy he obstinately follows, all the more so as he did not even listen to our advice and instructions directed to his reception of sound teaching. And therefore, weeping and

sighing over his complete damnation, we proclaim before the face of our Lord Jesus Christ that he has fallen into blasphemy, that he is deprived of every priestly rank, of communion with us and of the direction of his monastery, and give it to be known to all that from henceforth whoever shall converse with him or visit him shall himself incur excommunication.

This decree is a sample of the common mind of the Ecumenical Church concerning heretics; this decree was acknowledged by the whole church, being ratified by the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon. The heresy of Eutyches consisted in his failure to confess two natures in Christ in His Incarnation two natures, as the Church confesses; he admitted only one Divine nature.

You will say: is that all! One may see a mentality similar to your own in the reply of a certain person invested with worldly power to St. Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, concerning the Arian heresy; it is a reply ludicrous in its want of true knowledge and woeful in its nature and consequences. This person advised the Patriarch to preserve peace and not to start any quarrels, which are so contrary to Christian spirit, just because of a few words; he wrote that he found nothing reprehensible in the teaching of Arius, – a certain difference in the turns of phrases, – that is all! These turns of phrases, as the historian Flavius notes, in which there is nothing reprehensible, reject the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ – that is all! They overthrow, that is to say, the whole Christian faith – that is all! It is remarkable that all the ancient heresies, behind various changing masks, strove towards a single aim; they rejected the Divinity of the Word and mutilated the dogma of the Incarnation. The more modern heresies above all strive to reject the action of the Holy Spirit: with terrible blasphemies they have rejected the Divine Liturgy, all the sacraments, everything, everything in which the Ecumenical Church has always acknowledged the action of the Holy Spirit. They call all this human ordinances – even bolder: superstition, error! To be sure, in heresy you see neither robbery nor theft; perhaps it is only because of this that you do not consider it a sin? Here they reject the Son of God, they reject and blaspheme the Holy Spirit – that is all! A man who has received and upholds a blasphemous teaching and utters blasphemy, but does not steal, does not steal, and even does the good works of fallen nature – he is an excellent man! How can God refuse him salvation! ... The whole reason for this final perplexity of yours, as well as for all the rest, is a profound ignorance of Christianity!

Do not think that such ignorance is a defect of small importance. It is not! Its consequences can be fatal, especially now when any number of books with a satanic teaching are circulating under a Christian title. In ignorance of true Christian teaching, just like that you can take a false, blasphemous idea for a true one, appropriate it to yourself, and together with it appropriate eternal damnation as well. The blasphemer will not be saved! And the perplexities you have expressed in your letter are already terrible omens regarding your

salvation: **their essence is rejection of Christ! Do not play with your salvation! Do not play with it, or you will weep forever.**

Occupy yourself with the reading of the New Testament and the holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church (but by no means Teresa, nor Francis and the other madmen of the West whom their heretical Church passes off for saints!); study in the holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church how to understand Scripture aright, study there what kind of living, what kind of thoughts and feelings are fitting for a Christian. From the Scripture and living faith study Christ and Christianity. Before the terrible hour comes in which you will have to appear before God in judgement, acquire the justification given by God freely to all men through Christianity.

Appendix 3

From *The Calendar Question* by Father Basil Sakkas (1973)

(translated by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston)

The technocratic civilization of Antichrist strives to attain two things: a) the peas which fill the tin can have to be a certain uniform size; b) the men who dwell on earth have to become alike, like those canned peas.

In order to rule, Antichrist has no need of *individuals* who are free and conscious, but of 'atoms' which constitute cells, which in turn make up an amorphous, homogenous and anonymous mass. He seeks to achieve this by various means, utilizing idealistic slogans such as 'Liberty,' 'Equality,' 'Brotherhood,' etc., which, however, have as their basic principle the destruction of the idea of the hierarchy of values. By means of Judeo-Masonry, he aims at the equalization of all persons and all things. Since the family is the strength of the individual and of a conscientious society, it must be abolished slowly by degrees. By means of feminism, he aims first at the equalization of the two sexes, which would replace the hierarchical distinction between man and woman. Then he proposes a 'new couple' which would possess a hierarchichal 'joint-rule' and equality between male and female, an equalization from the point of view of equal rights so that there would be no real head in the new family. He also institutes an equalization of vocations and the outward signs of distinction, and moreover, an equalization of external appearances; the distinction that exists in their dress and hair style must also be confounded. Unfortunately, there are few who recognise that the spirit of Antichrist brings about new formulas in the social structure which have already created dreadful spiritual consequences for the entire world. The family also is warred upon by the decay of morals. The mothers and fathers of tomorrow are often so spiritually and carnally depraved, they can only transmit to their children what they themselves possess. And yet one speaks of 'liberation'.

The equalization of individuals is performed principally in the religious and spiritual domain. Until recently, each heresy claimed the truth exclusively for itself. Today, however, things are presented under a completely different light. Truth becomes nothing but a relative matter and, in reality, does not exist; it is necessary to destroy the spiritual faculties which God has given man. We do not oppose the cinema and the theatre and television from a spirit of pietism or puritanism, but we ascertain each day that a terrible influence is exercised by these spectacles which seek to inactivate the human mind, which itself has become exhausted and lulled and brings itself to a state of doubt and indifference towards God. Through these things, eternity has become

something which is uncertain for man, and he limits his efforts to visible things which are the only things he accepts as real and certain. Thus, he joins with other men in their efforts to attain common and earthly ideals; the 'things which are unseen' constitute an utopia and an uncertainty as far as he is concerned.

