

## The Roman Primacy and the Church of Kiev

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### Підсумок

Кир Василь (Лостен), автор цієї статті п.з. «Примат Риму й Київська Церква», є єпархом Української Греко-Католицької Єпархії Стемфорду, США. Статтю прочитано на першій сесії Студійної Групи Київської Церкви в Оксфорді в серпні 1992 року. Автор підкреслює, що ми зобов'язані докладати бодай стільки зусиль до загоїння ран поділу Церкви, що докладалося раніше, щоб їх завдавати. Згідно з теперішнім вченням Католицької Церкви, Православна Церква – це Церква-сестра, в якій знаходяться всі засоби до спасення. Католицька Церква офіційно відкидає будь-який проселитизм у відношенні до православних. Владика Василь звертає увагу на всі блага, що їх зазнала Греко-Католицька Церква через з'єднання з Римом. Теперішній Папа, Іван Павло II, відіграв особливішу роль у розвитку цієї Церкви. Папа настоює, що вислів «Церкви-сестри» – це не пуста реторика. Цитується префекта Конгрегації для Навчання Віри, кардинала Йосифа Ратцінгера, який писав, що від православних не вимагається нічого з тих доктрин, які були проголошені в Католицькій Церкві після першого тисячоліття християнства, коли обидві Церкви були одно. Однак, якщо православні зі своєї сторони щиро вважають Католицьку Церкву сестрою, то й вони повинні старатися зрозуміти чи може й католицькі доктрини другого тисячоліття (напр. Тридентського чи Першого Ватиканського Соборів) не є сумісні із їхньою доктриною. Автор статті переходить до питання

становища папи в Церкві. Треба розрізняти між функціями папи як патріярха Заходу і його ролею як Вселенський Архиєрей. Згідно із офіційним поясненням догмів Першого Ватиканського Собору, вселенська безпосередня юрисдикція папи не заперечує безпосередньої юрисдикції кожного місцевого єпископа. Вселенська влада папи існує тільки для збудування Церкви. У поясненні вислову «перший поміж рівними» (що описує папу) католики мають тенденцію забувати, що папа є «рівний» з іншими єпископами, а православні забувають, що він «перший». Непомилність папи – це властиво непомилність, що її Христос дає своїй Церкві. Папа, як той, що має «утверджувати братію», є речником цієї непомилности.

The desire for Church unity which we find today throughout the Christian world is surely a sign from God. Certainly the ecumenical movement is not perfect; no movement so large and so diverse could be without serious problems. But that imperfection and those problems do not excuse us from the obligation to cooperate with the grace of God to advance His holy Will. Perhaps excommunications, anathemas, and *strictness* are appropriate for those who are stubborn and obdurate, who actually want to cut themselves off from one another and who take sinful pleasure in their isolation. (Such people still exist today, but even in those cases I am not convinced that harshness is the best medicine). When we find the opposite—that people feel the pain of separation, of schism, and wish to heal that schism, it is the time for *economia* and *synkatavasis*; it is the time for patient help; it is the time, not to bar the door, but to rush out and welcome one another as the merciful father rushed out to welcome his returning son. If we make as much effort to heal the schism (God forgive us!) as we have made to sustain it, God will amaze us with the speed with which He will grant recovery.

These twin principles of *economia* and *synkatavasis* will be very important to us in the whole process of discovering and realizing our unity in Christ. I hope that perhaps Bishop Kallistos and all of our participants who are particularly qualified in

patristics will help us to gain a thorough, profound understanding of these principles.<sup>1</sup> As a bishop, I view the good of the Church first of all from a pastoral perspective. The presence of diocesan bishops and theological scholars at our consultation gives us an important strength, as we strive together to maintain the right practice of the right *faith—orthodoxia kai orthopraxis*, in the classic phrase.

The present state of the Eastern Catholic Churches does not constitute a model for the full communion of the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church—that has been said repeatedly and authoritatively by all sides in the discussion,<sup>2</sup> and we accept and agree with that position. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes the Orthodox Church as a Sister-Church, offering the means of salvation.<sup>3</sup> We all suffer from the division, the schism, between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism; our own Church of Kiev is divided by this estrangement—I could give many examples of hardship within individual families, so that my pastoral responsibility as a bishop

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Kallistos kindly offered a thorough definition of *economia* and *synkatavasis* during the Oxford consultation; I trust that this definition will appear in the same issue of *Logos* as this present paper.

