

Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies
Vol. 46 (2005) Nos. 1–2, pp. 189–195

A Proposal Regarding Areas of Ukrainian Catholic Church Life That Deserve Discussion and Action

Winnipeg, May 24–26, 2005

The following proposal is intended to accompany the excellent program developed by the Ukrainian Catholic bishops of Canada for the special Clergy Conference of May, 2005. It was prepared and reviewed by several clergy and lay persons of the Eparchy of Toronto. It is circulated in a spirit of sincere respect for our hierarchs and chancellors who have labored tirelessly to organize the Encounter of Clergy in Winnipeg. The proposal is based on nine areas of Church life derived from key sections of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council. It is certainly not intended to imply negative criticism of anyone, but only to listen to the voice of the Catholic bishops of the entire world who gathered at the Second Vatican Council to renew the Church's commitment to Christ and His gospel.

(Note that all of the translations of the Vatican II decrees reproduced here are from the Vatican's official website. This explains the differences in wording noticeable to those familiar with other translations.)

+ + +

1. Continuing Formation for Clergy

Optatam Totius (Decree on Priestly Formation), ¶21: “Since priestly training, because of the circumstances particularly of contemporary society, must be pursued and perfected even after the completion of the course of studies in seminaries, it will be the responsibility of episcopal conferences in individual nations to employ suitable means to this end.”

Proposal: That each Eparchy provide for, and require of its clergy, participation in annual week-long workshops conducted by recognized specialists in the areas of theology, spirituality, liturgy, pastoral sciences, and canon law.

2. Seminary as a Priority

Optatam Totius (Decree on Priestly Formation), ¶5: “Since the training of students depends both on wise laws and, most of all, on qualified educators, the administrators and teachers of seminaries are to be selected from the best men, and are to be carefully prepared in sound doctrine, suitable pastoral experience and special spiritual and pedagogical training. Institutes, therefore, should be set up to attain this end. Or at least courses are to be arranged with a proper program, and the meetings of seminary directors are to take place at specified times.”

Proposal: (Without in any way detracting from the excellent work of various Seminary staff throughout the years) that Holy Spirit Inter-eparchial Seminary in Ottawa have – in addition to the bishops – a Board of Directors (composed of clergy and laity from the various Eparchies), which would help in the search for appropriate personnel and provide regular consultation regarding aspects of formation.

3. *Catechesis for All*

Christus Dominus (Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church), ¶14: "Bishops should take pains that catechetical instruction – which is intended to make the faith, as illumined by teaching, a vital, explicit and effective force in the lives of men – be given with sedulous care to both children and adolescents, youths and adults."

Proposal: That all of the eparchial Ordinaries not only encourage, but find appropriate means to guarantee (using sanctions if necessary), a full program of catechesis for *all* age groups in our Ukrainian Catholic parishes, thereby eliminating the widespread practice of offering catechesis only to those preparing for first Confession and solemn Communion.

4. *Greater Responsiveness and Accountability of Clergy and Bishops*

Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), ¶37: "The laity have the right, as do all Christians, to receive in abundance from their spiritual shepherds the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the assistance of the word of God and of the sacraments. They should openly reveal to them their needs and desires with that freedom and confidence which is fitting for children of God and brothers in Christ. They are, by reason of the knowledge, competence or outstanding ability which they may enjoy, permitted and sometimes even obliged to express their opinion on those things which concern the good of the Church. When occasions arise, let this be done through the organs erected by the Church for this purpose."

Proposal: That a procedural mechanism be developed to facilitate the regular communication of concerns and desires "from below" to the clergy and bishops (and from the lower clergy to bishops as well). The absence of such a mechanism sometimes causes the higher authority – whether clergy or bishops – to interpret any proposal as a personal criticism. A regular system of evaluations and suggestions could help pre-

vent this – not to mention provide invaluable input from the laity and lower clergy.

5. “Ukrainian Catholic Church” Does Not Mean “Catholic Church for Ukrainians”

Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), ¶13: “It follows that though there are many nations there is but one people of God, which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly rather than of an earthly nature.”

