

Kievan Church Study Group Consultation at Chevetogne

Hierarchs and theologians of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and affiliated Churches, and the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church of Kiev met for a theological consultation at the Benedictine Monastery, Chevetogne, Belgium, August 1-3, 1994. Greetings were received from Archbishop Serge of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Archdiocese in Paris, from the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Panteleimon of Belgium, from Bishop Basil (Losten) of Stamford, Connecticut; from Bishop Vsevolod of Scopelos, ruling bishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Diocese in the United States, and others.

Participants in the consultation included:

Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia (Ecumenical Patriarchate)
Bishop Julian (Voronovsky) of Drohobych and Sambir (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Bishop Michael (Koltun) of Zboriv (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Archimandrite Boniface (Luyckx), Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Archimandrite Efrem (Lash), Ecumenical Patriarchate

Archimandrite Serge (Keleher), Keston Research (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Archpriest Dr. Oleh Krawchenko, Saint Andrew's College (Ukrainian Orthodox Church)

Archpriest Roman O. Mirchuk, Holy Spirit Seminary, L'viv (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Professor Archpriest Nicholas Ozoline, Ecumenical Patriarchate

Archpriest Theodore van der Voort, Ecumenical Patriarchate

Father Nicholas Makar, (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Father Andrii Onuferko, (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

Father Graham Woolfenden, (Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church)

On Sunday, 31 July, Bishop Julian and Bishop Michael served Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the Monastery Church. On Monday, 1 August, the consultation opened with the Intercessory Office for the Invocation of the Holy Spirit; the entire monastic community joined the members of the consultation for this prayer. At the request of the consultation, the Abbot of Chevetogne, Dom Michel van Parys, gave an exhortation based on the Gospel parable of the Prodigal Son, with particular emphasis on aspects of the relations between the two brothers.

Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia, Spalding Lecturer in Eastern Orthodox Studies, Oxford University, presented the major paper of this consultation, on the topic "Has the Schism Between East and West Ever Been Fully Accomplished?" Bishop Kallistos also read to the gathering a recent letter from His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople to His Beatitude Cardinal Lubachivsky of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church. On Tuesday morning, discussion on Bishop Kallistos's paper continued, first with a paper by Archimandrite Boniface (Luykx) on the love which unites the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church to Constantinople, and then with exchanges from the floor.

During the afternoon sessions on Monday and Tuesday, the participants of the consultation met in smaller groups for structured conversations aimed at developing proposals for practical, concrete activities to cultivate rapprochement between the two Churches.

On Wednesday, the plenary discussion focused on the suggestions developed by the sub-groups. The consultation adopted a joint statement of aims and purposes of the Kievan Church Study Group. The group would welcome particular initiatives: the compilation of a history of the Union of Brest, the development of a

popular educational programme based on the liturgical tradition common to both Churches (to be done in stages over a period of perhaps seven years), and some exchanges of professors and students between Eastern Orthodox theological institutions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and theological institutes of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church.

During these days in the Monastery, the participants were able to share in the monastic observance of divine services, with Orthros, Sixth Hour, Vespers, and Compline each day, and common meals with the monks in the monastery refectory. This provided a strict fraternal discipline which the participants in the Kievan Church Study Group found very supportive of their work. Through the hospitality of the Monastery Church, the Greco-Catholics were able to serve Divine Liturgy each morning, directly after Orthros.

His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople had announced that he hoped to visit His Holiness Pope John Paul II in Rome for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, 29 June 1995. With that date in mind, the Kievan Church Study Group set preliminary plans to hold the next consultation (to discuss topics related to the Union of Brest) at the International Franciscan Center for Dialogue, Assisi. The precise dates must still be determined with the aim of enabling the consultation participants to share in the events of the Patriarchal visit to Rome.