<sup>2</sup> Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, VI Plenary Session, Freising, Germany, June 6-15, 1990, "Statement," paragraph 6b: "we reject 'uniatism' as a method of unity opposed to the common Tradition of our Churches" and 6d: "when our Churches meet on the basis of the ecclesiology of Communion between Sister-Churches, it would be regretful to destroy the important work for the unity of the Churches accomplished through the dialogue, by going back to the method of 'uniatism'." Also in a "working draft" prepared for the VII Plenary Session (which has not yet met) by a sub-committee of the Joint International Commission which met for the purpose at Ariccia, near Rome, in June 1991 paragraph 6: "uniatism can no longer be accepted as a method and model in view of the new way of mutual understanding of Catholics and Orthodox regarding their relationship to the mystery of the Church." (English translation of the Ariccia draft published in *Sobornost* 13 (1992) 49-54.)

<sup>3</sup> Despite the agreement on this point in the Theological Dialogue, some Orthodox hierarchs and theologians still hesitate to affirm that the Roman Catholic Church is also a Sister Church and offers the means of salvation.

tells me that we *must* heal this division. We claim the same theological, liturgical, disciplinary and spiritual tradition as the rest of our Orthodox brothers and sisters.<sup>4</sup> So *why* do we maintain that communion with Rome which seems to be such an outmoded, pointless stumbling block?

### *Fruits of Communion with Rome*

My answer must first be pastoral. We view and receive our communion with Rome as a gift, a source of joy which we could not even consider rejecting—although we certainly can and do consider how the realization of that communion must be modified and improved. But no matter how critical we are of Roman administration, communion with Rome has proved to be a blessed grace.

In 1946, the hierarchical structure of the Ukrainian Catholic Church was shattered. In Ukraine and Poland, the bishops were all imprisoned and so were the leading clergy; our church buildings and properties were all taken away. Even in the West, many clergy and faithful were in "displaced persons" camps, facing an uncertain future. Only three bishops were still at liberty, and none of them was a Ruling Bishop of a diocese in full right: one was auxiliary of L'viv, Bishop Ivan Buchko, who had been in South America when World War II began and was never able to return home; and the other two were the Exarchs in Canada and the United States. No one at all could act on behalf of our Church as a unit.

The Roman primacy did what no one else could have done. Pastoral services—even temporary theological courses—were organized in the refugee camps immediately. Within ten years there was an Archdiocese in Canada with eparchies at Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton; two years later there was an Archdiocese in the United States, which is now composed of the Dioceses of Philadelphia, Stamford, St. Nicholas in Chicago, and Parma (St. Josaphat) outside Cleveland. In 1958 dioceses were erected in Australia and West Germany, and soon more dioceses followed in France, England and South America.

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<sup>4</sup> *Unitatis Redintegratio*, par. 17.



By the grace of God, the Roman Primacy saved our Church in this crisis. I was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in 1957. As a seminarian and a priest I saw, myself, what had been done on our behalf and how the Roman Primacy enabled our Church to emerge from disaster and bring the treasures of our Faith to comfort our people scattered all over the world, while preparing for the moment when religious freedom might come once again in Ukraine. I can be sharply critical of Roman administration—but I cannot forget that it was Rome itself which has, if you like, *enabled* me to criticize that administration.

We had considerable difficulty restoring the full synodal structure of our Church, and the process is still not complete. But at the historic synod of June 1990, when the catacomb bishops from Ukraine joined the diaspora bishops of the emigration for the first time, we suddenly realized that despite the persecution and the chaos, God had brought us through the crucible with more bishops, more dioceses, and a better developed structure than ever before in the history of the Church of Kiev. Regardless of our historic and contemporary misunderstandings with the Poles, we turned unanimously to Pope John Paul II to express our gratitude—because without the Bishop of Rome we would not have reached such a moment.

So in our present experience, our communion with Rome has kept our Church alive and given us prosperity. In communion with Rome, we have been able to retain the historic hierarchical structure of the Kievan Church, which is a treasure of our Local Church which we hold in trust for all her sons and daughters.