The natural consequence of this is for man to seek to improve the conditions of his life on this earth, not in a *pacific* manner but a *pacifistic* one. The Church becomes an obstacle for him since She constantly reminds him of the futility of this world and endeavours to orient his attention towards the heavens and the things which are to come. The Church demands sacrifices, purity, effort, affliction and rejects all overestimation of earthly things. Hence, the clouded mind is no longer able to discern the absoluteness of the Truth of the Gospels, and it seeks to appease its conscience by a compromise between the demands of religion and the demands of the materialistic world. It seeks to receive an assurance of everlasting life (for itself) just in case there really does exist an eternal life after death. Antichrist has already taken this metaphysical need of man into consideration and thus he has proposed an idealistic religion to him with high-sounding words and slogans: 'God is love, and therefore, we must love all men and consider them as our brothers aside from their religious beliefs.' Above all else, we must 'live in peace with one another with sentiments of mutual respect towards the ideas, customs, usages and traditions of others'; we must 'turn our attention towards always doing good and we should come to the aid of others who are in need and especially those who suffer; because 'it is of little importance what one believes, just so long as he is sincere in his convictions and his motives' and many other such words does he say which, at first sight, fascinate one.

Since heresy strives by means of a half truth to conceal the other half, there is never a mention made of the second coming of Christ, or of eternal Judgement, or of confessing the Faith 'even to death'; nor are the many admonitions of the Gospel heeded, such as 'strait is the gate and narrow is the way' (*Matthew* 6:12), 'we must through much affliction enter into the kingdom of God' (*Acts* 14:22), 'in the world ye shall have tribulation' (*John* 16:33); the saved shall 'come out of great tribulation' (*Apocalypse* 7:14); nor, finally, that 'the whole world lieth in evil' (*John* 5:19, *Gal* 1:14, *Eph* 5:16), a fact which one encounters on almost every page of the Sacred Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers.

Obviously, the coming of the Antichrist is not discussed (*2 Thes* 2), nor that, in the last days, 'evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived' (*2 Tim* 3:13), nor that 'many shall be deceived' (see *Mark* 13:6), 'if it were possible, even the elect' (*Mark* 13:22), nor that 'in the last days, people shall more and more become 'egoists, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof' (*2 Tim* 3:2-3).

Shepherds no longer remind their flocks that upon earth we are strangers and pilgrims' (*Heb. 11:13*) and 'hated by all men for the sake of the Name' of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To the contrary, the world is led towards a narcotic paradise, a kind of artificial euphoria, where man endeavours to attain the maximum satisfaction possible. Religion becomes no longer a life in Christ, but is reduced to the level of a simple intellectual conviction which one adopts out of habit, or because of one's education, or because of the influence of the environment in which one has always lived and it has become, thus, only a support of . . . civilization and culture. Yet the Holy Church, foreseeing the degeneration of this post-Christian era in which we live, warns us through her holy Apostles: 'Be not conformed to this world' (*Rom. 12:2*.)

The believer is not like an atomic particle, or one of the little uniform peas which fill Antichrist's cans, but rather, he is an individual, the hairs of whose head are numbered, he holds in his hand a 'white stone' (*Apocalypse 2:17*) on which his own name is written and this name is unique. It is this unique name which gives him the property of being a man, created in the image and likeness of God, 'a little lower than the angels' (*Ps. 8:6*) by nature, but called to become a 'god according to grace' who shall surpass the angelic host in honour, even as the Most Holy Virgin Mary did.

He is a man because, in contrast to the other creatures of this earth, he possesses a rational soul, and since he is a rational soul and a temple of God, he has received a calling, a destiny and the possibility of freedom of choice and of eternity. All these things make him a person who is responsible for his actions. With purpose and with a prescribed itinerary, he journeys upon the earth of his pilgrimage with the aid of a compass. He follows his own direction and is not limited to following the course and direction of other men, since he is not a molecule of an anonymous mass, nor an animal of some flock. He has received a personal calling, 'he knoweth Him in whom he hath believed' (*2 Tim. 1:12*) and can choose his own fellow travellers.

- ¹ See Bernard Smith, *The Fraudulent Gospel* (Foreign Affairs Publishing Co., Richmond, Surrey, 1977).
- ² Thus the supposedly conservative Pope Paul VI spoke of 'the Hebrew and Islamic peoples, and Christians... these three expressions of an identical monotheism' (*La Croix*, August 11, 1970).
- ³ See S. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism* (Clarendon Press, 1955), J. Meyendorff, 'Rome and Orthodoxy: Authority or Truth?' in P. J. McCord (ed.) *A Pope for all Christians* (S.P.C.K., 1977), Richard Haugh, *Photius and the Carolingians* (Nordland, 1975), P. Sherrard, *Church, Papacy and Schism* (S.P.C.K., 1978). These books are all tinged by ecumenism, however, and should be read in conjunction with Abbe Guettee's excellent (and by no means outdated) *The Papacy*, Minos, New York, 1866.
- ⁴ cf. my book *The Catacomb Church* (Gresham, 1979).
- ⁵ Vatopedi has since returned to the old calendar.
- ⁶ Archbishop Averky (*Handbook to the Study of the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament*, II, p. 41) makes the interesting observation that this is the first time that the community of the first Christians is called the 'Church'.



Metropolitan Glykerios (centre) with other clergy of the True Orthodox Church of Romania, and the author.



The Archangel St. Michael
The Orthodox Foundation of St Michael, Guildford

In science, it is generally understood that out of many conflicting hypotheses, only one can be true (or all are false). In art, it is generally recognized that out of many possible drafts of a poem, only one can be true to the poet's feeling (or all are to be rejected). But in religion today we are witnessing a very strange phenomenon: the belief, well-nigh universal among religious people in this (though not in any other) century, that every form of religious consciousness, every kind of belief in God, either approximates to, or expresses part of, the truth. This book examines the nature, origin and future destiny of ecumenism, the prevailing religious philosophy of our time.