Orientalium Ecclesiarum (Decree on the Eastern Churches), ¶3: “They [the various Churches *sui iuris*] are consequently of equal dignity, so that none of them is superior to the others as regards rite and they enjoy the same rights and are under the same obligations, also in respect of preaching the Gospel to the whole world (cf. Mark 16, 15) under the guidance of the Roman Pontiff.”

Proposal: That the Ukrainian Catholic bishops of Canada issue a pastoral letter to all the faithful and clergy in which it would be explicitly stated that the name “Ukrainian Catholic Church” should never be interpreted to mean a Church for only one ethnic group, and that the way of life embodied in our Church’s tradition is universal and thus should be shared with all those who seek God.

6. Mission to Poor and Marginalized

Presbyterorum Ordinis (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests), ¶6: “Although they have obligations toward all men, priests have a special obligation to the poor and weak entrusted to them, for our Lord himself showed that he was united to them, and their evangelization is mentioned as a sign of messianic activity.”

“... This celebration [of the most holy Eucharist], if it is to be genuine and complete, should lead to various works of charity and mutual help, as well as to missionary activity and to different forms of Christian witness.”

Christus Dominus (Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church), ¶13: "In propounding this doctrine they should manifest the maternal solicitude of the Church toward all men whether they be believers or not. With a special affection they should attend upon the poor and the lower classes to whom the Lord sent them to preach the Gospel."

Proposal: That our Church throughout Canada follow the example of the Ukrainian Catholic Redemptorists who established "Welcome House" in Winnipeg (and the Toronto Eparchy, which earlier established St. John the Compassionate Mission), so that in at least each of the Canadian cities with eparchs, the Ukrainian Catholic Church have similar homes for those in need. We invite other religious orders to guide us in this work.

7. *Creation of Liturgical Commission for Canada*

Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), ¶45: "For the same reason every diocese is to have a commission on the sacred liturgy under the direction of the bishop, for promoting the liturgical apostolate. Sometimes it may be expedient that several dioceses should form between them one single commission which will be able to promote the liturgy by common consultation."

¶ 46: "Besides the commission on the sacred liturgy, every diocese, as far as possible, should have commissions for sacred music and sacred art. These three commissions must work in closest collaboration; indeed it will often be best to fuse the three of them into one single commission."

Proposal: That by the end of the summer, the Ukrainian Catholic bishops of Canada establish a joint liturgical commission with representatives from each Eparchy, and that funding be provided so that at least once per year all of the members of the commission can meet for suitable deliberations.

8. *Fostering Liturgical Formation*

Presbyterorum Ordinis (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests), ¶5: “Let priests take care so to foster a knowledge of and facility in the liturgy, so that by their own liturgical ministry Christian communities entrusted to their care may ever more perfectly give praise to God, the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit.”

Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), ¶14: “In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work. Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realizing this unless the pastors themselves, in the first place, become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy, and undertake to give instruction about it. A prime need, therefore, is that attention be directed, first of all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy.”

Proposal: That owing to the more complex nature of Ukrainian Catholic worship, suitable time be found on a regular basis – whether during *soborhyky* or annual workshops/retreats – for instruction and discussion of our Church’s authentic worship.

9. *Cathedrals as Centers of Prayer and Worship*

Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), ¶41: “The bishop is to be considered as the high priest of his flock, from whom the life in Christ of his faithful is in some way derived and dependent. Therefore all should hold in great esteem the liturgical life of the diocese centered around the bishop, especially in his cathedral church...”

Proposal: That all of our cathedrals restore a full celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours (Vespers and Matins, etc.) on

Sundays and feasts, so that – *inter alia* – anyone desiring to master these services might be able to learn them. We would also ask our bishops to preside at these services whenever they are not impeded by their travel schedule.

Respectfully submitted by

Fr. Peter Galadza, Ph.D.,
Kule Family Professor of Liturgy,
Sheptytsky Institute, Saint Paul University, Ottawa