Particularly in Ukraine itself, communion with Rome represents *security* for our hierarchy, our clergy, and our faithful. Despite all our defects, our Church in communion with Rome managed to survive the persecution as a unit, and to maintain our distinct ecclesial identity. The Communists were willing to promise any concession at all, if only Ukrainian Catholics would forsake communion with Rome. Russian Orthodoxy identified itself with the opponents of both the Church and the people. The compromises which the Vatican made in the "Ostpolitik" distressed our people, and have complicated the ecumenical

process, but this did not cause our people to lose their basic confidence in Rome.

### *John Paul II*

The reign of Pope John Paul II has been a time of notable progress for our Church, almost from the very beginning. The Pope advanced our synodal development, and supported the cause of the Church in Ukraine when no one else believed that the Church in our homeland had survived. He assured a canonical successor to our Father and Head, Cardinal Josyf Slipyj. The Pope's appreciation of our Church in the context of the Marian Year, just before the Millennium of the Baptism of Kievan Rus', and his patronage for the actual Millennium celebrations<sup>5</sup> were decisive moments in the emergence of our Church from the catacombs in Ukraine. Certainly, we have unfulfilled aspirations to which we are committed, but it would be stunning ingratitude if we did not acknowledge and appreciate what Pope John Paul II has done for us thus far.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Liturgie dell'Oriente Cristiano a Roma nell'Anno Mariano 1987-88 - Testi e Studi* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 1990) 7-78. This volume includes the complete texts of First Vespers for the Second Sunday of Advent (5 December 1987, Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore) and the Holy Mass of the Second Sunday of Advent (6 December 1987, Basilica of St. Peter), celebrated by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the visit of the Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios of Constantinople.

<sup>6</sup> Papal support for the Ukrainian Catholics has nothing to do with enticing people to leave one Church and join another; the people concerned had been Catholics for centuries and are fully entitled to the pastoral solidarity of the Catholic Church. As paragraph 14 of the Ariccia working draft suggests, "The Orthodox Church for her part should accept the assurances given by the Catholic Church that in taking care of the well-being of these communities she has no desire for expansion at the expense of the Orthodox East. It must be recognized that when the Catholic Church takes care of the spiritual welfare of these communities, breaking effectively with all proselytism and refusing to regard the Orthodox as the object for mission, she is simply being faithful to the pastoral duty to her own. In this perspective there would not be any place for mistrust and suspicion." During the same period since World War II, the Roman Church has done much of a practical nature in an effort to be of help to Eastern

*Sister-Churches—The New Paradigm*<sup>7</sup>

The Roman primacy provides a focus for the Christian world which was remarkably exemplified on 1 December 1989 when Mikhail Gorbachev came to the Bishop of Rome to express the end of Soviet oppression and persecution of religion. While this was of obvious and special importance to our own Church, Christian Churches everywhere seemed to think that this was particularly fitting—and in several theological dialogues taking place there appears to be an increasing convergence on the importance and value of the Roman primacy, without minimizing or ignoring the doctrinal and practical problems involved. We see good reason to maintain our communion with "the Church which presides in love" (Saint Ignatius of Antioch), and we are unable to believe that *breaking* communion with Rome could possibly serve our communion with the Great Church of Constantinople, and I believe we are ready to consider the modalities of our communion both with Old Rome and New Rome, so that the present unsatisfactory model may be replaced with a better model.

No one needs to be startled by that willingness to consider and implement radical changes in the terms of our connection with Rome. This will not be the first time. The most radical change in our relationship with Rome occurred only a century ago—this change was so fundamental that today it is a shock to

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Orthodoxy, and Eastern Orthodox theology has gained a profound influence on Roman Catholic thought and practice—which does not deny that much remains to be achieved.

<sup>7</sup> On this point, Archimandrite Emmanuel Lanne "Eglises-soeurs. Implications ecclesiologiques du *Tomos Agapis*," in *Istina* (Paris: Janvier-Mars, 1975) no. 1; and *Orient et Occident, Koinonia, Premier colloque ecclesiologique organisé par la Fondation 'Pro Oriente'*, pp. 47-74 is a useful analysis for our purposes. Father John Meyendorff's article of the same title in the same number of *Istina*, pp. 35-46 [an emended English translation appears in John Meyendorff, *Living Tradition* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978) 63-79] fails to grasp the use of the term "Sister Churches" adequately. During the October 1992 Stamford consultation of the Kievan Church Study Group, Father Andriy Chirovsky presented a paper on the concept of "Sister Churches," which will appear in *Logos* with the rest of the papers of the Stamford consultation.